

KIM'S CONVENIENCE

February 10, 2020

Mr. Claude Doucet
Secretary-General
Canadian Radio-television and
Telecommunications Commission
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N2

Dear Mr. Doucet:

Re: CBC Licence Renewal – Application numbers: 2019-0280-0 and 2018-0282-5

I am writing in support of the CBC's licence renewal application. I request to appear at the hearing, if the Commission determines it would be useful.

By way of background, I write today as not just the Producer of the hit comedy Kim's Convenience, but also as someone who has been working in the radio and television world for almost 45 years, over a third of which has been at the CBC, in various positions, from radio producer to program director, culminating as the Vice President of English Television. My private sector experience ranges from being a technician at CHIN Radio, to News Director at Citytv, to a VP of development at the NBC Network and most recently as CEO of CTV and CTVglobemedia.

In other words, I've been around.

Much has been written about the trends in the media content environment, including a great deal of material in the CBC supplementary brief, so there is no need to reprise any of this.

But allow me a personal anecdote. I recently was able to closely observe, over the space of a few months, the media habits of two kids, aged 6 and 10. Not once have I seen them tune into a linear station. If the content they want isn't on Netflix or YouTube or some other on demand service, it doesn't exist for them. This is sobering for someone who spent much of his 45 years in the business in linear media. (Fortunately for me, I have come full circle and am doing what I started out doing—producing!)

Obviously, my observation isn't unique—all the research points to a sea shift.

Both the CRTC and the CBC are creatures of the Broadcasting Act. The CBC has been given an extremely broad mandate, incidentally one which they don't have the resources to fully execute. But in addition, the Act requires the CBC's content to be available "by the most appropriate and efficient means".

Well, to use an old expression, you gotta fish where the fish are.

If so many of our citizens, particularly our youth, are only watching online, and if that number is increasing while those only watching linear is decreasing, in my opinion, the CBC has an obligation to serve both online and linear citizens.

Thus, since resources are finite, and there is no indication that government is prepared to provide more resources to the CBC, it makes perfect sense to divert some resources from legacy linear media into original content for online. And it follows that such online content should be counted towards the CBC's regulatory obligations.

I don't believe this sets a precedent for private broadcasters as the Act only confers the duty to serve everyone on the public broadcaster.

It is not my intention to opine on the specific numbers and their appropriateness. The CBC is fortunate to be currently operated by a first rate group of talented media managers. That said, I'm certain the CRTC will have many tough questions for these managers.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't attest to the fact that the CBC has been a spectacular partner on Kim's Convenience—they have backed our series financially, promoted it brilliantly and given excellent creative notes. Our success is their success.

Sincerely,



Ivan Fecan
Producer/Executive Producer
Kim's Convenience

Cc: Regulatoryaffairs@cbc.ca