



Message from the Chair

This year, as Chair of CBC/Radio-Canada's Board of Directors, I have witnessed the great momentum of change that is happening at Canada's national public broadcaster. The Corporation has a firm sense of direction and a surge in confidence that have perhaps not been seen since its early days.

Why would there be such a sense of purpose at the national public broadcaster at a time when there are so many domestic and, mostly, foreign media services available to Canadians? Why do we still need a Canadian public broadcaster?

There are many compelling reasons. CBC/Radio-Canada has a critical role in helping citizens identify with each other from one region of this large country to another. Our networks regularly produce a vast body of regional programming, for local and national broadcast, which explores the realities and aspirations of individuals throughout Canada. We are proud to say that over half of our Canadian programming, across all of our media lines, now has a regional connection. In fact, we are the *only* broadcaster in Canada that can boast of such high regional content. And why is regional reflection so important? Because understanding the concerns of fellow citizens is essential to the building of a civil, tolerant society of people who feel connected to each other and who together make up a country – *our* country.

How else does CBC/Radio-Canada stand out favourably in the media crowd? Our renowned, award-winning News services are peopled by *Canadians* who deliver the story through Canadian eyes. Citizens deserve to hear a homegrown perspective on events, and to have Canadian analysts provide their understanding of how events will affect us. It is simply not good enough for our nation to accept another country's version of events as told by foreign journalists. And Canadians deserve to receive their News from a broadcaster with the flexibility to devote extra resources or entirely change its programming schedule to present breaking News. Our News services deliver all of this, as no other broadcaster does.

CBC/Radio-Canada also has a very important role in promoting Canadian creative industries, showcasing creative expression and developing the next generation of Canadian cultural talent. Encouraging and maintaining a healthy domestic culture is vital to nation-building and national independence, especially now in a "borderless" broadcasting world.



An additional and important role for CBC/Radio-Canada is to feature the dedication and success of Canadian amateur athletes. We have committed ourselves, to both our audiences and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), to increasing and broadening amateur sports coverage, as part of our overall transformation to a more clearly defined public broadcaster. We are providing, in fact, the kind of coverage that only a public broadcaster would offer.

Clearly, Canada needs its own strong and independent national public broadcaster to fulfil all of these roles. An important aspect of strengthening CBC/Radio-Canada for the coming years, I believe, is reaching out to our audiences to reinforce our existing relationships and to build bridges to new audiences. To advance this goal, I have visited many communities since becoming Chair in July 2001. This year, I met with Canadians in Halifax, Montréal, Québec City, Ottawa, Toronto, Regina, Calgary, Banff, and Vancouver, who expressed their very strong feelings about this Corporation. A common element in these conversations was Canadians' wonderful sense of ownership of their national public broadcaster and the importance they accord it in their everyday lives.

We recognise that an equally important step in reaching new audiences is the Corporation's own transformation, in tandem with the increasingly multicultural make-up of Canada. We have made changes to ensure that our programming remains relevant to all Canadians, and we intend to do much more in the coming years.

This Annual Report describes many of the fundamental programming and management changes made by CBC/Radio-Canada this year. This is a new CBC/Radio-Canada. We have strong leadership. We are producing high-quality, high-impact Canadian programming that no other broadcaster offers – Canadian stories, information and viewpoints reflecting our culturally diverse country, in English, French and in eight Aboriginal languages. We absolutely acknowledge that we are using taxpayer's dollars and we must earn them every day. And, we believe that the services we provide, funded by those dollars, make CBC/Radio-Canada an essential part of Canada's present and future.

In closing, I wish to thank the members of the Board of Directors who devote a great deal of time and talent to overseeing this extraordinary Corporation. I also want to express my sincere confidence in the President and CEO, Robert Rabinovitch, and in the skilled and dedicated staff of CBC/Radio-Canada who every day make important contributions to this country.

Carole Taylor, O.C.
Chair, Board of Directors