

Manifesto for a Healthy Work Environment at CBC/Radio-Canada

Today, the employees of CBC/Radio-Canada and the members of the STTRC-CSN are breaking the silence and making a public plea for far-reaching changes in the way the national broadcasting corporation treats its employees. We seek to put an end to the oppressive climate that pervades many parts of the organization across Québec and Canada and that is undermining our ability to work.

Radio-Canada's primary mission is to inform, enlighten and entertain the public in order to contribute to the development of Québécois and Canadian culture. To that end, it must ensure that all its management practices are informed by full and sincere adherence to the basic principle of respect for human rights.

Every one of us without exception is committed to the vitality and future of the public broadcaster. It is because of the calibre of our work, and the work of all the employees who came before us, that CBC-Radio Canada has succeeded in winning acclaim over the years and in reflecting a rich and varied heritage. The efforts of each and every one of us in every field have led to the production of a host of little gems for radio, television and the Web, which have won plaudits not only in Québec and Canada, but also internationally.

Unfortunately, poor management at CBC/Radio-Canada is tarnishing the broadcaster's reputation and leading to serious employee retention & recruitment issues. In recent years, a number of highly publicized cases have attested to a climate marked by disrespect, intimidation and verbal violence that has been deeply harmful to members of the staff. The case of the station in Québec City offers eloquent testimony to a situation where insults, degrading remarks, trash talk, favouritism, manipulation, and discriminatory speech are common currency. Other teams have experienced similar problems. Moreover, as a recent survey showed, many employees in the French-language network feel that management is closed to thinking outside the box and shows no inclination to promote the inclusion of diverse groups within the ranks of its staff.

Despite being the target of complaints, however, our employer has never seen fit to reconsider its ways of operating with a view to changing the organizational culture, except in the case of a handful of projects led by a few managers showing leadership and employees motivated to make a difference. It is unthinkable and terribly sad that this state of affairs should reign behind the scenes of this renowned public producer and broadcaster.

Some of us have remained silent for far too long in face of daily attacks against us. Now we've reached our limit and silence is no longer an option. Complaints of harassment can no longer be addressed by piecemeal disciplinary measures. Furthermore, solutions

to the widespread management problems at CBC/Radio-Canada cannot be approached solely from the employer's point of view. A fundamental rethinking of the issues at hand must be undertaken on a joint and equal basis. The substantive problems troubling all parts of the corporation can only be resolved by means of genuine cooperation between employees, managers, senior management, and the union.

The task we must undertake together is of the utmost importance.

Our union, the STTRC-CSN, places respect for individuals' physical and psychological integrity at the top of its scale of values.

Backed by all of us, the union will invest the energy and resources necessary for the positive renewal of labour relations at Radio-Canada. It will be no easy task, but it is essential to start tackling it immediately.

We are asking our employer for their full cooperation in order to implement management practices and methods that will protect our health and safety at work. We will no longer tolerate behaviour that may jeopardize our physical and psychological integrity and we are asking CBC/Radio-Canada to act accordingly.

Our right to dignity and security as well as our freedom of association to defend those rights are guaranteed by the major charters that protect the rights and freedoms of the citizens of Québec and Canada and supported by the *Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man*.

- We have the right to be respected without fear of reprisal just for attempting to ensure our well-being at work.
- We have the right to report unacceptable conditions to which we have been subjected or borne witness without being threatened or intimidated.
- We have the right to come and go from work with ease of mind and without being troubled by hurtful and insidious comments.
- We have the right to engage in union activity without fearing that it will adversely affect our careers.
- We are entitled to expect our employer to have a constructive attitude and to behave decently toward us.
- We have the right to reject harassment and abuses of authority.
- We have a right to dignity and to the protection of our integrity at work.

We stand tall and proud as we state loudly and clearly that we deserve better – much better.