

TVOntario gets praise, French license from CRTC

TORONTO – Given the go-ahead for its new French language network last month, TVOntario goes on the air with the service New Year's day.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) gave La chaîne française its broadcast license and renewed the existing English service in December.

The new French service is intended to serve about 1 million Ontarians whose mother tongue is French or who have a working knowledge of the language. The French network license expires Sept. 30, 1991.

CRTC chairman André Bureau lauded TVO saying its two networks make it "unparalleled in the world."

"Not even Quebec has educational networks in two languages. TVOntario is making a real contribution and Canadians should be proud," Bureau said.

La chaîne française is distributed to cable companies by satellite. The network predicts that by the end of February 1987 the French language service will reach about 90 percent of its target audience.

In the next five years TVOntario proposes to spend about \$40 million on French programming and broadcast about 3,700 hours of French programs each year. Sixty percent of those programs will be Canadian, a CRTC press release states.

While no conditions of license were outlined for the

French service, the CRTC outlined several conditions for the English network that received a license renewal until August 31, 1992.

TVOntario was told it must increase its Canadian content levels to 70 percent in its 1990-91 broadcast season.

A second condition requires that TVO follow the Canadian Association of Broadcasters self-regulatory guidelines on sex-role stereotyping.

During the CRTC license hearing the Association of Canadian Radio and Television Artists (ACTRA) supported the quality of TVO productions, but expressed concern that TVO has reduced the number of original productions. ACTRA also said the repeat factor is too high.

Bernard Ostry, TVOntario's chairman, said lack of money has affected the quantity of original programming Ontario's provincial broadcaster can create.

"We have requested additional funding. If it is forthcoming, we will be able to meet our obligations to Canadian artists and the production industry, and meet the requirements of our licenses," he states in a press release.

The TVO board has committed to improve on its current levels of programming, the CRTC said. TVO will produce more than the 2,100 hours of new Canadian programming broadcast in the last five years, spend more on programming and increase Canadian content.

At the hearing the Ontario Closed Captioned Consumers acknowledged the provincial broadcaster's efforts to provide closed captioning, but urged that more be done.

TVO said it exceeded a target of 46.5 hours of closed captioned programs last year by 22.25 hours, but outlined ways it would do more. The public broadcaster said progress in closed captioning was "slow and still inadequate."

Theatre Action, a group dedicated to promoting Franco-Ontarian theatre, supported TVO's intention to provide Franco-Ontarian programming. It asked, during the hearings, that priority be given to Ontario based actors, writers and producers.

The new network will broadcast about 70 hours of French programming per week and also provide English programming from noon to sign off Sundays. The English network provides English programs during the week with French programs on Sundays.

La chaîne française, the only provincial French language network, is funded on an equal basis by the provincial and federal governments who will provide about \$15 million each in the next five years. TVO also receives about \$8.6 million in base grants for French programming from the provincial government.

CRTC regulations require the French network to be carried on the basic service offered subscribers by cable

companies. In the next two years transmitters will also be built in areas of high Francophone population in Ontario.

Programming for the new service falls into children and youth, general and educational categories.

TVO has developed a range of programs for the new French service, some of which are to be made through co-production agreements with European French language

broadcasters.

Three regular shows that involve cinema are to air on the new French service each week.

Cinéma Cinéma is introduced by a host who talks about the French films from abroad and from Quebec that are about to be shown. **Matinée en Soirée** presents films that are more appropriate for family viewing. **Les Ateliers du reve** is a show that tours the film studios of the world.

Producers on sun break

TORONTO – Fourteen Toronto-based movie and advertising producers travelled to Jamaica for a 10-day trip to see possible shooting locations last month.

Margarietta St. Juste, a representative of the government agency Jamaica National Investment Promotion Ltd. (JNIP), said the trip was intended to show Canadian producers the locations, facilities and personnel available in the Caribbean nation.

St. Juste said it was the first time a trip of this scale was done with Canadian producers. She said the producers all expressed an interest in filming in Jamaica, but the results of the trip depend on scripts and the requirements of each production.

The producers visited sev-

eral cities in Jamaica and took tours of the coastlines, forests, a mountain range, hotels, great houses and castles, a press release states.

St. Juste termed the trip a co-operative effort and added she did not have details on the cost, which was split between JNIP, Air Jamaica and the Jamaica Tourist Board.

The Canadian production companies that sent representatives include Alliance Entertainment Corp., Atlantis Films Limited, Boardwalk Pictures Ltd., the Partners' Film Company Limited, Primedia Productions Ltd., Rawifilm Inc., Shlutz Productions, Avcor, Pascoe Productions Limited, McWaters, Vanlint and Associates, TDF Broadcast Productions and David Cook and Associates, the release states.

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