



*Kings Christian Collegiate Model United Nations*

**CRTC**

Canada 

**Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission  
(CRTC)**

**- February 24, 2024 -**

**Kate Roman**

Dear King'sMUN 2024 delegates,

We are truly honoured, as this year's Co-Secretary Generals of King'sMUN, to welcome you to our 10th annual conference. The Secretariat has been working hard throughout this school year to deliver you an incredible, in-person conference with a variety of creative committees, experienced chairs, and a successful day of debate.

Model United Nations, a reenactment of the function of the United Nations, is designed for students to come together to debate, discuss, and develop creative resolutions to some of the world's most pressing issues that plague our world today. In most committees, students take on the positions of various countries, characters, or political figures to create solutions for both real and fictional issues and crises. We also offer unique committees that explore historical, future, and fictional issues.

In our personal experience with MUN we have developed many valuable skills that we will take with us throughout our lives, such as confidence in public speaking, leadership, and creative problem-solving. Furthermore, MUN promotes lifelong connections, as we are constantly meeting delegates who share similar passions to us in committee sessions. We truly believe that your participation in MUN will guide you throughout your high school journey and beyond.

At King'sMUN, we provide a variety of committees to ensure that we have something of interest for everyone. From very current pressing issues (ie. UNSC and the African Union) and issues in sports (ie. International Cricket Council and WSF) to fictional, yet real, controversies (ie. Barbieland) and issues set in the past (ie. The Manhattan Project). We strive to ensure that there is appeal for a variety of delegates. Whether you have no experience or have been to a multitude of conferences, there is a place at King'sMUN for you!

Once again, we are thrilled to welcome all delegates, new or returning, back to King'sMUN. We hope that you engage in fruitful debate and have an amazing time at King'sMUN 2024.

Sincerely,

Serena Kalsi and Georgia Apostolopoulos

Co-Secretary Generals

King'sMUN 2024

## History and Purpose of the CRTC

For historical perspective, the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC) was established in 1932 following the recommendations put forth by the first Royal Commission on Broadcasting - that Canada have a national broadcasting network supervised by an independent federal agency. Then, in 1936, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) was created, replacing the CRBC. In 1968, the creation of the Broadcast Act confirmed CBC's position as a national broadcaster. This strengthened restrictions on foreign ownership, requiring Canadian programming to be created by Canadian talent. As a result, this created the Canadian Radio-television Commission/CRTC, a new regulatory agency that eventually became the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission/CRTC in 1976. The same year, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Act expanded the CRTC's jurisdiction to include telecommunications companies (Potter and Dunton).

The purpose of the CRTC is to ensure that broadcasting and telecommunications systems serve the Canadian public (CRTC). It is important to note it does not regulate newspapers, magazines, cell phone rates, or the quality and content of TV and radio programs. The commission reports to Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Today, the CRTC is an administrative tribunal responsible for regulating and supervising broadcasting and telecommunications in the public interest. The commission publicly expresses their dedication to ensure Canadians have access to a world-class communication system, providing innovation and enrichment to their lives.

## Background Work

The main purpose of the CRTC is to utilize broadcasting as a critical tool to help build and support Canadian identity. As a result, Canada's *Broadcasting Act* sets out objectives to ensure content meets the needs and interests of Canadians. Thus, the act encourages the development of Canadian expression by:

- ★ Providing a wide range of programming reflecting Canadian attitudes, values, opinions, ideas, and artistic creativity

- ★ Displaying Canadian talent in entertainment programming
- ★ Offering information and analysis concerning Canada and other countries through a Canadian perspective
- ★ Recognize differences within Canadian communities - addressing diversity, equal rights, linguistic duality, multicultural nature of society, and recognizing Aboriginal peoples (CRTC).

The Role of the CRTC: achieving the policy objectives outlined in the *Broadcasting Act*

- ★ Engage in public processes generating policies
- ★ Support public affairs programming through CPAC
- ★ Ensure access to high-quality local news
- ★ Encourage linguistic duality
- ★ Support Indigenous Peoples
- ★ Support Canadian talent
- ★ Support gender equality
- ★ Licensing the CBC (CRTC).

## **Issue #1 - *Access to News on Social Media Platforms***

The C-18 bill, or *Online News Act* was passed June 23, 2023, with the purpose of addressing the imbalance between tech platforms and Canadian publications. The goal is to force digital giants to compensate news publishers for the use of their content and ultimately foster fair commercial deals without direct governmental intervention. The bill is set to receive Royal Assent December 19, 2023, mandating powerful tech companies such as Meta and Google to compensate Canadian news publishers for their content (Mundie).

On August 1st, META (formerly Facebook) confirmed that it will block access to news on its social media platforms: Instagram, Threads, Whatsapp, etc. - for all Canadian users. Meta's decision is a direct response to Bill C-18, stating that content from news outlets, publishers, and broadcasters will not be available to Canadian users anymore, in order to comply

with the bill (Mundie). However, there are many concerns associated with this bill. Several critics argue that the proposed legislation may benefit large media companies, leaving local and independent news outlets to suffer (Peters). As well, multiple mainstream publications like the Globe and Mail and Toronto Star have signed agreements with Google around news sharing. Professor Dwayne Winseck from Carleton University infers this was an attempt to “head off this legislation at the pass.”

In the meantime, X (formerly Twitter) has recently been removing headlines from links to news articles, cutting off an auto-share function from WordPress. This negatively impacts student publications as the majority rely heavily on online readership. Dr. Perdomo puts it as “The number one need right now is for publications to maintain a direct connection with their readers. Invisibility is a problem.” The bill itself is complicated - Dr. Winseck agrees that social media companies should be subject to regulation as all other businesses are, however the bill is flawed and is creating a widespread misunderstanding (Peters).

One of the main concerns that has arisen is the current lack of access to international news sources on social media. Currently, if a Canadian tries to search up an American news source such as fox news, a statement will appear on the page saying the content is blocked. In fact, according to an Angus Reid report released July 2023:

- ★ 85% of Canadians do not pay for any online news subscriptions
- ★ Canadians 64 and under usually check social media sites like Facebook and Reddit first for news

Federal Statistics indicate:

- ★ 69% of Canadians access news online
- ★ 11% pay for it

Figure 1: “Instagram block”  
(screenshot from Instagram)



It is evident from these statistics that the majority of Canadians receive news through social media online. With tech giants Google and Meta blocking news links from Canadian news sources a significant decline in media literacy is expected. A related issue is the potential of user reliance on unverified stories. Deciphering fact from fiction can be much more challenging.

However, weeks before the law went into effect. Google and the Federal Government made a deal heading off the search engine's threat to block Canadians' ability to search for news on its platform. In the terms, Google will pay \$100M/year indexed to inflation, instead of the original \$172M/year demanded by the government. The money will go into a fund rather than to the news outlets directly, which Google wanted. The deal was initially criticized as the CBC, which already gets public funding, was positioned to receive one third of the money as distribution is partially based on the number of journalists the news organization has (Woolf, Marie). CBC has their share capped at \$7M of the \$100M from Google, and the rest of the broadcasting industry players combined will get no more than \$30M.



Figure 2: "Google Funding Diagram" (made on excel)

Almost two-thirds of the Google funds leftover will now go to written media - including local papers serving francophone and Indigenous communities. To qualify for a portion of the Google money, news groups must show their content can be found through a Google search online, meaning smaller newspapers and radio stations without websites will not be eligible for funding. As well, the amount of money news organizations stand to collect from the deal is also

dependent on the number of full-time journalists they employ. Additionally, Meta is still blocking news and negotiations continue for them to pay into the fund.

To summarize:

- ★ The C-18 Bill was passed June 23, 2023 with the goal of forcing digital giants to compensate news publishers for the use of their content and ultimately foster fair commercial deals without direct governmental intervention
- ★ Meta has blocked news on social media for Canadians
- ★ The majority of Canadians look to social media for their news intake
- ★ There is increasing concern for lack of access to information - increasing the amount of fake news

Some things to consider:

- 1) Could blocking access to news on social media be a human right violation? - Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms: freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication.
- 2) Should the government interfere and or regulate media - or should there be a completely free flow of information? What would the risks be if all oversight was removed?
- 3) Do you think Bill C-18 and similar initiatives will achieve the goal of enabling more diverse local content in Canada? Will the smaller media outlets survive as a result of the funding?
- 4) Are Google and Meta given enough credit for the value they generate for media outlets, specifically linking platform users to outlet content at a scale that would not otherwise be possible?

## Issue #2: Reviewing CanCon Rules

CanCon or Canadian Content is defined as Canadian audio and television content. The CRTC describes the program as: “*Canadian Program Certification* helps independent Canadian producers and broadcasters obtain recognition for productions that use mainly Canadian crews and talent. This certification allows broadcasters to meet their Canadian content regulatory obligations, including their on-screen quotas.” (CRTC). The criteria for what makes content “Canadian” has been around in some shape or form since the 1920s. The following criteria is as follows:

- ★ the producer must be Canadian and is responsible for monitoring and making decisions pertaining to the program;
- ★ the production earns a minimum of 6 out of 10 points based on the key creative functions that are performed by Canadians;
- ★ at least one of either the director or screenwriter positions and at least one of the two lead performers must be Canadian;
- ★ a minimum of 75% of program expenses and 75% of post-production expenses are paid for services provided by Canadians or Canadian companies. (CRTC).

A basic point system was created in 1984, with no further changes since then. “Points are awarded for productions based on the key creative functions being performed by Canadians” (CRTC).

Key creative positions for live action productions\*:

- ★ Director (2 pts.)
- ★ Screenwriter (2 pts.)
- ★ First and Second Lead Performers (performer or voice) (1 pt. each)
- ★ Production Designer (1 pt.)
- ★ Director of Photography (1 pt.)
- ★ Music Composer (1 pt.)
- ★ Picture Editor (1 pt.)



*\*note that other rules apply to animation productions*

The modern-day 21st century has sparked debate on the need for CanCon, many believing it has gone obsolete. Tajja Isen from The Walrus has expressed this opinion on behalf of many others. The concern with the CRTC mandates is that platforms will be forced to boost content to a smaller domestic audience since the content is Canadian over delivering the content to meet the wants and needs of the audience. This could affect how creators profit from their work (Isen). There is also the MAPL system (music, artist, performance, and lyrics). This determines what makes a Canadian song. It is important to note none of these tests have any relation to the content. The “lyrics” criteria is assessed by whether they were written by a Canadian, not if they are about subjects the government has considered appropriately Canadian. Isen argues “Just because content has been made by (and will be shown to) Canadians, there’s no automatic correlation between those origins and the idea that it reflects this country’s “attitudes, opinions, ideas, values, and artistic creativity.” What even are those?” The audience is exposed to a minimal amount of news, without their wants and needs being the main consideration. News should be accessible to everyone, shouldn’t the consumer be the main priority?

To summarize:

- ★ CanCon rules exist to define “Canadian Content”
- ★ A set of rules and a point system determines this
- ★ Art is subjective and collaborative - the judging system is highly criticized for being dated and restricting
- ★ The audience is not necessarily the main priority - their wants and needs for news are not guaranteed nor prioritized

Some things to consider:

- 1) Are the CanCon rules too restrictive? Is it better to make adjustments or lose them all together?

- 2) Is Canadian content stable enough on its own today - there have been many Emmy/Oscar/Grammy/etc winning Canadian artists and content. Canadian content isn't necessarily suffering.
- 3) Is the point system fair? Why hasn't it been updated?
- 4) How do international collaborations fall into play with CanCon rules? Collaboration is essential to art - working with people from different backgrounds only enhances it. Is this considered enough?

## Connections to SDGs



### UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.

The issue "Access to News on Social Media Platforms" relates to SDG #9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure - specifically target 9.8: Universal Access to Information and Communications Technology (The Global Goals). Lack of access to information is a major issue with blocked content and access to international news platforms. As stated earlier, the majority of Canadians get their news from social media - but this isn't just the case for the specific nation. In fact, 62% of adults today consume news via social media.



Another goal in line with the issues of the CRTC is SDG #17: Partnership For The Goals. Specifically with target 17.1: Enhance Availability of Reliable Data - because the majority of people get their news via social media, the availability of reliable data declines. Fake news is a prevalent issue within the age of online news. Ensuring the availability of reliable data starts with providing plentiful access to news. If Canadians are seeing such nit-picked news, then it will become even harder to decipher real news from fake news.



**ENHANCE AVAILABILITY OF RELIABLE DATA**

By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

**Common sources of fake news according to Canadians**

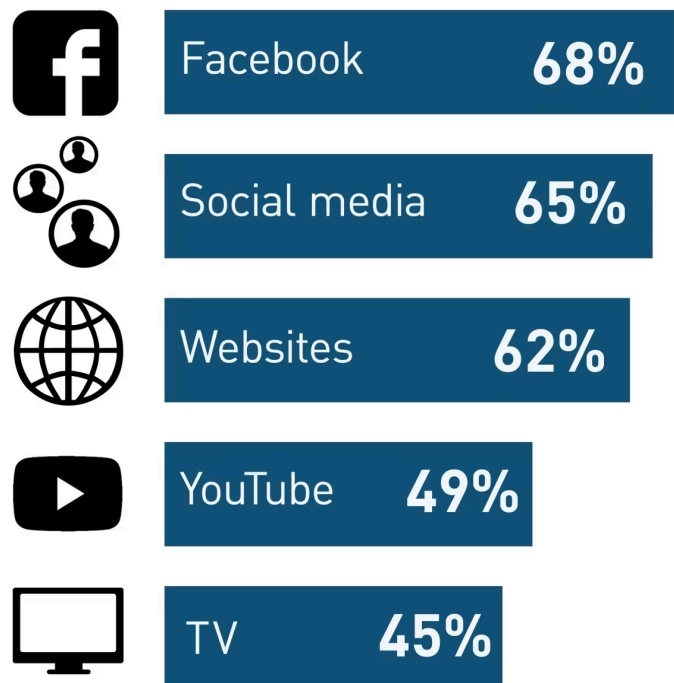


Figure 3: “Canadian Fake News Chart”



## **PROMOTE UNIVERSAL SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INCLUSION**

By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

The last connection is to SDG #10: Reduced Inequalities - target 10.2: Prompt Universal Social, Economic, and Political Inclusion. Political news is often very biased, in order to understand different perspectives and fully educate oneself, one must look to various news sources. This is increasingly difficult with Meta blocking news sources on social media. Social, economic, and political inclusion starts with access to information.

List of helpful resources for further research:

<https://globalnews.ca/news/9934703/facebook-meta-news-blocking-canada-regulations/>

<https://www.reuters.com/technology/google-meta-qualcomm-team-up-push-open-digital-ecosystems-2023-12-13/>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/streamers-required-to-feature-cancon-1.6415661>

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/278800/canada-digital-ad-spend/>

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