



Canadian Slovak League

Kanadská slovenská liga

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September 8, 2010

OMNI Television Programming
33 Dundas Street East
Toronto ON M5B 1B8

Dear Sir or Madam,

Subject: **Slovaks in Canada**

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Slovak League (CSL), I wish to express my disappointment that OMNI Television felt it appropriate to broadcast on the *Nova Vize* Czech programme a film made by Josef Čermák, a member of the Czech community in Canada, entitled *Slovaci v Kanade*. In 2008, the *Nova Vize* Czech programme received a grant from OMNI to produce a film about Czechoslovak immigration to Canada in the 1930's, in 1948 and the post-1968 wave. It is clear from the contents of Čermák's film that the terms of reference were not followed.

The *Slovaci v Kanade* film title betrays the reason for the grant because it was limited to Slovaks in Canada. There is practically nothing about the immigration during the 1930's, very little about the 1948 wave of immigrants and a good part about the post-1968 immigration is from Slovakia, BUT not from the Czech Lands. This film was very unrepresentative of the life and activities of Slovaks in Canada, which were shown in a most summary way, because it consisted primarily of interviews with a small group of Slovaks, only some of whom have been or are involved in the activities of the community, and with two Czechs about their experiences in and thoughts about Slovakia since the creation of Czecho-Slovakia in 1918. There was a total exclusion of the role played by the churches, fraternal associations and professional organizations in the development of the Slovak community in Canada.

I should be grateful if you would send me a copy of the original terms of reference for the grant awarded by OMNI Television to the *Nova Vize* Czech programme. In addition, I wish to ask you kindly to respond to the following questions:

1. On what basis did OMNI decide to have one ethnic group (Czech) produce a film about another ethnic group (Slovaks)?
2. Why did OMNI permit the scope of the film about Czechoslovak immigration to Canada to stray and only focus on Slovaks in Canada?
3. What does the litigation between Josef Čermák and Dr. Jozef Kirschbaum or the visit by the former Czechoslovak President Václav Havel have to do with the immigration of Slovaks to Canada?

Unfortunately, by allowing the *Nova Vize* Czech programme to broadcast this particular presentation of Slovaks in Canada, your viewers were given an inaccurate, incomplete, and biased report about the Slovak Community in Canada. I sincerely hope that you will make every effort to redress this situation.

Respectfully yours,

May Ann (Hackova) Doucette,
President, Canadian Slovak League