

# Canada's daily papers taken for ride

BY CAPILANO COURIER STAFF

NORTH VANCOUVER, BC (CUP) — Before the scandal broke the advertisement was, at first glance, a harmless-looking manifesto for a "British Canada."

Complete with a coat of arms, Union Jack flag and in some versions a small picture of the late Princess of Wales with her two sons in their school uniforms, the letter claimed to be a policy statement for the Coalition for a Humanistic British Canada.

But a closer look revealed the group was calling for a "massive increase" in European immigration, an end to "multicultural policies" and enforcement of a policy of "cultural assimilation."

The ad went on to describe the coalition's policy on appropriate clothing for Canadians; school uniforms for children, pants for men, skirts and dresses for women.

The advertisement ran in major and minor newspapers across the country, including *The Globe and Mail*, *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Montreal Gazette*. The size of the ads ranged from a quarter of a page to a full page, like the one that appeared in *The Vancouver Sun*.

The coalition's founder, Michael Chessman, informed an Ontario newspaper that the ads were part of a campaign to make the group a recognized force in Canadian politics.

He estimated the cost of the campaign was approximately \$200,000. But the appearance of the ads led to curiosity, questions and complaints on the part of readers. As a result, the media began looking into the coalition and its beliefs.

It was soon revealed the coalition consisted of only one person, Chessman, a 38-year-old Toronto resident. After his ads ran, Chessman sent the media a press release containing obscene opinions regarding other races, particularly blacks, whom he sees as inferior to whites, along with women, Asians and native peoples.

He describes Canada's First Nations people as "squatters on a land destined for their betters."

The advertisement itself was benign by comparison, and the magnitude of Chessman's extreme views shocked readers and humiliated the newspapers involved.

In his press release Chessman said, "we are without funding as an organization."

To date, none of the newspapers who published the ad have been able to confirm they were paid.

"[Chessman] took all these papers for tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands [of dollars]," said Brian Caldwell, a reporter for *The Kitchener-Waterloo Record* who investigated the Coalition.

*The Record's* advertising director, Larry Hooper, confirms his paper ran the ad twice out of four scheduled appearances.

The ads that did appear were at a cost of \$4,000 each. The final add, which did not run, was supposed to be a full-page ad at a cost of roughly \$10,000.

If all the scheduled ads had run, the bill would have been about \$22,000 for the one newspaper alone.

After reporter Caldwell discovered Chessman's racist views the ad was pulled.

*The Record* donated the pro-

ceeds from the ad to a multicultural society, despite the fact they were never paid and there really was no revenue to donate.

When asked how Chessman managed to get his ad in the newspaper without anyone checking on the content, Hooper said Chessman sent his ad in electronically and, "an electronic ad goes right to the production department."

Don MacLachlan, director of communications for Pacific Press, publisher of *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*, had the non-sufficient funds cheque for over \$10,000 in his hand when he was interviewed by *the Capilano Courier*, the campus paper at Capilano College in North Vancouver. He described it as very professional looking, adorned with a Canadian flag and the name of the Coalition.

"We are sitting here with very long faces," he said dejectedly. "It's not only unfortunate, it's embarrassing."

Pacific Press was going to donate proceeds from the ad to a charity, but now that there has been no payment for the ads that plan has been cancelled.

Coalition founder Michael Chessman did not return a phone call requesting an interview.

He did, however, send three separate emails to *the Capilano Courier*. One contained his picture, the second outlined his philosophical views and the third contained an article on him that appeared in *the National Post*.

Moreover, in a press release dated October 15, 1999, he said the newspapers should have known better than to accept his credit.

"The backers I kept referring

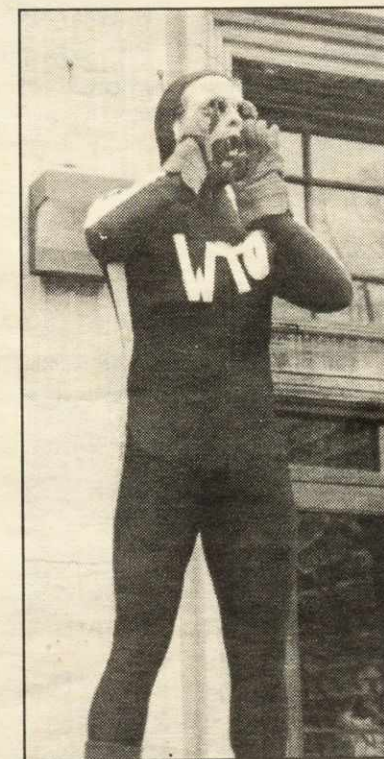
## WTO

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"Our experience is that you cannot trust corporations or government to protect, or to be fair to people."

While the rally was filled with people highly motivated about creating awareness about the WTO, some passers-by were not quite so interested.

"What the hell is the WTO?" replied one anonymous onlooker when asked if he saw any threat in the WTO's policies.



Shannon Lynch (aka WTO-Man) shouts to protesters at the Citizens' March held last week.

## Sextant criticizes DSU

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"I'd like to see us have our own student union. That way we can fund our own activities and not have our money going to renovating the SUB or Brian Kellow's \$23 lunches." — Andrew Woods, Editor-in-Chief, *The Sextant*

fighting them, which I hate," said Cote. "All we're trying to do is work with them."

Cote says that his efforts to accommodate DalTech students have been virtually ignored.

"I'm there three times a week and a lot of the time I'm just sitting there, no one comes by to talk to me or make comments."

While DalTech students have been given the opportunity to comment on what's happening on the campus, Cote says they haven't done their part to do so.

Out of this year's four DSU council meetings, only one of the nine DalTech representatives has shown up consistently.

Cote says that while he tries to voice the concerns of DalTech students at these meetings, he has little support.

"If I don't have these peo-

ple at the meeting [backing me up], I can only do so much," said Cote.

Woods says he'd be happy to see DalTech have more power in making their own decisions.

"I'd like to see us have our own student union," said Woods. "That way we can fund our own activities and not have our money going to renovating the Student Union Building (SUB) or Brian Kellow's \$23 lunches."

While woods feels there are problems with the DSU, he acknowledges that some of its effects on DalTech have been positive.

Woods does not expect a response to his article from the DSU.

"I don't think the DSU will write a response because they're too lazy," said Woods, "If they do, I'll print it."

Cote is hesitant to respond to Woods through *the Sextant*.

"I don't want to write a response so he can cut up anything I say and I don't want to start an argument in the papers," said Cote.

Cote says another problem with sending a response is that it may give students the wrong impression.

"I don't want to convey the image that DalTech and the DSU executive aren't getting along, for the most part it's good."

then defrauded."

It remains to be seen whether Chessman will be investigated, prosecuted, or punished. Perhaps the newspapers are satisfied to have learned their lesson.

But what this lesson is varies from paper to paper. Some are congratulating themselves for their stringent credit-checking policies, others are embarrassed about being duped, while others are horrified that an advertisement for a group whose true views were hidden slipped into their papers.

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