

Secretary of the Press Council
PO Box 10-879
The Terrace
Wellington

13 December 2006

Dear Sir or Madam,

I wish to submit a complaint regarding the cover story of the December 2006 issue of North & South magazine.

In my assessment of the article *Asian Angst: Is it time to send some back?* it appears to breach two principles of the Press Council code.

Principle One: Accuracy

Publications (newspapers and magazines) should be guided at all times by accuracy, fairness and balance, and should not deliberately mislead or misinform readers by commission, or omission.

Principle Eight: Discrimination

Publications should not place gratuitous emphasis on gender, religion, minority groups, sexual orientation, age, race, colour or physical or mental disability. Nevertheless, where it is relevant and in the public interest, publications may report and express opinions in these areas.

The relevant article (pages 38-47) is enclosed. Also included is a copy of the letter I sent for publication (dated 15 November 2006). The letter was subsequently published in the January edition of North & South.

A follow-up letter (also enclosed) not intended for publication was sent to North & South on 20 November 2006. It sets out in more detail what I believe are the main flaws in the article.

In terms of the principle on accuracy, the article appears to deliberately mislead in its use of statistics to demonstrate the extent of crime committed by Asians.

In terms of the principle on discrimination, the article's tone and language portrays Asian communities as outsider communities that are at odds with New Zealand societal and cultural values.

In the letter dated 20 November, I list the issues that form the basis for my complaint to the Press Council. The complaint is grouped under the following sub headings:

- The front cover and the issue of legal aid
- Serious lack of Asian perspectives
- Statistical and contextual selectivity
- Objectification of Asians
- Editorial policy and journalistic credibility

Also included is a copy of an article by Keith Ng that was published in the Listener on 2 December 2006 to which I refer to in the 20 November letter.

I have yet to receive a response from North & South. If you require further information, I am happy to provide it.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Mabbett
Media Adviser