

New Zealand media need to make a decision. If they will insist on reporting "Asian" crime then they should also report on "European" and "Polynesian" crime, or be even more specific: "Chinese" crime (kidnapping), "Tongan" crime (something to do with machetes), "English-New Zealander" crime (getting pissed and brawling in bars or defrauding people of their pension funds). If that sounds hopelessly regressive and ignorant, which I hope it does, then we might just need to consider a new approach.

Charles Laing Birkenhead, Auckland

Outbreak Of Fury

When I first saw your cover (*Asian Angst*) I was furious and outraged. Having read the content, I'm just embarrassed, for Deborah Coddington and your magazine. This writing fails on every level of journalistic credibility. As a piece of work it stands only as a racist, xenophobic stab at rabble-rousing. There isn't a single murky stereotype that's not dredged up, and not one tired, hackneyed phrase spared. It almost stands as a gold standard for this particular type of trash.

I suppose if you're going to be a racist — and let us not for a second pretend there is a single reason that discourse like this gets any circulation at all, apart from providing the expression of racism in a fashion that keeps the racist's self-righteousness somehow intact — you might as well do it thoroughly. For small-minded souls, I guess, there is no bigger pleasure than this type of nasal whining masked as outrage. It adds an extra layer of sleaze — the squirm of self-congratulation throughout.

An outbreak of fury at difference, and the implied threat of difference, however, can't be disguised as public concern. It doesn't fit, because the latter is a selfless impulse, and this reeks of the worst kind of self-absorbed moaning. It's dishonest writing. Luckily, only a nitwit of the same stripe as the author would ever consider taking it seriously. I am a little upset, though, that such a cretin edits the "Newsstand Magazine of the Year".

I have noted the advertisers in *North & South* and intend to avoid their products in the future. Not much of a protest, I know, but arguing directly with racists is usually never that productive.

Margaret Howie Mt Eden, Auckland

No Backing Off

It was truly painful to see extreme fear-mongering and racism towards the Asian community in your pages. Deborah Coddington's article, containing phrases such as "cackling families" and "Asian menace" and a plethora of uninformed examples and ignorant sentiment, is both incredibly racist



ROBERT THOMPSON
"Precisely how deep in debt are we, Nigel?"

and utterly ludicrous. Such a pity that an issue like Asian crime, which deserves serious attention, has been left to a shameless writer who uses the entire article as a platform for her own extremist views. It seems that your own editorial naivety has been manipulated.

I'm sure sales have increased with the controversy. But what games will you have to play to justify peddling such hatred? The media have a poor record of fixating on Asian cliches and stereotypes. But I have yet to see such a low point that demonstrates such racial contempt appear in a publication that previously had been considered serious.

From your website: "We don't back off from the difficult issues but, by the same token, we never stop celebrating this land and its unique people."

If you call that celebrating, please do stop.
Cameron Broadhurst Auckland

Outright Racism

I am a New Zealand-born Chinese and I feel obliged to express my disgust and outrage at reading the *Asian Angst* article. So much for *North & South's* supposed "20-year heritage of consistent and proudly independent journalism". This article may be "consistent" for a National Front newsletter, but it is clearly statistically biased, racially intolerant and utterly condescending for any person with half a brain.

Sarcastic and cursory disclaimers about those "(mostly) good New Zealand Asians" barely hide the deliberate inconsistencies, intolerance and outright racism expressed in this article about the "Asian menace". If anyone has ever wondered why "Asian" communities in New Zealand seem to be insular, they only need look to *North & South* to see why.

Roseanne Liang Auckland

Why Stop At Asians?

I have been shocked to read *Asian Angst* by Deborah Coddington. Does she know who robbed and raped the Dutch couple? Who is

charged with killing their own twin babies? Who is robbing Auckland banks every day? Who used 120 fake names to cheat Work and Income for benefits? Who robbed dozens of dairies, service stations and restaurants last year in Christchurch? Are they Asian? Ten per cent of New Zealanders are Asian. Has Coddington been to New Zealand prisons to see what percentage of prisoners are Asian?

I'm an Asian dairy owner. I've stopped selling *North & South* and suggested to my customers not to buy it. Someday maybe Coddington will be brave enough to write an article called *Maori Angst* or *Islander Angst* or *Kiwi Youth Angst*, and I might sell *North & South* again.

Cheng Zhang Auckland

Footnote: Through 250 issues *North & South* has taken on the difficult and challenging stories bubbling just below the surface of mainstream media debate. We regularly highlight issues many New Zealanders are talking and anguishing about privately.

New Zealanders are worried about kidnappings, ruthless murders, legal aid for international students, theft of our precious health services and the alarming rise in methamphetamine importation (which, according to the Auckland Drug Squad, is currently largely Asian-centred).

Likewise over the years we have written hard hitting cover articles about Maori issues (*The Maori Burden*), child abuse (*Disciplined To Death* and *Our Shame*) and corporate crime (*The Ugly Face Of White Collar Crime*). As recently as November 2003 we devoted 13 pages (in *An Asian At My Table*) to giving voice to Asian New Zealanders who'd "had a gutsful of being told to go home".

That's what we do — investigate and bring into the light issues that are engaging and disturbing thinking New Zealanders. — Editor

Sex, Sedition And Stats

Letter Of The Month receives a dozen bottles of Moët & Chandon, worth \$800, from Regency Duty Free.

May I congratulate you on a fine issue. With seditious acts of window terrorism, Deborah Coddington whipping the blogosphere into a frenzy with her, shall we say, interpretative attempt at statistical analysis of racial issues, and the big O — all that was missing was a nude woman in a bath with a piece of string and a vicar.

Can't wait for the next juicy instalment.
Paul Le Comte Dunedin

Tenure Reviewer

The furore over tenure review (*High Country Hijack*, November) by run-holders requires some historical information since the first Land

TO ME IT SAYS PURITY,
AN INVITATION TO SPACE
IN WHAT IS AN INCREASINGLY
SATURATED
WORLD
OF
MESSAGES

THE SPECTATOR



Act. Lessees have held the land with rentals heavily subsidised by the Crown and proposed increases are long overdue.

The lessees had the opportunity to enter into land improvement agreements offered by catchment boards with substantial free grants and subsidies, but only a few adopted them, though they were assured they would be no worse off.

The argument by the High Country Accord that the removal of grazing from the land going to the Department of Conservation will jeopardise the fine-wool industry is ridiculous as many down-country farmers in both islands have shown they can produce fine wool from merinos on improved down-country pastures. These land-improvement agreements were just what tenure review produces, again with substantial financial assistance.

As patron of the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand I'm satisfied with the results of tenure review in spite of claims by the High Country Accord and some members of the public that the Department of Conservation cannot look after the land going to it.

I note that it looks after national parks and other conservation land very well.

At a meeting at Birchwood Station when the Minister of Conservation announced the purchase of the lease, three run-holders told me that with stock off the land a colossal fire hazard would be created. I replied that trampers and climbers had been using national parks and unoccupied crown lands for 100 years while the areas were tinder dry, with few fires attributed to their carelessness. A catchment boards' study showed 87 per cent of the fires that escaped on pastoral leases were caused by run-holders or their employees while the land was being grazed by their sheep and cattle.

The pastoral lease document states the lessee is required to keep the land free of weeds and pests. However as a taxpayer I object to contributing to the removal of wilding

pinus on future conservation land. I believe lessees should be required to remove wildings on the land going to DOC before freehold titles are issued.

Allan Evans Temuka

Moral Dilemma

Thank you for the article about Garth McVicar and the Sensible Sentencing Trust (*Mr Sensible*, November). I identify with his concern and sense of responsibility for the sad state of New Zealand society where our children are not safe to walk to school.

I recall a television news item showing a Labour Party conference from a few decades ago. An older delegate was speaking — promoting sexual responsibility and restraint. He was greeted by mocking laughter from a row of prominent female delegates. Are they now willing to stand up and acknowledge their responsibility for the growing number of messed-up families and of young people robbed of a sense of value? These liberal intellectual ideas have permeated all facets of society, encouraged by the media.

New Zealand can't afford its "if it feels good, do it" morals. The message given to our young people has been "f**k away, the state will pay" — for abortion, contraception, venereal disease treatment, birth care, the domestic purposes benefit and fostering.

Would the Ministry of Education dare publish information revealing the proportion of school students requiring special help or disciplinary procedures who are not living with both natural parents?

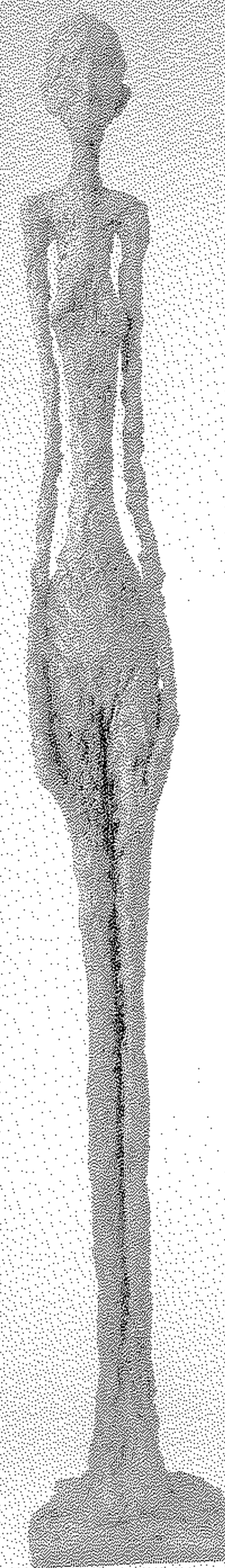
I hope our politicians and people will listen well to Mr Sensible.
Leigh Briggs Waimate

Reunions

New Zealand J Force veterans (part of the post-WWII occupation of Japan) and BCOF (British Commonwealth Occupation Force) veterans hold their 14th national reunion at Mt Maunganui, March 19-21 2007. Contact Charles Purcell, ph: (07) 575-5838, PO Box 10360, Mt Maunganui, escape@actrix.co.nz

The Home of Compassion in Wellington's Island Bay celebrates its centenary, April 27-29 2007. Contact Maria Elenio, ph: (04) 383-7769, www.compassion.org.nz

The University of Otago faculty of dentistry celebrates its centenary, June 1-3 2007. Contact Pat Johnston, ph: (03) 477-1377, www.dcms.co.nz



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