



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Civil Liberties Group Calls on CanWest to Drop its Legal Action Against Accused Satirists

In an open letter, the B.C. Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) is calling on CanWest to drop its lawsuit against Mordecai Briemberg and a local publisher, Horizons Publications over an alleged trademark infringement based on a mock edition of the *Vancouver Sun*.

The publication, a satirical paper printed and distributed in the Lower Mainland last June, parodied the layout and look of the Vancouver Sun while mocking the paper's perceived bias in favour of the state of Israel and against Palestinians.

The BCCLA views the CanWest lawsuit to be an ill-advised attempt by CanWest to use the courts to silence satirical criticism and constrain fair comment.

BCCLA spokesperson Tom Sandborn: "We call upon CanWest to exercise a bit of good humour and sober second thought, which will, we are confident, persuade the firm that it does not want to proceed in an action that will, if successful, look like corporate bullying. Whether successful or not, the case works against the principles of press freedom that support CanWest's media operations across Canada. Too often, the mere threat of court action is enough to stifle public debate or satirical expression."

The BCCLA had asked the *Vancouver Sun* to publish the open letter but the newspaper declined.

Read the Open Letter to CanWest Mediaworks Publications:
<http://www.bccla.org/othercontent/08briemberg.htm>

-- 30 --

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