Do not pass GO, do not get the facts: the true cost of the media monopoly

By ROY MACMULLIN

On Monday morning, October 31st, I was told by my client to do something entirely out of character for me. By noon, I was standing in front of the Times & Transcript building writing Moncton's Main Street with a sign in my hand—denouncing a lie.

Just a day before, I had read the Moncton Times & Transcript, happening upon a clear and succinct presentation of a promotion by L’Acadie Nouvelle, which allows online subscribers to pay a higher price to receive an iPad 2 and receive a “giftaway” (a legacy) to the public or possibly a deliberate act.

The underlying message of the article was that since L’Acadie Nouvelle is a “giveaway” (ie), it is therefore a poor manager of its money and deserves to go bankrupt. Then he congratulated the newspaper “wishing them the best of their luck to the IACOS for an injection of taxpayer money to shore them up in these hard times.” Nice hatchet job, Rod. You might take a look at an ethics code.

When I read this, I thought of a story and especially when it is about a competitor, they should explore all of the facts that are pertinent. For example, the Irving newspaper business is on their way to bankruptcy for a reason that is given away for free. He doesn’t mention that one of the typical Irving tactics in destroying other newspapers has been to dramatically reduce local newspapers and increase the price of their newspaper. Given the depths of Irving’s pocket, most of the competitors of Irving are long gone or consisted of a few who decide to start a competitor to Irving in Woodstock called the Carleton Free Press, lasted about a year.

When Allen mentions getting subsidies, he forgets to mention the Irving project most likely to be at the front of the trough for gifts or loans: $14 million to the NB Southern Railway, $500,000 to Kent Homes, $45 million per year tax cut to Irving LNG, $15 million to Cevichan Farms, $37 million to Master-Printing, abnormally low forestry stumpage rates and other related activities.

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Standing up to Fracking Bullies

(continued from page 1)...you look at what economists are saying about this and you think that the people who run this country are really worried. They think we will maintain last year’s level of consumption or that we’ll get a change. How is that going to affect the people who work for the people. For the environment it’s actually a good thing because we’re all going to work harder to make sure that the environment is taken care of. Yes, Peter Kent is correct, the government does have the authority to ban fracking, but it is highly unlikely they would ever take such steps.

CW: So what do you recommend to concerned citizens?

I think they should listen to the risks that are already accepted. They are organizing, they are talking, and they are trying to tell people about the risks facing fracking. They are resisting and we need to support them in their efforts.

In Brief...

• The Mayor of Fredericton sent a letter to Occupy Fredericton on November 20 requesting they vacate Phoenix Square in front of Fredericton City Hall for the official Christmas Tree lighting. Occupy Fredericton has redoubled its efforts to remove the monument and continue occupying the space as an act of protest. Members plan to stay there throughout the winter, making Fredericton one of the few remaining cities in the country to continuously host anti-build occupations, also known as tent cities, in cities like Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, and have been evicted by the police.

• The government wishes to pass Bill C-10, the federal omnibus crime bill. Critics of the Bill say that crime rates are going down and there is no need for more prisons. Instead, they want the public dollars directed to social programs to heal people and give them opportunities.

• Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird announced Canada would spend $10 million disarming rebel groups on his second official trip to Tripoli, October. Canada’s Ambassador to Libya revealed that the Canadian Embassy plans to move from the high-rise hotel known as the NAC Hotel, which is being a jail in Libya. There were 145 NATO drone strikes on Libya on September 23 & October 20.

• Afghans protested the tenth anniversary of the NATO occupation of their country. “After a decade, Afghanistan still carries the weight of more bloodshed, crimes, barbarism, human rights, and women’s rights violations, which has doubled the miseries and sorrows of our people,” write Afghan activist Malalai Joya.

• The first of the annual shipments of nuclear waste from France arrived in Vancouver. Damian Diakunski discussed problems and met with larger protests than ever on November 27th. In France, anti-nuclear activists damaged train tracks in an effort to halt the shipment of 150 tonnes of waste, while in Germany, massive protests blocked the train for 15 hours and met numerous obstacles and barriers along its route, and violent clashes occurred between protesters and police. Anti-nuclear activists were detained by German police.

• The 17th session of the parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) took place in Durban, South Africa from November 28th to December 9th. While developing countries continued to talk of the developed world to do their fair share in the fight against climate change, Canada’s Conservative government refused to announce any greenhouse gas reductions citing the U.S. and China’s unwillingness to sign on.

• A Bahamian police officer has been arrested and the retrial of 20 medics charged with incitement to overthrow the government (among other charges) until January. Original sentences of 5-10 years for the medics, it was determined the confessions of the defendants had been obtained under torture. The retrial of the medics was postponed this year. Guns and swords found in the Medical Complex as “proof” of the doctors’ crimes by the public.

• Egypt began to hold its first elections since the ousting of Hosni Mubarak on November 28th. Many have termed these Egypt’s first “free and fair” elections, many are wondering how elections can be free and fair while many Egyptians go to the polls to vote amidst a large police presence. Many politicians languish in jail.

• Canada’s economy is killing some 100,000 and thousands of unincorporated since the upward and subsequent crackdown in March. President Bashar al-Assad said that the use of force by the regime against him and blames the unrest on “foreign followers.”

• Afghan Hazara Leader, Abdul Nasir Abasoulizad, has been removed from the UN terrorist blacklist. The former Sudanese refugee’s problems began in 2003 when he was detained by the Sudanese authorities at Canada’s request while visiting his dying mother. He was later released, last January.

• During his 5 years on the list, Abasoulizad was prohibited from finding work and had his assets frozen, Abasoulizad is a former Canadian government for $250,000 for breach of his charter rights.

Community Calendar

For details and updated event listings, visit nbmediaacoop.org To list your event or to receive the community calendar by email once per week, email community@nbmediaacoop.org.

Pay Equity Info Session. Do you work in childcare? Health care? Social work? Maintenance?(Account?) A few years ago, the government committed to pay equity in these sectors but has to this day failed to make the wage adjustments. If you belong to one of these sectors or if you want to take part in making pay equity a reality in this province, please join us next week in Saint John on Jan. 19th. To find out the location, contact Jessica Hase at 506 855-0002 or bangseau@nbcol.ca.

Cinema Politica’s documentaries take us to places like Palestine, Palestine, Palestine, Seren, Lebanon, indigenous territories and prisons where demilitarization and destruction wreaked by capitalism and colonialism warrants our examination, analysis and action. In Fredericton, films are screened on Fridays starting in early Jan.. 2012 at 7pm at Conserver House, 180 Saint John Street. In Sackville, films are screened Mondays and Wednesdays at Wu Centre, Dunn Building at Mt. Allison University. CP Chapters also exist in Sussex, Bathurst, Moncton, Tignish and Saint John. Check out film schedules at www.cinemapolitica.org.