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NEW ZEALAND

## Maxim back in gun over plagiarism

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By: Julie Middleton

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Another Maxim Institute writer has been caught plagiarising - this time, senior policy analyst Michael Reid.

Four paragraphs in a column he wrote for *The Independent* business newspaper on May 7, 2003, are nearly identical to text from the 2002 book *Sustainable Development* by Julian Morris, a British academic and director of the International Policy Network.

The copied paragraphs cover issues such as intellectual property rights. At the time he wrote the column, titled *Giving aid doesn't right the wrongs of terrorism*, Dr Reid was a researcher for Maxim, a privately funded, conservative Christian lobby group. His column remains on Maxim's website.

Dr Reid's plagiarism was uncovered, using text-matching software, by Paul Litterick, secretary and spokesman for the Auckland-based Association of Rationalists and Humanists.

The same process led to the discovery several weeks ago that Christchurch Press freelance columnist Alexis Stuart and her father, widely published Maxim founder Bruce Logan, had both

plagiarised from various sources. Ms Stuart lost her job.

Contacted at Maxim's Christchurch office, Dr Reid did not deny the charge. Asked to comment, he told the Herald: "I don't have anything else to say. We'll leave it there."

Would he be staying with Maxim? "I'm not commenting with those things."

Dr Reid is described on the Maxim website as having a doctorate and teaching qualifications, and is "an experienced primary and secondary teacher. Michael also has a background in history, philosophy and educational policy issues. He has studied at Otago, Massey and Canterbury Universities and is married with three children".

Mr Litterick makes no secret of the fact that he monitors conservative Christian groups, publishing his comments in an electronic newsletter called *The Fundy Post*.

The reason, he says, is because "there's a movement in New Zealand politics and society to import American-style religion-based politics.

"One big achievement [of the plagiarism issue] is that everyone is now aware that Maxim has an evangelical Christian agenda, and that's important because they will pretend to be secular."

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