

Cycle Of Conscience



By Joe Haché (Sr)

Forward

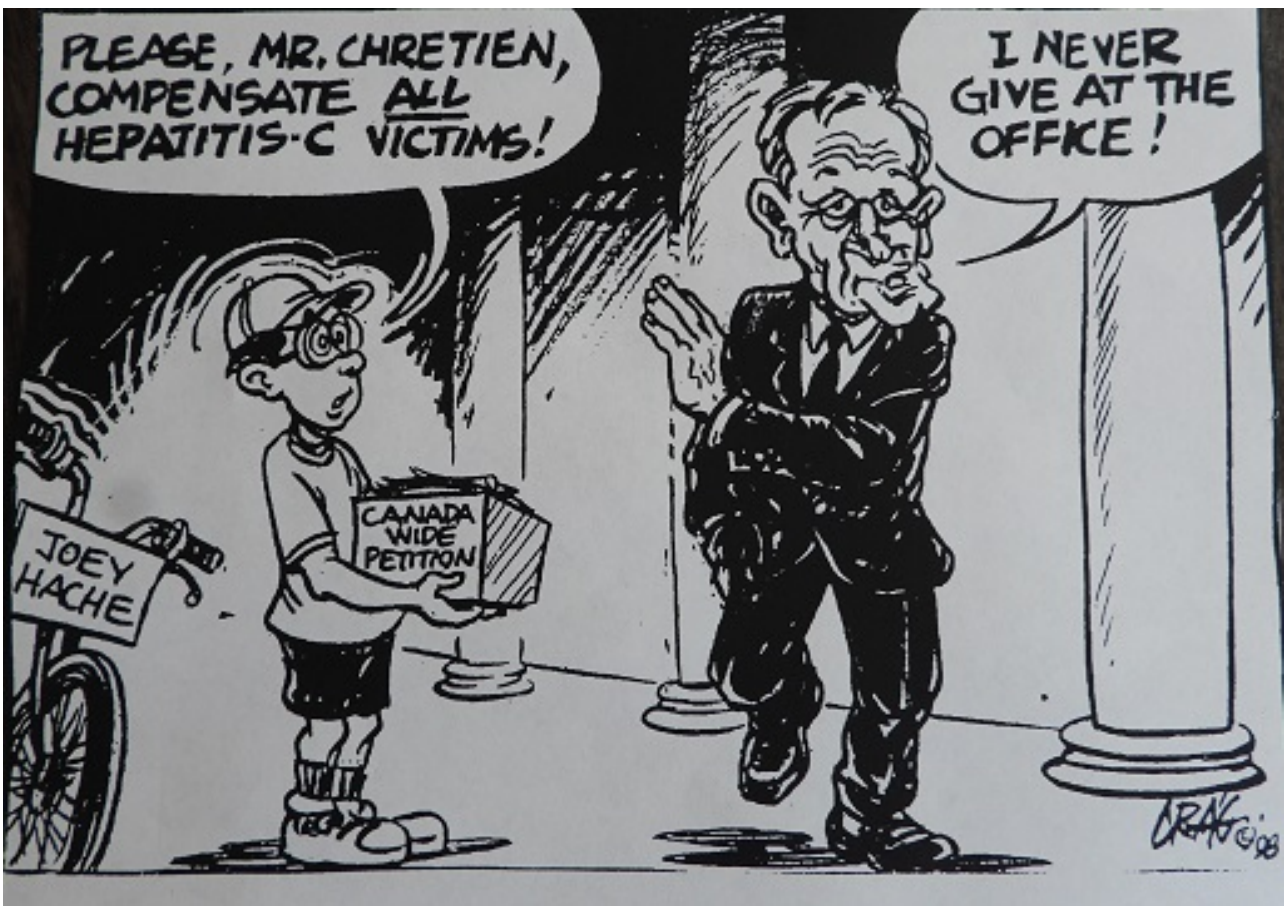
First of all I have to say I did not "write" this book; I merely put it together. The book itself is based on the daily diary my son Joe (Joey back then!) wrote while he travelled across Canada on his "Cycle Of Conscience"

I have always been proud of my son from his amazing grades in school to his outstanding University days. I was proud of the way he put everything into his minor sports even with his health challenges. I am also proud of him today for the family man he has become and the amazing grandson he and his wife Chris have given me.

But the pride I had of him as he biked across Canada (receiving two blood transfusions during his trip) knows no bounds. I followed him for countless kilometers during his trek and I saw firsthand his sweat and tears! Yet, he never quit!

I want to thank Joe's Mom Connie for all of the background work 25 years ago. She worked tirelessly at home behind the scenes to organize the trip while we were on the road. She also helped in editing this book and is every bit as proud of him as I am.

This is his story!



Introduction

This is a true story about how a 15 year old kid took on the Prime Minister of Canada, and won!

The fight for compensation for Hepatitis C victims in Canada has been a long and arduous battle. The refusal of the Canadian government to compensate victims of hepatitis C in the early days of the outbreak is a dark chapter in Canada's history. Despite clear evidence that many Canadians had contracted the virus through contaminated blood products during medical procedures, the government initially refused to provide compensation for those affected.

As per the Mayo Clinic, "Hepatitis C is a viral infection that causes liver inflammation, sometimes leading to serious liver damage. The Hepatitis C virus (HCV) spreads when blood contaminated with the virus enters the bloodstream of an uninfected person."

This book chronicles one young person's fight to get compensation for all victims after the Liberal Government of the day refused to supply compensation.

Joey Haché, a 15 year old activist, contracted Hepatitis C from one of his 150 blood transfusions between 1983 and 1998. Thus he was covered but he didn't think it was fair that all victims who had contracted Hepatitis C from infected blood weren't covered. After all they had also received the contaminated blood from the Canadian medical system.

Joey Haché first came to media attention when, prior to the April 28, 1998, vote in House of Commons and the height of the Hepatitis C compensation debate, he accused the Prime Minister of treating his Liberal MP's like "political prisoners". As he watched news of Mr. Chretien's visit to Cuba and the protest against Castro's holding of political prisoners, Joey made the astute comparison. Liberal MP's were being forced to vote the party line even though they publicly stated they would prefer to vote their conscience. The Opposition's motion for a free vote on the Hepatitis C compensation issue was forced into a confidence vote by the Prime Minister.

The day of the vote, Joey Haché was in the gallery as he watched the entire right side of the House stand in support of victims of Hepatitis C. As expected the entire Liberal party stood one by one against and the motion was defeated. But Joey was not. In the dead silence following the fateful tally, Joey stood and began to clap, showing his thanks to Opposition MP's, and waving to them.

In response, an unprecedented event occurred, as Conservatives, Reform, NDP, Bloc Quebecois and a lone independent MP rose to their feet in unison and "brought down the house" in thunderous applause. The Speaker of the House took a full 10 minutes to settle things down, as security guards threw Joey and Hep C victims out of the gallery.

His plan was to keep Hep C compensation in the news during the summer so that Canadians, and the Liberal Government of Canada, wouldn't forget about the victims. His plan was to bike across Canada and collect 1,000,000 signatures in support of compensation for all victims.

He called this trip the "**Cycle Of Conscience**".

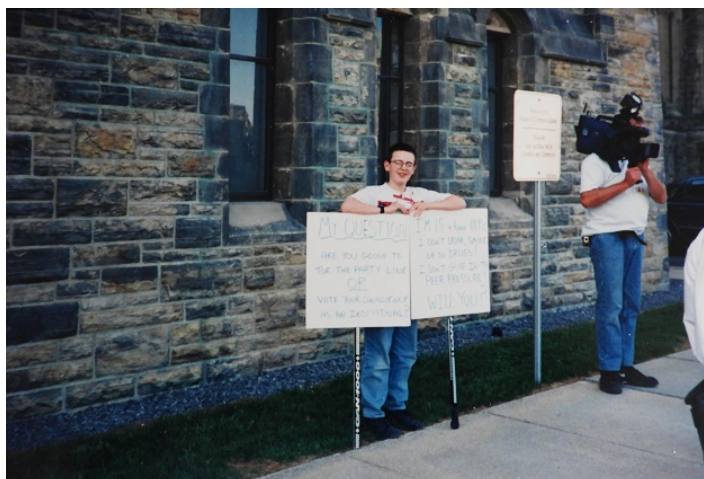
How It Started



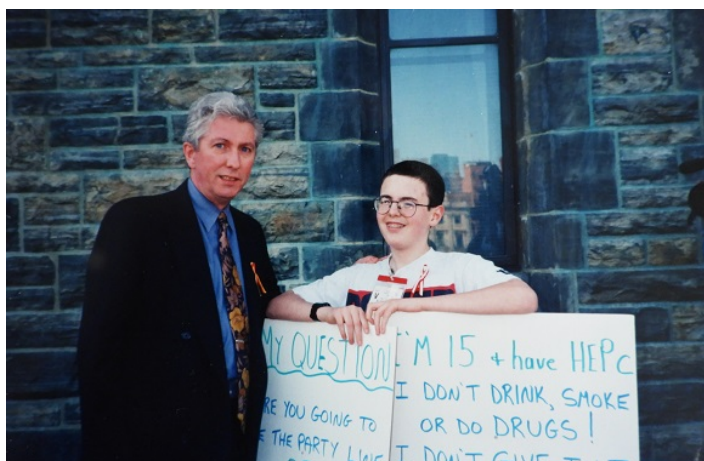
My first Hep C rally



My first Hep C speech



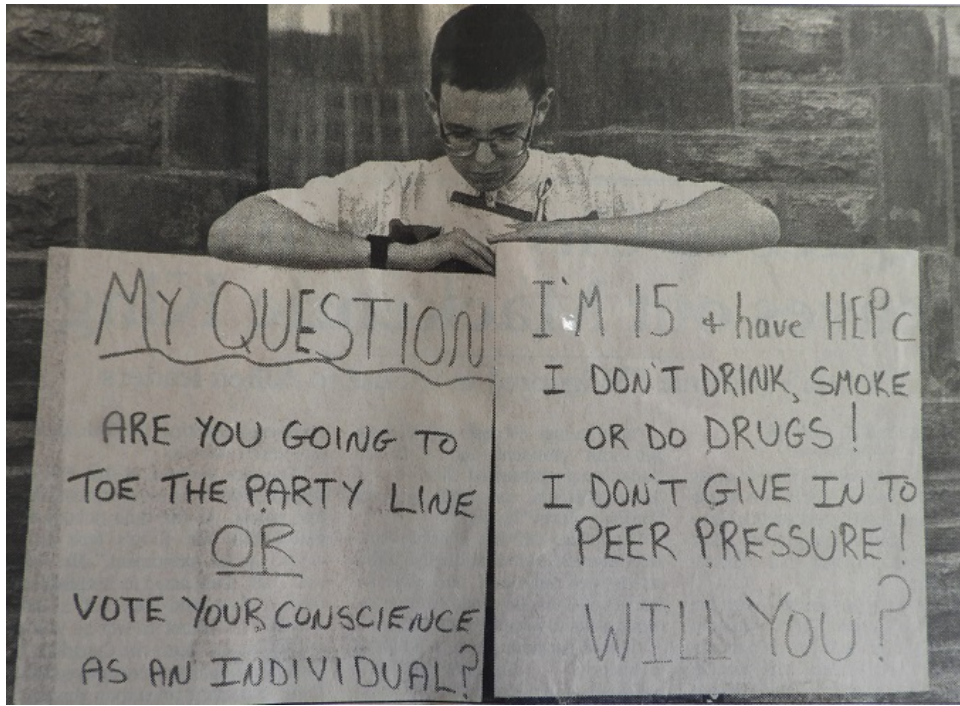
As MP's enter the House I ask them to vote their conscience!



BLOC Leader Gilles Duceppe stops by to chat



PM Chretien said I should go see Premier Harris if I wanted compensation for victims. So on May 5th I did and he promised me to compensate ALL victims in Ontario!



**My first time meeting Dr. Grant Hill - He became my biggest supporter on the Hill
This was just after I got kicked out after the vote!**