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Stop the Ad, He Wants to Get Off

SEATTLE — (AP) — You may not know Gary S. Cooper's name, but you've probably seen his face in countless cigaret ads.

"What am I doing about smoking?" Cooper asks in the ad copy. "I'm smoking Vantage."

Now he's doing something else about smoking — he's quit.

The whole country got a look at Cooper, 28, a businessman who was paid \$615 for his testimonial about the advantages of smoking Vantage, an R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. brand.

The picture of his face, along with a hand holding a cigaret, appeared nationwide in such publications as TV Guide, Time, News-

week, Playboy and local newspapers.

Cooper said he was recruited while at a shopping center, after he told a young woman making a survey that he smoked Vantage. She said she stopped 190 people and that he was the first one who said he smoked Vantage, Cooper said.

COOPER'S words were taped in an interview, and strung together by an advertising agency.

"I don't believe anybody would think I'd say something like that in a real dialogue," Cooper said. "Those are my words, basically. They just made it sound good."

But he added: "It came out like I was promoting smoking, when all I

wanted to do was make a statement."

Cooper said he complained to R. J. Reynolds, but "they just said they didn't think it'd do much harm."

Besides the \$615, Cooper also got 100 to 150 crank calls, sometimes in the early hours of the morning, telling him he was stupid for smoking. "I hung up on most of them," he said.

Cooper, who had been smoking since high school, quit last month and told the advertiser for R. J. Reynolds to stop running the ads. The company said it would.

DAVID FISHEL, public relations manager for the tobacco company, said, "It was Mr. Cooper's option and, out of respect for his wishes, we pulled the ad when he requested it."

Fishel said Cooper's comments were "taped and turned into ad copy" and were not exactly as Cooper spoke them. However, Fishel said, Cooper was sent a copy of the ad and gave written approval of the final version.

No one else in the ads has asked to be removed or, to his knowledge, quit smoking, Fishel said.