

June 13, 2008

Jan Paulsen, President
Matthew Bediako, Secretary
Robert Lemon, Treasurer
Executive Committee members

Dear Jan:

I write this letter with a very heavy heart and great disappointment over the charges of supposed misconduct laid against me. Despite claims to grace and compassion, in our dealings with one another these essential virtues of Christian faith have been significantly absent in my experience these past months. Are we not called to a higher standard than that of the corporate world? Am I, who has served the cause of human rights for years, to be denied my own human rights, by my Church? I wish to be as objective as possible here, while recognizing that the pain caused by these personal attacks cannot be hidden.

After twenty-six years of committed service to the Lord and his Church, I now am compelled to write this, the hardest letter of my life. I am immensely saddened that no one from GC leadership has come to speak with me outside the framework of the intended termination process, at this the most painful time. Whatever happened to our pastoral care, our belief in compassion in relationships particularly in difficult times? The treatment I have received strikes at the very heart of our Christian beliefs. This has been truly devastating, and without the Lord upholding my family and myself; would have been impossible to bear.

As to the process used to engineer my dismissal let me clearly state that there were no previous warnings of perceived problems ever given, and at the March 17, 2008 meeting I was faced with the demand for my resignation and threatened with criminal prosecution. Subsequent to that the whole process has been incredibly flawed, and now I am told that I cannot attend the forthcoming meeting at which my "case" will be reviewed and final decision taken. Yet, the GC Administration and their Counsel, who have been accuser, prosecution, judge and jury, will present to the Executive Committee whatever they deem appropriate, and will have denied me the opportunity any direct defense. Is that the way we wish to operate, and how we would want to be perceived in our dealings? That someone accused has no right to speak in his defense, nor to present rebuttals to the charges made, nor even to be present to hear what is said? Why would we wish to be perceived as acting in ways "worse than the world"? Certainly this is not making sure things are "done decently and in order," operating from brotherly love and in a transparent manner.

From the time these bizarre allegations were first made up till now, we have conclusively demonstrated that such charges are not true. What has been alleged, is in sum: that I was "birding" (in actuality the cover story) and not working on human rights; that I "misused" the funds given by donors known to me (who were themselves very happy for the reports on the human rights work I was doing); that some deleted files of pornography were supposedly "discovered" on the computer supplied by the General Conference; that the persons who were my contacts for the research trips on behalf of the UN allegedly did not exist; and that I falsified the e-mails from these supposedly

non-existent contacts. I have provided evidence that conclusively disproves these charges as false. A great deal of time, money (which I do not have), and effort has been expended to counter these allegations. I have been forced to hire a forensic computer expert and attorneys in order to preserve even a semblance of protection from my Church. It is now clear to all but the most prejudiced that the charges of the GC have not been proven at all. Of course, if the Church is now taking the position that someone is considered guilty before being proven innocent, then it will proceed along the road already decided upon. However those who look on objectively will surely be greatly disturbed by such an unfair and unchristian process, and draw their own conclusions.

This is not the time to make recitation of all the arguments already presented. The file of answers to the charges from research, expert testimony, and documented evidence is inches thick. But that evidence is there for anyone who would wish to see it, and objectively determine the invalidity of the charges made against me. Once again I would suggest this would not make for happy reading as to the way that CC leadership has chosen to act in this matter, and that it has carried on regardless of the clear evidence of the invalidity of the allegations made against me.

A number of individuals who know me in the human rights arena have chosen to write letters of support and corroboration of what they know of my work especially in religious freedom and the need for confidentiality over the research trips. That these individuals, including officials at the United Nations have been willing to do this indicates the high regard they have for the work carried out by me on behalf of the Church. Letters received include representatives of Jewish groups, the Greek Orthodox Church, Unitarians, LDS, Humanists, a former representative of ADRA, and a U.S. Ambassador. For more than eight years I have worked tirelessly at the UN to represent us, and believe this has been highly successful. I greatly fear much will be lost as a result of these damaging actions of the GC, including our representative status on committees such as the UN NGO Committee for Freedom of Religion or Belief. It is very painful for me to consider that all we have built up in tens of networking and contacts is to be destroyed.

It may be seen by some as self-serving to elaborate my own principles regarding the use of Church money, but I do need to reference this since my personal integrity and accountability have been called into question. I am very conscious of the need to be frugal with money donated by church members. A review of my expense reports these past eleven years will reveal that I never knowingly spent any more than necessary—always taking the cheapest train to New York, (with AAA discount); staying in hotels outside of Manhattan or at the college near Geneva rather in a downtown hotel etc. It seems that I am being viewed as financially suspect even though I have consistently sought to act in the best interest and for the benefit of the Church.

Due to the confidential nature of the human rights trips, and the time period in question (3 years past) supporting documentation was not as extensive as usually is the case. Because of this I obtained approval for all I was doing. I also explained the reasons for and the situation regarding my trips to treasury personnel, to the General Counsel, to my Supervisor John Graz and to others. No expense report was ever denied. All such trips were pre-authorized and approved as per policy. In addition, the funding for these human rights trips came from donations given by people I know well (and to whom I provided regular reports), and not from CC funds.

I would wish that if there had been some perception of a problem it would have been raised well before this, and not some nine months after the program was closed at Dr. Paulsen's specific directive. Even to find documentation is now extremely difficult, since due to the confidential nature of the program I disposed of receipts upon reimbursement by the GC, and never ever expected this to be the subject of an "investigation" going back three years. I would challenge anyone to try and find receipts going back three or more years for items that already been approved and paid!

I would also wish that there had been some far better process of collegial engagement rather than confrontation and a heavy-handed demand for my resignation with threatened criminal action. I would wish too that Biblical principles and our own CC written policy could have been used, rather than the tactics used in the secular world. Most importantly, the process outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 was certainly not followed.

I am aware that there have been some in the building who for some considerable time have actively worked for my dismissal, and I have reported these incidents confidentially to administration. However nothing was ever done to investigate and act to stop these very definite smear campaigns from several years ago.

I note that the process of defamation begun then is now continuing with these new allegations, with reports reaching me that employees at the GC are openly discussing my termination for "pornography" and the "misuse of funds". This is despite the repeated assurances from GC leadership that no discussion would occur until any final decision had been made. (However even here it appears from comments made by the GC General Counsel that an irrevocable decision has already been made by administration in that it is reported that my salary will be stopped by the end of next week). Once again I am extremely disappointed at my brethren for not keeping their promises, and for allowing gossip to further deny my rights and damage my reputation. We are called to give up such practices yet sadly such Biblical injunctions are persistently ignored.

Be that as it may, (and I do hope lessons will be learned from this whole sorry case), we are where we are and we cannot change the past.

So for all the foregoing reasons, and with much sadness I am resigning without cause from my position as Associate Director in the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists:

I resign without cause in protest over the fact that I am not being allowed a fair hearing at the Executive Committee, and natural justice is being denied to me by preventing me from appearing at this Committee to hear the charges and supposed evidence presented against me, along with the refusal to allow me to give a response. I do not trust that the General Conference Administration or the General Conference Counsel will fairly and accurately present the facts as presented by me over these last few weeks.

I resign without cause in protest at the way allegations have been made against me without due process: the delay and in some cases outright denial in providing critical documentation; the refusal to provide access to the actual computer hard drive the GC relies on in making some of the allegations; and the denial of repeated requests to attend any meeting at which determination as to my continued employment would be made, notwithstanding Church policy and prior precedent.

I resign without cause in protest because though substantial and credible evidence has been submitted refuting all of the allegations made against me, the original intent to remove me from office has never changed.

I resign without cause in protest at the unchristian methods used. against me, in clear violation of scriptural principles and denominational policy.

I resign without cause in protest since even if no decision to remove me from office was discriminated, my reputation has already been so badly damaged by gossip and innuendo at and from the GC that my continued work would be compromised.

I resign without cause in protest, as I am not guilty of any of the allegations made against me, as none of the allegations have been proven or have merit.

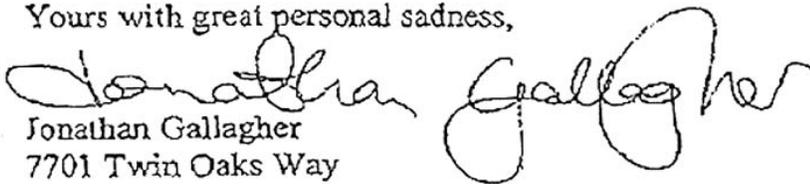
I resign without cause in protest that the GC has acknowledged it will not pursue the pornography charges, but the GC administration apparently still intends to raise it by implication at the GC Executive Committee, which could only be interpreted as an attempt to slander me.

I resign without cause in protest for I could not in good conscience continue to work for an organization that has cleanly demonstrated it does not believe in me or trust me, notwithstanding my 26 years of faithful service.

I wish to place on record that I choose not to bear any malice towards those who have acted in this way against me, and that I have willingly forgiven the wrong that has been done to me.

I close with the reaffirmation that though this chapter of my life work is now closed, I will continue to speak well of God all my days a committed member of his Church, and will follow his lead as we move on to new challenges and opportunities in sharing God's good news with a dying world.

Yours with great personal sadness,



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