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Saturday, October 27, 2007

Dennis Dease
University of St Thomas
Office of the President - Mail AQU 100
2115 Summit Avenue
St Paul, MN 55105-1078
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Dear Dennis Dease,

I received your letter of October 23, 2007. I find it very troubling that you appear to think that by simply re-inviting Tutu after the ensuing public outrage, and issuing an official statement, that the matter is resolved. **It is not.**

The degree I received from St Thomas included an integrated curriculum in business ethics which I found to be highly valuable, and attempt to follow. Professors discussed the high costs of ethical lapses, and these teachings were confirmed as the wave of corporate malfeasance took down Enron, WorldCom and Arthur Anderson a few years after I graduated. The executives of these companies had many common flaws: conscientious efforts to mislead shareholders and regulators, punishment and expulsion of whistle blowers, and the elevation of profit above all else. **So while I congratulate St Thomas for the recent \$60 million donation from a generous board member, I think you should consider other, perhaps more significant, measures of leadership.**

Cris Toffolo blew the whistle on the efforts to deny venue to a Nobel Peace prize winning activist. Absent her action, the awareness of your misguided efforts would never have been exposed to the public scrutiny it warranted. **Many others share this analysis of the situation.** Your office continues to punish her for that heroic act by refusing to reinstate her to her directorship of the peace and justice program, and referring to it as a "personnel matter" that must be administered by a formal complaint from her.

In other words, Toffolo is paying for speaking out and initiating the very process that resulted in your proper reconsideration of Tutu's appearance. Toffolo's only compensation in this is that she now joins a long list of dissident heroes, from Daniel Ellsberg to Colleen Rawley, who did the right thing at great personal cost. **Tutu is right to insist that you reinstate her with no conditions or professional black marks.**

The diploma you now return to me (with my "return to sender stamp across the front intact") should I "reconsider and wish to keep it" only further proves a certain level of operational disingenuousness. That is why this diploma is "damaged goods": not because of my stamp, but because the grantor continues to lack the leadership values America so desperately needs, and that your own school of management teaches. I again return it to you and request that you frame it and hang it in your office as a testament that real leadership demands more than hollow public platitudes, retaliation against whistle blowers, and empty gestures.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant F. Smith". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a prominent horizontal line across the middle.

Grant F. Smith
Director of Research

CC: Dr. John Moravec, Cris Toffolo, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Matt Snyders, Eric Ringham