

LEONIDAS RALPH MECHAM
ATTORNEY AT LAW
11337 WILLOWBROOK DRIVE
POTOMAC, MARYLAND 20854
301-299-7741

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Mr. Jeffrey R. Immelt
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
General Electric Co.
3135 Easton Turnpike
Fairfield, CT 06828

Dear Mr. Immelt,

RE: Apology needed for McLaughlin Group shows libel and smear of 13 million
“Mormons”

Your “McLaughlin Group” panel broadcast Sunday December 9th took viewers back to Hitler’s Germany of the 1930’s. You provided a forum for a red-faced shouting Lawrence O’Donnell to falsely vilify and condemn an entire church just as Hitler assailed all Jews. O’Donnell smeared, defamed and insulted all 13 million members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in his hateful harangue. Three of the panelists tried to bring fairness and integrity to this disgraceful process, but O’Donnell rudely broke into each of their comments by shouting imprecations against all Mormons, including the Prophet Joseph Smith and Presidential candidate Governor, Mitt Romney. It was obvious that O’Donnell could not find in Mitt Romney’s record any serious vulnerability so he attacked his Christian religion (Mormon.)

O’Donnell’s vindictive, vituperative screed against all Mormons made just because they are Mormons was far more sweeping and vicious than the tasteless comment by MSNBC’s talk-show host Don Imus made against 12 black women college basketball players. NBC and MSNBC fired Imus summarily! You also have a duty to take summary action against O’Donnell by repudiating his baseless Hitlerian anti-Mormon diatribe, issuing a full apology in writing and over the network. His oral genocide and his multiple slanders against all Mormons must be publicly rebuked. You responded immediately to the vigorous complaints of the Reverend Al Sharpton. I trust you will do the same for 13 million Mormons.

I waited for Dr. McLaughlin the moderator, to intervene and restore some sense of truth and decorum. But instead, like the “good Germans” of the 1930’s he stood by silently and did nothing. He seemed to lead as Neville Chamberlain, did not with a gavel but with an umbrella providing cover for O’Donnell’s repeated rants.

As you will see from O’Donnell’s comments quoted below, his assault on Mormons not only follows the pattern of Hitler’s attack on all Jews but also the persecution by the Pharisees of Jesus Christ. Moreover, I worked in the US Senate when Senator Joseph McCarthy was in his prime. O’Donnell seized upon the McCarthy approach to assail an entire Church. Incidentally, it was the Utah Senators

who took the lead successfully, to censure McCarthy for his behavior, Senators Arthur Watkins who chaired the McCarthy Investigation Committee and Wallace Bennett, for whom I worked, offered the approved censure resolution. Of course, O'Donnell obviously would consider that neither Senator nor the 5 Mormon Senators today are qualified to serve because they are Mormons just as he charges that Mitt Romney should not be President solely because he is Mormon. The Senate censured McCarthy. General Electric Co. and NBC should do no less to O'Donnell.

You should replay the broadcast and listen to the shrill shouts of O'Donnell as he repeatedly and rudely breaks into the comments of all of the other panelists in order to make his odious attacks on all Mormons, on Mitt Romney, and on the Prophet of the Restoration of Christ's Gospel, Joseph Smith. Watch how his face reddens with anger toward his Mormon victims in his verbal terrorism. Then prepare a transcript so that you can focus on his fallacious assaults, as I have done.

First, here is a list of the libels and falsehoods made against the Prophet Joseph Smith by O'Donnell who claims that he was:

1. "Pro-slavery" (stated twice) and, a "Slavery champion"
2. "A lying, fraudulent criminal" and repeats "a criminal"
3. "Anti-American"
4. "Racist" – repeated nine times

O'Donnell is fortunate that Mormons are decent law-abiding citizens, unlike some Islamists who, if he had calumniated Mohammad as he did Joseph Smith with such impunity, would likely take his life.

Second, here is how O'Donnell maliciously described the entire Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:

1. "A ridiculous religion"
2. "A religion with "evil views"
3. "A pro-slavery religion"
4. "A church founded by a criminal"
5. "Blacks could not be Church members prior to 1978"
6. "A racist religion, officially racist until 1978 when it abandoned its view for political convenience"
7. "Blacks are black because in heaven they turned against God – a demented Scientology notion"
8. "A religion full of crazy beliefs" repeated twice
 - a. O'Donnell specifically ridiculed the following two such allegedly crazy beliefs:
 - i. Jesus Christ will come to the earth again as the Messiah in power and glory, first to Jerusalem and then to Missouri to establish a world government.
 - ii. The Garden of Eden was located in Missouri

Third, consider these slanderous smears against Governor Mitt Romney:

1. He respects and by his alleged silence supposedly embraces the “faith of his fathers which was a “criminal, anti-American and racist religion”
2. In Romney’s Texas speech “he refused to distance himself from the evils of his religion”
3. “He is a racist fake”
4. “Until 1978 he believed blacks were inferior; when did he change his mind?”
5. “What of the faith of his great grand-father who had five wives?”
6. “His speech was that of a racist telling his story.”

O’Donnell repeatedly and falsely claimed that Joseph Smith, the Mormon Church, and apparently Mitt Romney, since he did not specifically disavow it, are and always have been supporters of slavery. This is a blatant falsehood! Joseph Smith strongly condemned slavery, as the Church has always done. The Church paper in Missouri editorialized against slavery, which brought vicious retaliation. The Church’s opposition to slavery is one of the principle reasons why Mormons were persecuted and driven from their homes in Missouri a slave state with too many Mormon lives lost. My own ancestor had to pull a dead Mormon friend over him to save his own life at Haun’s Mill in Missouri where 18 Mormons were massacred by mobocrats. His daughter had a bullet pass through her dress as she ran along the millrace. Later, in 1844, Joseph Smith ran for President of the U.S. after the State and Federal Governments refused to protect Mormons from mobs and denied compensation to Mormons in Missouri who all lost their houses and farms. His presidential platform plank strangely urged the end of slavery with freedom to all slaves. But he was assassinated soon there after in June 1844 along with his brother Hyrum by a mob, which hated Mormons as much as O’Donnell does.

O’Donnell claims that blacks were barred from membership in the Mormon Church until 1978. That too is totally false! There were black members of the Church from its earliest days. In fact, not only did Joseph Smith oppose slavery and urge the freeing of slaves but he also approved ordaining some blacks to the Priesthood such as Elijah Abel. Yet Joseph Smith was falsely described nine times as a “racist.”

Later, after his death, a “practice” was adopted by Church leaders to withhold the priesthood temporarily from black men. But it was not “Doctrine;” nor was it voted upon by the Church membership, a required step under the Churches requirement of “Common Consent.” It is my belief that Mitt Romney and his father, Governor George Romney shared my view that the “practice” should be ended. I held this view even though those who supported the “practice” pointed to the fact that only a small group of Jews in the Old Testament, namely the Levites, could hold the Priesthood. Moreover, in nearly all instances in the New Testament, only Jews were ordained to the Priesthood, not gentiles, and therefore not blacks. In 1978 a great Prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball sought the will of God and the temporary

practice was terminated. All men were to be treated alike, reminiscent of Jesus Christ's termination of his initial direction to his apostles that His Gospel should only be taught to and therefore the Priesthood conferred only on Jews not "Gentiles" including blacks. But by revelation, the resurrected Christ told Peter that henceforth his gospel should be taught to all mankind and all men be eligible to receive the Priesthood and not just Jews.

Some Mormon leaders expressed their personal opinion about the pre-earth life in Heaven of all mankind each of whom were sons and daughters of God, including blacks. But O'Donnell's idea that any particular group, including blacks, "turned against God" is totally inconsistent with Church doctrine. We have been given only limited knowledge. But we do know that all mankind, including all of today's races, stood with God in the pre-mortality "war in heaven" described briefly in the New Testament's Book of Revelations. It is only Satan and one third of the hosts of Heaven who rebelled against God and were cast out, and thus they were not permitted to come as mortals to this world. One Mormon apostle who had written extensively and who had expressed a contrary personal view both about blacks holding the Priesthood and their status in the pre-earth life courageously acknowledged in 1978 that he and any others had been "wrong" on both counts.

O'Donnell unleashed a shotgun salvo of unfounded additional allegations against Joseph Smith. It is true that just like Christ and the Apostle Paul and other religious martyrs, persecutors hounded him and caused him to be jailed on trumped-up false charges. But he was not a criminal any more than were Jesus and Paul who also were jailed for no legitimate reason. The claim that he was "anti-American" also is totally spurious. He taught that the Federal Constitution and Declaration of Independence were inspired of God. As the Book of Mormon teaches, and as he stated, America is a choice reserved land where religious liberty would permit the Restoration of Christ's Gospel in its New Testament purity. It was to be the base from which freedom is to be proclaimed to the world. He was deeply disappointed when the Federal Government provided no relief to the Mormons who lost everything they had as they were driven by mobs from Missouri and Illinois. But even then, he offered to help colonize the American west for the Federal authorities where Brigham Young and the Mormon pioneers made the Biblical type exodus to Utah, they promptly applied for statehood.

Although Mitt Romney does not approve of polygamy, which was ended in 1890, fully 117 years ago, O'Donnell demands that he denounce his great grandfather because he had five wives. Since 1890 polygamist offenders have been excommunicated by the Church. In contrast, O'Donnell did not condemn the great Biblical patriarchs such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob or Moses, Solomon and David or the many Israelites who were polygamists and modern Islamists who practice polygamy today. He did not ask that Jesus Christ condemn his great grandfather King David, a noted polygamist from whom he descended through Mary. Thus O'Donnell sets a much higher standard for Romney than he does for Christ.

Since O'Donnell's litany of false charges against the Mormon Church and Joseph Smith all collapse, so do all of his libels and slanders against Mitt Romney whom he condemns solely because he is a Mormon. Such bigotry and bias ill-becomes a would-be journalist or even a TV actor such as O'Donnell who makes false charges without doing any research.

And what of the Mormons' "crazy beliefs" that O'Donnell breathlessly ridiculed as his face reddened and rose to full shouting mode? If he had ever bothered to read the Bible, he would know that Christ himself as well as the Biblical Prophets proclaimed that Christ as the Messiah would come again to the earth in power and glory. There will be a judgment; He will launch a 1000-year Millennium. The Bible states that his Government will be in Jerusalem. But Joseph Smith was told there also would be a second such center in Missouri. However, O'Donnell the omniscient one obviously thinks that the Creator of the World doesn't have power to visit Missouri or to make it a companion to Jerusalem. But O'Donnell seemingly thinks Missouri is unworthy of Christ's visit.

In his God-like way, O'Donnell also has revealed that the Garden of Eden could not have been in Missouri as was told to Joseph Smith. Who revealed that to O'Donnell? I have read the Bible many times and I can't tell where the Garden of Eden was located.

O'Donnell's hatred of Mormons goes back at least to 1968. When a panelist on your Sunday McLaughlin program observed that the "Mormon issue" was not raised when George Romney ran for President that year, O'Donnell loudly proclaimed that this "was only because I was not on the program." Last Sunday he made up for his 39-year delay through his vitriolic, hate-filled attacks on Mitt Romney and on all Mormons.

If you should think I am unduly harsh in describing O'Donnell's invective, I have listed above dozens of his defamatory statements. But in addition, he appeared on the Hugh Hewitt show Tuesday and repeated most of his defamatory assaults and even advanced new ones. Hewitt described O'Donnell's scandalous performance on your show in part, as follows:

1. "You went on an anti-Mormon, racist, bigoted tirade," Lawrence O'Donnell responded, "Yes I did."
2. Hewitt asked "Why are you so bigoted against Mormons?"
3. Hewitt said, "Listening to your McLaughlin tirade..."
4. Hewitt accused O'Donnell of having a double standard for Catholic politicians and another for Romney. Hewitt, also a Catholic, said: "We don't expect Joe Biden (or other Catholic politicians) to defend the Catholic Church's teachings or practices because it is America. Lawrence O'Donnell wants to throw America overboard" by demanding that Romney denounce all Mormon theology. (O'Donnell says that Catholic politicians need not defend the

Catholic Church or its beliefs while at the same time he demands that Romney explain all of Mormon theology!)

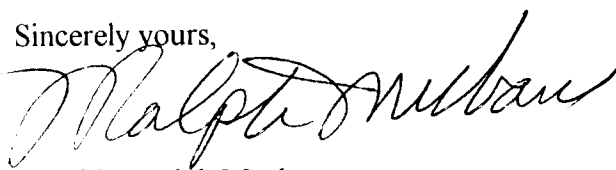
5. Concerning polygamy, which ended in 1890, Hewitt accused O'Donnell of reviving this false issue today for Romney. "Lawrence, that is disingenuous of you to bring up (Romney's) great-great-grandfather who had 5 wives."
6. O'Donnell admitted that he wouldn't dare attack Mohammad and Islam as he had Joseph Smith and all Mormons by saying "I would like to criticize Islam much more than I do publicly, but I'm afraid for my life if I do." But what of attacks on Mormons? They can be pilloried at no cost. O'Donnell told Hewitt "Mormons are the nicest people in the world... they will never take a shot at me" As for Islam, "I'm not going to say a word about them." Thus he reveals his total moral cowardice! Hewitt responded: "So you can be bigoted toward Mormons because they'll just send you a strudel." O'Donnell agreed.

In the course of his interview with Hewitt, O'Donnell said that New Testament Christians, including Christ, are "racists" as were "ancient Israelites" or Jews. As for believing everything in the Bible, he said, "No, of course not." O'Donnell attacked Catholics as having been guilty of "anti-Semitism," discrimination against women, "anti-gay," and also said, "Let's get this straight. The Pope is ignored on most things by most Catholics." This may explain how he can still profess to be an "extremely flexible Catholic."

Once having permitted O'Donnell to shout his defamatory falsehoods, GE and NBC have given them a life of their own. Thus your Matt Lauer quoted some of the most virulent O'Donnell charges this week. At least, Governor Romney was given a chance to respond. But such repetition of the smears against all Mormons will do further harm.

It is well time for NBC and for General Electric to issue a formal apology, make a public retraction and administer some Imus-type discipline against O'Donnell for his vastly greater offenses than those of Don Imus.

Sincerely yours,



Leonidas Ralph Mecham

LRM/dj

CC: Mr. Jeffrey Zucker, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, NBC Universal
Dr. John McLaughlin