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**BEN STEIN**

**STEIN WAS RECENTLY FIRED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES FOR VIOLATING "ETHICS GUIDELINES" IN WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS A "BAIT-AND-SWITCH" SCHEME. STEIN WAS A SPOKESMAN FOR A COMPANY WHICH CHARGED $30 PER MONTH FOR CREDIT REPORTS THAT FEDERAL LAW ALLOWS CONSUMERS TO GET FOR FREE.**

**THIS ARTICLE IS HIS ATTEMPT TO SAVE HIS REPUTATION. ALTHOUGH, ONE COULD ARGUE, THAT IT IS A LITTLE LATE FOR THAT.**

**EXPELLED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES**

**BY BEN STEIN**

**My sister nailed it many years ago when she said, "your basic human is not such a hot item."**

**CONSIDERING THE FAMILY SHE GREW UP IN - I WOULD HAVE TO AGREE.**

**Keep that filed in your head as i tell my little tale.**

**"TALE" IS PROBABLY THE OPERATIVE WORD HERE.**

**About five or six years ago, roughly, i was solicited to write a column every two weeks for the sunday new york times business section.**

**JUDGING BY YOUR INABILITY TO FOLLOW THE RULES OF CAPITALIZATION, YOU'RE LUCKY THEY HIRED YOU AT ALL.**

**I was really thrilled. I have written for the washington post (when i was a teenager), for the wall street journal edit page under the legendary bob bartley, for barron's, under the really great alan abelson and jim meagher, for my beloved american spectator, and now having a regular column at the times was going to be great stuff.**

**The column went well. I got lots of excellent fan mail and fine feedback from my editors, who, however, kept changing.**

**The first real super problem i had was when the movie i narrated and co-wrote, expelled--no intelligence allowed, was in progress. A "science writer" for the times blasted the movie on the front page and noted that i, whom she repeatedly called "...a freelance writer..." (not a columnist ) for the times, was somehow involved. That was followed by a really fantastically angry blast against the movie by a reviewer who really hated it a lot. (i note that the times also disliked ferris bueller's day off. Hmm.)**

**SO YOU THINK THEY BLAST MOVIES THAT YOU ARE A PART OF? EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE ONE OF THEIR OWN COLUMNISTS?**

**HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED THAT MAYBE THE MOVIES SUCKED? THAT MAYBE YOU SUCKED?**

**LET'S FACE IT - THE GROSS BROUGHT IN BY "EXPELLED" WAS LOWER THAN MOST HOME WEDDING VIDEOS.**

**Expelled was a plea for open discussion of the possibility that life might have started with an intelligent designer.**

**COMPLETELY FALSE.**

**"EXPELLED" WAS AN ATTACK ON SCIENCE, AND THE HONEST TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS IN IT, BECAUSE SCIENCE HAS PROVEN THAT YOUR "INVISIBLE MAN" IS MOST LIKELY A FIGMENT OF YOUR IMAGINATION.**

**This idea, that freedom of academic discussion on an issue as to which there is avid scientific disagreement has value, seems obvious to me**

**THERE IS NO "AVID SCIENTIFIC DISAGREEMENT." THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO FIGHT EVOLUTION ARE FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIANS AND THAT IS BECAUSE IT DISPROVES THEIR CREATION MYTHS.**

**But it drives the atheists and neo-darwinists crazy and they responded viciously.**

**A "VICIOUS" RESPONSE WOULD BE WHAT YOU FUNNIES DID TO THOSE WHO DISAGREED WITH YOUR BELIEFS NOT TOO LONG AGO - INCLUDING TORTURE AND EXECUTION.**

**Some of them started a campaign against me in various forums, including letters to the times.**

**WHEN YOU PRODUCE A FILM THAT IS FULL OF PROVABLE LIES - YOU MIGHT EXPECT THAT HONEST SCIENTISTS AND TEACHERS WOULD RESPOND APPROPRIATELY. BE THANKFUL THAT WE DID NOT RESPOND TO YOU THE WAY THAT, FOR CENTURIES, YOU RESPONDED TO US.**

**At roughly the same time, i made a new set of antagonists by repeatedly and in detail criticizing the real power in this country, the "investment bank" goldman sachs, for what seemed to me questionable behavior. This elicited a mountain of favorable mail but also some complaints by well-placed persons.**

**Still, my editor at the times stood by me loyally and was steadfast, even inspiring.**

**SO THEY SUPPORTED YOU IN THE FACE OF A MOUNTAIN OF CRITICISM. THAT SOUNDS VERY ADMIRABLE OF THEM.**

**Now, in the time i had been doing my column, roughly five or six years, i had done many commercials for goods and services. No one at the times ever said a word negatively about these. In fact, when i did a series of commercials with shaquille o'neal, the legendary basketball star, one of my superiors at the times asked me for souvenirs. No one ever told me in any way, by word, look, or gesture, not to do commercials.**

**YOU WEREN'T FIRED MERELY FOR "DOING COMMERCIALS" YOU DISINGENUOUS LITTLE SNOTBAG.**

**Meanwhile, the haters connected with atheism and neo-darwinism continued to attack me.**

**AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO, UNTIL YOU GIVE UP "LYING FOR JESUS" AND SHOW SOME HONESTY.**

**HOWEVER, AS THIS FIRING SHOWS - HONESTY IS NOT A WORD WITH WHICH YOU ARE FAMILIAR, IN NEITHER THE BUSINESS WORLD NOR IN YOUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.**

**Then, two things happened to change and end my career at the times.**

**LET ME GUESS - THEY HIRED SATAN AND RICHARD DAWKINS?**

**Well, maybe three.**

**AND SAM HARRIS?**

**The times told me they were forced by budgetary pressures to only run me every four weeks. This was a blow and i started to think about where else i might write.**

**WELL THAT CERTAINLY SHOWS GREAT LOYALTY ON YOUR PART.**

**SO NOW YOU'VE ESTABLISHED THAT YOU POSSESS NEITHER LOYALTY NOR HONESTY - TWO TRAITS CLAIMED BY THE RELIGIOUS, BUT THAT I HAVE YET TO WITNESS THEM DISPLAY.**

**(i had been solicited by many major publications while at the times but my editors had asked me not to write for them and i did as asked.)**

**But the two main things, as i see them, were that i started criticizing mr. Obama quite sharply over his policies and practices. I had tried to do this before over the firing of rick wagoner from the chairmanship of gm. My column had questioned whether there was a legal basis for the firing by the government, what law allowed or authorized the federal government to fire the head of what was then a private company, and just where the obama administration thought their limits were, if anywhere. This column was flat out nixed by my editors at the times because in their opinion mr. Obama inherently had such powers.**

**THE FACT THAT MULTIPLE EDITORS DISAGREED WITH YOU, INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE PROBABLY NOT GIVEN US THE WHOLE STORY.**

**They did let me run a piece querying what i thought was a certain lack of focus in mr. Obama's world but that was it, and then came another issue.**

**I had done a commercial for an internet aggregating company called freescore. This commercial offered people a week of free access to their credit scores and then required them to pay for further such access.**

**This commercial was red meat for the ben stein haters left over from the expelled days. They bombarded the times with letters.**

**THE TWO ARE COMPLETELY SEPARATE ISSUES THAT YOU ARE TRYING TO CONNECT IN ORDER TO "PLAY THE VICTIM."**

**WHAT YOU DID WAS UNETHICAL - THAT IS WHY THEY FIRED YOUR ASS. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH EVOLUTION, OR YOUR REFUSAL TO ACCEPT SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE.**

**They confused (or some of them seemingly confused ) freescore with other companies that did not have freescore's unblemished record with consumer protection agencies. (freescore has a perfect record.) They demanded of the high pooh-bahs at the times that they fire me because of what they called a conflict of interest.**

**THAT IS BECAUSE THEY WERE SELLING A PRODUCT THAT CONSUMERS WERE ENTITLED TO GET FOR FREE. YOU WERE SHILLING FOR THEM. THAT IS A CONFLICT OF INTEREST. THAT IS WHY YOU WERE FIRED. NOT BECAUSE DARWIN FOUND SOME BONES.**

**Of course, there was no conflict of interest. I had never written one word in the times or anywhere else about getting credit scores on line. Not a word.**

**YOU WEREN'T FIRED FOR WHAT YOU WROTE OR DIDN'T WRITE.**

**But somehow, these people bamboozled some of the high pooh-bahs at the times into thinking there was a conflict of interest.**

**SOMEHOW? BAMBOOZLED? THINKING THERE WAS A CONFLICT?**

**IF THAT WAS TRUE, AS YOU CLAIM, YOU WOULD HAVE A SLAM-DUNK LAWSUIT. THE REASON YOU DO NOT - IS PROBABLY BECAUSE WHAT YOU SAY ISN'T TRUE.**

**WHICH MAKES ME WONDER, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU HAVE EVER SAID - THAT WAS TRUE?**

**In an e-mail sent to me by a person i had never met nor even heard of, i was fired.**

**WHY DO YOU NEED TO HAVE MET, OR HEARD OF, THE PERSON WHO FIRED YOU? WHERE IS THAT REQUIREMENT?**

**(i read the e-mail while having pizza at the seattle airport on my way to sandpoint.)**

**I HOPE YOU WENT EASY ON THE CHEESE.**

**I called the editor and explained the situation. He said the problem was "the appearance" of conflict of interest. I asked how that could be when i never wrote about the subject at all. He said the real problem was that freescore was a major financial company and i wrote about finance. But, as i told him, freescore was a small internet aggregator, not a bank or insurer.**

**HOW DOES THAT GET YOU OFF THE HOOK?**

**Never mind. I was history. "you should have consulted us," was the basic line.**

**HEY - NEXT TIME YOU'LL KNOW BETTER.**

**Of course, there was not one word of complaint when i did commercials for immense public companies.**

**MAYBE THEY WEREN'T SCAMMING THE PUBLIC.**

**By a total coincidence, i was tossed overboard immediately after my column attacking obama. (you can attack obama from the left at the times but not from the right.)**

**YOU JUST HAVE AN ENDLESS SUPPLY OF EXCUSES: FIRST IT WAS DARWIN - NOW OBAMA. WHO'S NEXT, THE ACLU?**

**I still do not see the conflict of interest.**

**THAT'S NOT SURPRISING. DESPITE TONS OF SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE, YOU STILL SEE INVISIBLE FRIENDS.**

**WHY DON'T YOU ASK ONE OF THEM TO HELP YOU?**

**Credit reports on the internet never was in my subject area.**

**WELL SINCE THEY WERE PAYING YOU, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD HAVE DONE A LITTLE HOMEWORK.**

**However, i don't sue newspapers.**

**YOU WOULD - IF YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD WIN.**

**And the gig was getting to be so small that it really had a minor effect on my economic life.**

**YOU RICH GUYS ARE ALWAYS THE GREEDIEST - WHY IS THAT?**

**Still, i shall miss waking up on sunday to see my column unless a neighbor here in beverly hills has stolen my paper. (no place, not one place, in sandpoint sells the times.)**

**BEVERLY HILLS. LIKE I SAID - YOU RICH GUYS ARE ALWAYS THE GREEDIEST.**

**The whole subject reminds me of a conversation bob dylan had long ago with a reporter who asked him what he thought about how much criticism he was getting for going from acoustic to electric guitar. "there are a lot of people who have knives and forks," he said, "and they have nothing on their plates, so they have to cut something."**

**YOU HAVE AN INORDINATE ABILITY TO CONNECT THINGS THAT ARE NOT LOGICALLY CONNECTED.**

**I will miss writing my column for the times but i miss many things.**

**LIKE MOST OF SCIENCE.**

**There were some great people there, really standup people. I got to love some of them.**

**WE'RE NOT REALLY INTERESTED IN YOUR AFFAIRS.**

**But as to the haters and the weak willed, i think my sister and bob dylan had it right.**

**DID HE DO HER TO?**

**You will still see my little thoughts, maybe in some big places. And i can put this times gig on my résumé when i apply for social security.**

**WHY WOULD SOMEONE WHO LIVES IN BEVERLY HILLS NEED SOCIAL SECURITY?**

**LIKE I SAID - THE RICH ARE ALWAYS THE GREEDIEST.**

**And, i really mean this, i will pray for those who use me despitefully, even if the neo-darwinists think that's a waste of time. It's not.**

**I AGREE. IT IS NOT A WASTE OF TIME. THE MORE TIME YOU SPEND ON YOUR KNEES TALKING TO YOUR INVISIBLE FRIENDS - THE LESS TIME YOU WILL HAVE TO SCREW UP OUR SOCIETY.**

**One final thought. Well, maybe two final thoughts: first, it's sad that the internet has become a backyard gossip freeway for the whole world's sick people to pour out their neuroses.**

**WELL, MAYBE IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE "LITTLE PEOPLE" CAN COMPETE WITH YOU BEVERLY HILLS FINANCIERS, WHO USE MOVIES AND NEWS COLUMNS TO POUR OUT YOUR NEUROSES AND FANTASIES.**

**I have seen a tiny fraction of all of the hate mail that's come in the wake of the ny times announcement (which they promised they would not make in any event). Too many sick people out there on the web for comfort.**

**I FIND DISHONEST, DISLOYAL WHINERS PRETTY SICK - WHETHER THEY ARE ON THE WEB OR NOT.**

**Second, among those who are not really such hot items, i fully include myself.**

**THAT'S THE FIRST THING YOU'VE SAID THAT WE AGREE ON.**

**UNFORTUNATELY, LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE YOU SAY, NO ONE BELIEVES IT. AS YOU REVIEW YOUR BANK STATEMENTS EVERY MONTH AND REFURBISH YOUR BEVERLY HILLS HOME, AND REFLECT ON YOUR FAME IN MOVIES AND ON TELEVISION - IT IS PRETTY HARD TO BELIEVE THAT YOU DON'T CONSIDER YOURSELF A "HOT ITEM."**

**I DON'T THINK YOU ARE CAPABLE OF MAKING A TRUTHFUL STATEMENT. I ALSO FIND THAT TO BE VERY COMMON AMONG ALL FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIANS - SO PLEASE DON'T TAKE THAT PERSONALLY.**

**Without doubt, i have made as many mistakes as a person not in custody can make.**

**IF WE KNEW ALL YOUR "TRUE" SECRETS - MY GUESS IS THAT YOU WOULD BE "IN CUSTODY."**

**I make no claims to anything even remotely like perfection or even desirability as a role model.**

**ONCE AGAIN WE AGREE. HOWEVER, ONCE AGAIN, I DOUBT YOU ARE BEING HONEST - SO WE PROBABLY DON'T AGREE.**

**It is just that in this case, i didn't do anything wrong.**

**MAYBE - MAYBE NOT. SO JUST KICK BACK BY YOUR POOL IN B.H. AND ENJOY YOUR MILLIONS.**

**In my life, i have done plenty wrong. I am not the master. I am the servant and a poor one at that.**

**DO YOU REALLY THINK ANYONE IS BUYING THAT?**

**I SURE DON'T.**

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**THE SCIENCE SEGMENT**

**SATURN MOON RESEMBLES EARTH**

**NEW RESEARCH BY NASA SCIENTISTS REVEALS THAT ONE OF THE MOONS OF SATURN, TITAN, LOOKS MORE LIKE THE EARTH THAN ANY OTHER BODY IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM.**

**THEIR RESEARCH WAS BASED ON ANALYSIS OF DATA SENT BACK FROM THE CASSINI SPACE PROBE.**

**IT SHOWS THAT TITAN HAS MOUNTAIN RANGES, DUNES, NUMEROUS LAKES, AND POSSIBLY VOLCANOES, WHICH ARE ALL FEATURES THAT MAKE ITS SURFACE STRIKINGLY SIMILAR TO EARTH.**

**TITAN IS 10 TIMES FURTHER AWAY FROM THE SUN THAN EARTH.**

**IT IS MUCH COLDER AND HAS NO LIQUID WATER.**

**BUT OTHER CHEMICALS SUCH AS METHANE AND ETHANE HAVE TAKEN THE PLACE OF LIQUID WATER, WHICH FALLS AS RAIN OR SNOW TO FORM LAKES AND ENABLES THE MOON TO HAVE WEATHER SYSTEMS SIMILAR TO THOSE OF EARTH.**

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**ABROAD**

**ROW OVER AFGHAN WIFE-STARVING LAW**

**AN AFGHAN BILL ALLOWING A HUSBAND TO STARVE HIS WIFE IF SHE REFUSES TO HAVE SEX HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE AND BECOME LAW.**

**THE ORIGINAL BILL CAUSED OUTRAGE EARLIER THIS YEAR, FORCING AFGHAN PRESIDENT HAMID KARZAI TO WITHDRAW IT.**

**BUT CRITICS SAY THE AMENDED VERSION OF THE LAW REMAINS HIGHLY REPRESSIVE.**

**THEY ACCUSE MR KARZAI OF SELLING OUT AFGHAN WOMEN FOR THE SAKE OF CONSERVATIVE SHIA SUPPORT AT NEXT WEEK'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.**

**THE LAW GOVERNS FAMILY LIFE FOR AFGHANISTAN'S SHIA MINORITY.**

**SEXUAL DEMANDS**

**THE ORIGINAL VERSION OBLIGED SHIA WOMEN TO HAVE SEX WITH THEIR HUSBANDS EVERY FOUR DAYS AT A MINIMUM, AND IT EFFECTIVELY CONDONED RAPE BY REMOVING THE NEED FOR CONSENT TO SEX WITHIN MARRIAGE.**

**THE ORIGINAL BILL CAUSED OUTRAGE WITHIN AFGHANISTAN AND AROUND THE WORLD**

**WESTERN LEADERS AND AFGHAN WOMEN'S GROUPS WERE UNITED IN CONDEMNING AN APPARENT REVERSAL OF KEY FREEDOMS WON BY WOMEN AFTER THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN.**

**NOW AN AMENDED VERSION OF THE SAME BILL HAS PASSED QUIETLY INTO LAW WITH THE APPARENT APPROVAL OF PRESIDENT KARZAI.**

**JUST AHEAD OF THIS THURSDAY'S AFGHAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS SUGGEST THE TIMING IS NO ACCIDENT.**

**"THERE WAS A REVIEW PROCESS - KARZAI CAME UNDER HUGE PRESSURE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO AMEND THIS LAW, BUT MANY OF THE MOST OPPRESSIVE LAWS REMAIN," RACHEL REID, THE HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH REPRESENTATIVE IN KABUL, TOLD THE BBC.**

**"WHAT MATTERS MORE TO KARZAI IS THE SUPPORT OF FUNDAMENTALISTS AND HARDLINERS HERE IN AFGHANISTAN WHOSE SUPPORT HE THINKS HE NEEDS IN THE ELECTIONS."**

**WOMEN'S GROUPS SAY ITS NEW WORDING STILL VIOLATES THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY THAT IS ENSHRINED IN THEIR CONSTITUTION.**

**IT ALLOWS A MAN TO WITHHOLD FOOD FROM HIS WIFE IF SHE REFUSES HIS SEXUAL DEMANDS; A WOMAN MUST GET HER HUSBAND'S PERMISSION TO WORK; AND FATHERS AND GRANDFATHERS ARE GIVEN EXCLUSIVE CUSTODY OF CHILDREN.**

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**FAMOUS QUOTES**

**KARL MARX (1818 –1883) 64 YEARS.**

**HE WAS A GERMAN PHILOSOPHER, POLITICAL ECONOMIST, HISTORIAN, POLITICAL THEORIST, SOCIOLOGIST, COMMUNIST AND REVOLUTIONARY, WHOSE IDEAS ARE CREDITED AS THE FOUNDATION OF MODERN COMMUNISM. MARX SUMMARIZED HIS APPROACH IN THE FIRST LINE OF THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, PUBLISHED IN 1848: “THE HISTORY OF ALL HITHERTO EXISTING SOCIETY IS THE HISTORY OF CLASS STRUGGLES.”**

**MARX ARGUED THAT CAPITALISM, LIKE PREVIOUS SOCIOECONOMIC SYSTEMS, WILL INEVITABLY PRODUCE INTERNAL TENSIONS WHICH WILL LEAD TO ITS DESTRUCTION. JUST AS CAPITALISM REPLACED FEUDALISM, HE BELIEVED SOCIALISM WILL, IN ITS TURN, REPLACE CAPITALISM, AND LEAD TO A STATELESS, CLASSLESS SOCIETY CALLED PURE COMMUNISM. THIS WOULD EMERGE AFTER A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD CALLED THE "DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT."**

**WHILE MARX REMAINED A RELATIVELY OBSCURE FIGURE IN HIS OWN LIFETIME, HIS IDEAS BEGAN TO EXERT A MAJOR INFLUENCE ON WORKERS' MOVEMENTS SHORTLY AFTER HIS DEATH. THIS INFLUENCE GAINED ADDED IMPETUS WITH THE VICTORY OF THE MARXIST BOLSHEVIKS IN THE RUSSIAN OCTOBER REVOLUTION IN 1917, AND FEW PARTS OF THE WORLD REMAINED SIGNIFICANTLY UNTOUCHED BY MARXIAN IDEAS IN THE COURSE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.**

**"RELIGION IS THE OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE."**