Date: Thu, 26 Oct 2006 12:02:57 -0400
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Bill Ballenger <impbb@comcast.net>,Vidu Soni <soni1v@cmich.edu>
From: "William B. Allen" <allenwi@msu.edu>
Subject: Thanks
Cc: Barbara Grutter <bgrutter@comcast.net>,Carol M. Allen <pfeiff16@msu.edu>
X-Virus: None found by Clam AV

Carol and I are back in New Jersey, having completed our swing through Michigan with a grand finale at Wayne State University on Tuesday evening. We were delighted with each of the events that took place. Without a doubt, though, that at UMBC was the best, and not merely the best attended. I want to thank you both for your contributions to making the promise of civil discussion a reality. These so very difficult issues deserve to draw the best from us, and you did much to make that possible.

By the time we got to Grosse Pointe on Sunday, we did discover that some of the efforts to derail discussion were even worse than we had realized. Operatives from One United Michigan directly attempted to persuade that church to withdraw its commitment. To its credit, it did not do so, and we had a very nice conversation there. We did discover there an email message which makes clear that what we have encountered have not been the merely spontaneous expressions of individual opinions but a concerted boycott effort led by OUM. I attach a press release that we are sharing with the media, that expresses our reaction to these unfriendly attacks upon freedom of speech and civic participation.

You will be hearing more from TAFM post-election, as this entire process has convinced us that we desperately need some pro-active initiatives to change the way we discuss fairness and the tools we use to achieve it. We believe that we can make a real contribution there.

I also attach a student newspaper's report on our final session, that you may appreciate the reported character of the session and reactions to it.

Again, I thank you most deeply for all of your helpfulness.

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