

EXCLUSIVE: Lawsuit Against TBN Dismissed

Christian television giant Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) got some good—although not unexpected—news May 7 when a lawsuit that has been fuel for a flurry of potentially libelous news articles against the network was suddenly dropped by attorneys for the plaintiff.

The suit filed by Joseph McVeigh, the uncle of a former TBN manager who admitted to misappropriating hundreds of thousands of dollars in network funds, alleged that high-level TBN officials had misused millions of dollars from the network to fund a lavish lifestyle of multiple mansions, private jets, luxury automobiles and expensive meals.

TBN attorney and spokesman Colby May explained that the entire suit was nothing more than a ploy to divert attention from the actions of McVeigh, his nephew Michael Koper, and Koper's wife Brittany, who was TBN's former finance director as well as the granddaughter of TBN founders Paul and Jan Crouch.

"The truth of the matter is that this lawsuit was never anything more than a smokescreen to obscure the Kopers' own misappropriation of ministry funds, as well as their illegal loan of over \$65,000 to Mr. McVeigh," said May. "There was never any lavish or reckless spending of ministry money by the Crouches or any other TBN officials: no hundred thousand dollar motor homes for pets, private jets for personal use or any other unaccountable expenditures."

May explained that McVeigh's attorneys quickly moved to have the lawsuit dismissed after TBN's attorneys filed a motion charging that the suit violated California's SLAPP law prohibiting meritless lawsuits filed to intimidate or silence a defendant. "Courts take a dim view of this kind of legal

maneuvering, and McVeigh and his attorneys got caught, plain and simple,” May said.

TBN, he predicted, will ultimately be vindicated in a similar lawsuit filed by Brittany Koper. While TBN is not a defendant in that action, May said that Koper’s attorneys (who also represented McVeigh in his suit) used the suit to try to attack TBN’s reputation and integrity.

“The salacious accusations in the Koper action are similar to those made by McVeigh,” May pointed out, “and for the same reason: to divert attention from the truth that the Kopers used their positions of authority and trust at TBN to divert significant amounts of ministry funds for their own personal use.”

Meanwhile, May said, TBN continues to pursue its unchanged mission of broadcasting inspirational and family programming around the world.

“Unfortunately, these kinds of attacks can impact a ministry in a variety of ways,” May conceded. “But we’re thankful that TBN’s financial and ministry partners have continued to stand with us, knowing that the spiritual and financial integrity that has given us success over the past 40 years will guide us into the future.”