

SINGLE FROGS

General Information

Background

David was one of three Directors of Community Peacemakers, a charity specialising in the training and support of respected individuals who worked in areas of unrest in the UK and abroad. The belief was that these individuals could live in problem communities and intervene when conflict arose so that potential eruptions of violence and unrest were avoided. Over a period of five years the work of CP was recognised as being spectacularly successful, with problem areas in Liverpool, London, Glasgow and Dublin ceasing to hit the headlines because the level of violence and disturbance was so low. More recently, CP trained peacemakers in the Lebanon and Eritrea and the signs there are similarly encouraging. The British Government had also consulted with CP on overseas projects that it wished to fund as part of its third world aid programme.

Unfortunately, David and Alex, the Chief Executive of CP, had a deteriorating relationship and this led to Directors meetings becoming a nightmare for all concerned. The problems centred mainly on Alex's style of management which, in David's view, had become dictatorial and self-promoting. David accused Alex of not practising what CP preached, that Alex's management style was far from peacemaking and that all Alex really wanted was the publicity and kudos of heading a successful and increasingly high profile charity. Unfortunately, the third Director always sided with Alex and so David was overruled on every issue.

Six months ago David was headhunted by an American organisation who had huge financial backing from USAid and who wanted to create a Peacemaker network around the world. Alex was furious, accused David of disloyalty and treachery, and sent him on 'gardening leave' for the period of his three months notice.

Two months into his leave, David was notified that he was being investigated by CP for matters that could be termed 'sexual harassment' and of using language of an 'unacceptable and suggestive nature'. David was devastated. He demanded a meeting with Alex to get an explanation and was met instead by AJ, David's replacement at CP. AJ told David that some members of staff had made some serious comments that could not be ignored, and that AJ had been asked to investigate. At the moment everything was confidential and nothing further could be said until the investigations were complete. David, even more mystified and outraged at such serious accusations, demanded a report within 48 hours.

Two weeks later, after daily phone calls and emails by David, AJ reported that the investigations were complete and that, if David had continued with CP, they would have resulted in David being suspended. As it was, because David was leaving, the matter would not be taken any further. David was beside himself with frustration and anger. He

could think of nothing that he had done to warrant this and had been given no information by CP to even suggest what lay behind these accusations. He demanded a comprehensive report. AJ insisted that much of the information on file was given in confidence and, anyway, CP were not pursuing so the matter was closed.

David demanded a meeting with AJ and Alex and suggested that an experienced Mediator should be present. David also requested that a lawyer friend accompany him. Immediately before the mediation, the attached briefing sheet was received by David from CP.

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