

Press Release April 1, 2004

International Business Conference decides Ronald McDonald can not be President

SUMMARY: After incoming President David Boje, dressed as a Ronald McDonald's clown, the Governing Board of the International Academy of Business Disciplines (IABD), asked him to resign. The complaints: (1) dressing as a Ronald McDonald clown, (2) putting on a clown play "McDonald's goes to Baghdad" at the conference dinner, (3) referring to past presidents as clowns at the business meeting, (4) references to "Evangelical Capitalism" that prompted evangelicals to circulate a petition for his removal, (5) displaying an unpatriotic image of President Bush as a Ronald-clown.

Being Critical in Relation to International Business



Exhibit 1: Boje (Ronald) and conference executive director, Abbas Alkhafaji

David Boje admits dressing as a Ronald McDonald clown, complete with white-face, red nose, wig, red and white stripes, yellow jumper, and red clown shoes. He put on quite a show at the dinner meeting of the IABD conference that met March 25-28 2004 in San Antonio Texas.¹ A 14 year member, and elected to the Governing Board in 1999, Boje is known for his provocative theatrical presentations. But the play, titled "McDonald's goes to Baghdad," staged Thursday March 25 2004, managed to offend just about everyone: evangelicals who objected to Ronald being portrayed as Christ on the cross, President Bush supporters who objected to Bush being portrayed as a clown, and the Board of Governors of the Conference, who in the Business meeting, on Saturday (March 27th)

morning were referred to as clowns. Other conference goers complained to the Board that it was highly inappropriate for a President of an International Business conference to dress as a clown, to make fun of the President of the United States, and to portray American capitalism as evangelical.

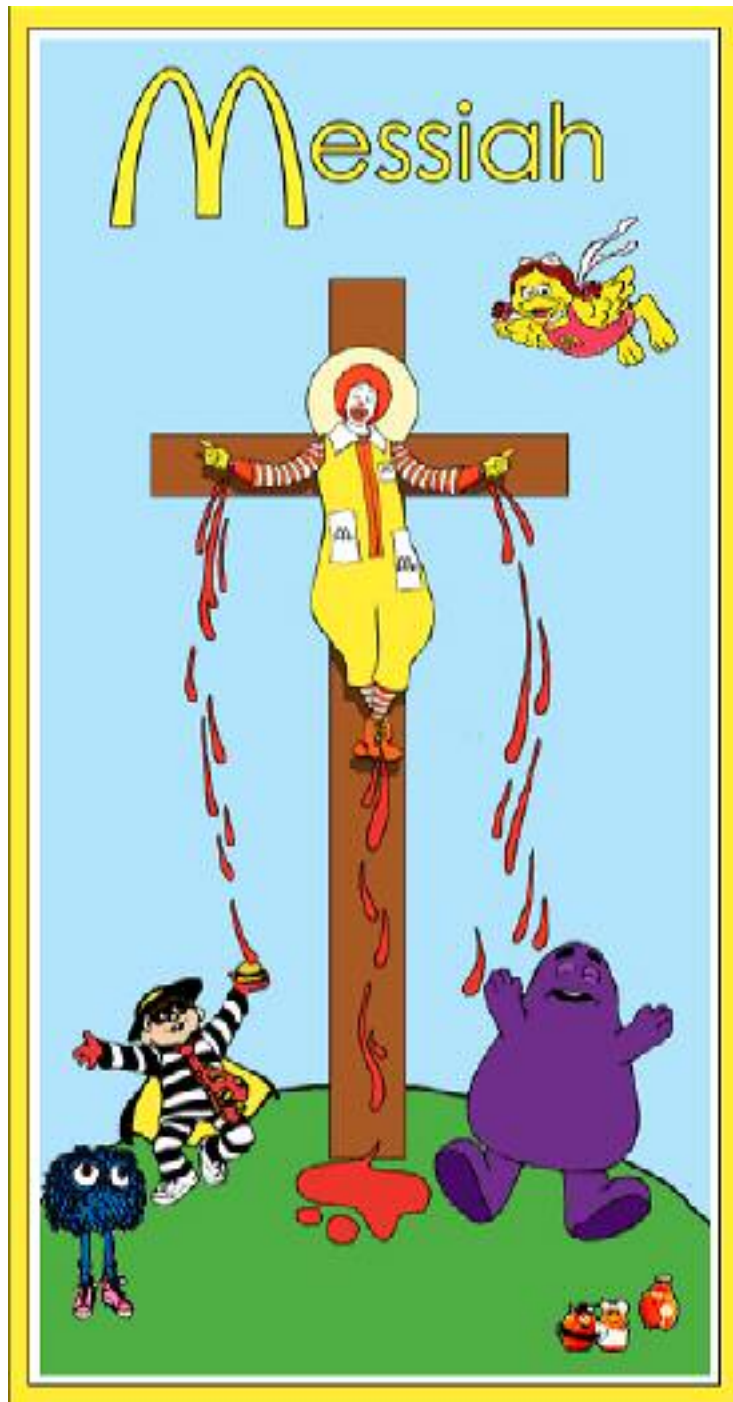


Exhibit 2 – Image Clown Boje displayed during the play (Blood from Ronald is dripping on Hamburglar and Grimace, as Birdie flies as a spirit above)ⁱⁱ

Boje, said he based his satire of McDonald's going to Baghdad on news coverage of a meeting where McDonald's said they would open a site in Iraq in 2004ⁱⁱⁱ; The term "evangelical capitalism" comes from an article by two other IABD board members, Abbas Ali and Robert Camp, that was published in the conference's main journal and was presented.^{iv}



Exhibit 3 – Image Clown Boje displayed: Last McSupper (Source Art Exhibit in UK) [somethingawful.com website]

Immediately after the 12 minute theatre performance by Boje and several "actors" from the critical organization theory track, the Board told Boje that evangelicals in the

audience met in the hall to circulate a petition calling for his resignation as in-coming IABD President, because of images shown that were a travesty of evangelicals. One attendee said: “I cannot believe such a presentation was scheduled during the dinner; we were all held hostage to Boje’s theatre; we think that the presentation is not science, and presents his own bias.”



Exhibit 4 – Boje displayed this image of President Bush, as a Ronald Clown during the theatrical event^v

Another group clamoring for Boje’s resignation were supporters of Bush’s war in Iraq, which they characterized as a legitimate liberation of the Iraqi people. Others at the event

and the next day accused Boje of staging politically inappropriate theatre in an academic setting.

The IABD Board met in emergency session on Friday March 26 at midnight. They summoned professor Boje to the meeting, and asked him to resign for the good of the conference; Boje refused, saying he was duly elected by the membership, and wanted to address the issues. It was then decided that Boje would offer a public apology at the 7 AM Saturday morning business meeting.



Exhibit 5 – Spectators with Clown Boje

In a scene right out of the Bible, Boje faced his priestly accusers, and answered each charge. He explained that god probably has a sense of humor. He indicated that he is doing research on the relationship between McDonald's strategy and the history of humor of Mikhail Bakhtin. Evidently, the clown (Ronald), rogue (Hamburglar), and fool (Grimace) constitute something called a 'chronotope' (something to do with Einstein's theory of relativity of time and space). Professor Boje's apology would have been acceptable to the Board of IABD, had it not been for the joke the Board says, "Broke the camel's back." In explaining his clown research, Boje indicated that he thought himself a clown, and in fact, previous presidents were clowns. Former presidents of IABD, stood up one by one, saying "I am not a clown." This International Business conference in San Antonio was definitely Boje's last stand, his Alamo.



Exhibit 6 – Clown Boje with Edwardo Berrera

At the Saturday luncheon, the Board of Governors gave out the usual plaques to outstanding papers and tracks; Boje received a plaque for his service to the IABD. The luncheon speaker gave a slide presentation on ads used to convince Hispanics and Latinos to join the military, and ended with an ad the Bush administration would use to convert democrats to republicans in the upcoming presidential election. Not one person at the luncheon challenged the relationship between business marketing and politics.

At the close of the luncheon meeting (and the conference), the current President said “there will be a brief announcement and there will not be a time for any response.” President David McKee then announced that the Board of Governors met again and was giving Boje one week to reply to their request that he resign.

Professor Boje said, while saddened that the Board and a few of the members did not have a sense of humor, said that he was dis-associating, but not resigning.

A new and improved independent conference of clown-lovers has been organized for April 2005, and will meet in Philadelphia (home of the Liberty Bell). The new conference name is *Standing Conference for Management and Organization Inquiry*. It is abbreviated sc'MOI, pronounced “say Moi” which has something to do with the reflexivity of social science.

For more information contact their web site at

<http://scmoi.org>

Endnotes:

ⁱ The conference: International Academy of Business Disciplines; the offending theatre was enacted Thurs March 25 2004 at an, “All Academy Symposium: Globalism and the Future of Capitalism. The script of Boje’s play, “McDonald’s goes to Baghdad” as printed in the Business Research Yearbook (2004), Vol. XI 2004 edited by Carolyn Gardner, Jerry Biberman & Abbass Alkhafaji pp. 747-751; an accompanying article by Boje “Regenerating Ronald McDonald with the Method of Grotesque Realism is published in the same yearbook, pp. 752-756 (it contained the Bush photo).

ⁱⁱ Photo once appeared at The Crucifixion of Our Lord – Source

http://www.timboucher.com/journal/2003_11_01_archive.html The image has been removed but was at http://www.timboucher.com/images/crucified_ronald.gif until May of 2004

ⁱⁱⁱ ‘Dying for a McDonald's in Iraq’ By Herbert Docena Oct 24, 2003 Asia Times Source

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/EJ24Ak02.html ; Parody of Saddam toy and McHussein Nuggets was suggest by Deadbrain ‘McDonald's to pull out of Iraq’ 10 Nov 2002 (no author) Deadbrain

http://www.deadbrain.co.uk/news/article_2002_11_10_0912.php

^{iv} Ali, Abbas J. & Robert C. Camp (2003). Risks of Evangelical Capitalism. International Journal of Commerce and Management. Vol. 13 (1): 1-10.

^v Latuff (2002) Image of Ronald McMurderer.