

February 16, 2009

Mr. Graham Messick
Producer, 60 minutes

Re: World of Trouble broadcast

Dear Mr. Messick:

I have been a faithful viewer of 60 minutes for years but have now lost all confidence in the integrity of your production after viewing your portrayal of Golden West/World Savings. By accepting at face value the unsubstantiated and distorted statements of a disgruntled former employee and community activists whose motivation should have been obviously suspect you have maligned one of the most ethical mortgage lenders (along with their former employees) in the country.

Where was the research?

1. Golden West loans have performed with close to no losses during and after the tenure of Mr. Bishop. It was not until property values declined in 2006 that losses started occurring in areas where Golden West had loan concentrations.
2. Why was Mr. Bishop terminated? I doubt seriously that it was for the reasons he stated. And why does one inexperienced loan rep out of thousands who were employed seem to have so much clout and credibility. What are his true motivations, I expect they are money related. If so, you certainly fell into his trap.
3. Did World Savings really bring Wachovia down as you implied? A simple review of Wachovia's financial statements will show that the losses are coming from other businesses within the Bank. It seems as though it was more convenient for Wachovia to blame the Golden West merger for their problems than to admit to their own internal failures. The losses quoted on 60 minutes were obviously based on the establishment of reserves because the losses have not been realized.
4. Did you research the facts surrounding the case study you presented? There is always more that meets the eye in mortgage fraud. How much money was really funded with all the refinances and where did all the money go? What was the role of the mortgage brokers and who really instigated the loans? What was the previous loan history?

This list of unexplained questions could go on indefinitely. You obviously had a story that fed the public perception of the mortgage business. This was not the highly ethical company for which I took pride in working for over 36 years. You picked the wrong company to malign. Shame on you.

William Stipek