

14, rue du Président Wilson  
94250 Gentilly, FRANCE  
February 22, 1991

Dear Colleague,

Recently, I sent you an open letter concerning the motives of my move to Paris, which contains a narration of many incidents of my career in the US. In the attention-getting underlined sentence on its first page I suggest, among other things, that I will enlighten those who have "no idea why Quillen would have wanted to leave MIT," and later, on page 5, I make the supposition that Quillen was very angry at MIT for not following his recommendation to take me on as an assistant professor, and point out that he then went on leave for two years to Bonn and Oxford. All of which was to insinuate, although not to explicitly state, that this was the motive, or at least one of the motives for his eventually leaving MIT for Oxford. While my belief until recently, this particular insinuation now seems to be completely false. In a letter to me of February 18, Quillen objects to my speculation as to his motives, saying "I wish you had limited yourself to things I did or said," and going on to say, "I reject your suggestion that MIT's failure to hire you as an assistant professor influenced my decision to leave. In fact my reasons were quite personal." Quillen continues in specifying such a reason, that has nothing to do with any possible dissatisfaction with MIT. I will add that I have never witnessed him express any anger or dissatisfaction with MIT at any time.

The open letter was carefully written, and I have assented as fact only things I have personally witnessed, or which are notorious, and given explicit quotations only when I have a clear memory of the words in question. I have been very careful with my explicit inferences and stated conclusions, and have great confidence in them, although they are naturally a bit less sure than eyewitness facts. On the other hand, those things labelled "subjective impressions" or which are speculations or insinuations concerning motives and unexpressed thoughts of other people, are obviously somewhat unreliable, although I have tried to suggest only things with some plausibility given the facts, and have expressed my honest opinion. I stand by my statements of eyewitness facts, which I think give a picture shocking enough, and continue to uphold the general truth of my conclusions. I admit some details of my speculations and insinuations may be incorrect. My insinuations concerning Quillen's motives for leaving MIT have been shown to be false. I regret any embarrassment my error has caused him, and apologize sincerely.

Yours,



Robert Thomason