

By email

5 September, 2001

Dr. Robert Birgeneau
President
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5S 1A1

Dear President Birgeneau:

We write to protest the decision to revoke the employment contract of Dr. David Healy.

The central point in our view is not the possible involvement of a drug company in university affairs, but the maltreatment of Dr. Healy. It is clear that the withdrawal of employment occurred as a result of a single lecture at a conference on November 30, an occasion for looking into the future, and preparing the discipline of psychiatry for the challenges of the new century.

To have sullied Dr. Healy's reputation by withdrawing the job offer is an affront to the standards of free speech and academic freedom.

It is almost inconceivable that a single lecture could have completely altered the perception of a colleague-to-be who has been extensively interviewed, whose work is voluminous and well known, and whom, up until the very minute the lecture began, was being implored to take up his position sooner than originally arranged. This is especially true given the lecture itself was well regarded in every other venue in which it was given, and in Toronto received the highest rating for content of any of the presentations at the conference.

This entire affair is poisoning the reputation of the Department of Psychiatry and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in international circles, and besmirching the name of one of North America's great research universities. The University's continuing tolerance and endorsement of the Department of Psychiatry and CAMH's rash act, and of the Department and CAMH's mendacious ongoing defense of its action, is a threat to academic freedom. As such, it concerns all of us who uphold the standards of open discussion and frank exchange in university life.

We respectfully request that the University and CAMH finally do what is right in this dismal affair by restoring the offer of employment to Dr. Healy along with the conveyance of its sincere apology.

Yours truly,

- ✓ Dr. Julius Axelrod
Nobel Laureate in Medicine 1970
Emeritus Scientist of the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland, USA
- ✓ Dr. Thomas A. Ban
Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, USA
- ✓ Dr. Raymond Battgay
Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland

- ✓ Dr. Joseph Knoll
Emeritus Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, Semmelweis University,
Budapest, Hungary
- ✓ Dr. T. Kobayakawa
Corporate Advisor, WellFide Corporation, Osaka, Japan
- ✓ Dr. Brian E. Leonard
Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland
- ✓ Dr. Isaac Marks
Professor, The Institute of Psychiatry, London, UK
- ✓ Dr. Merton Sandler
Emeritus Professor of Chemical Pathology, University of London, London, UK
- ✓ Dr. Mogens Schou
CINP-Pfizer Pioneer in Neuropsychopharmacology 2000
Emeritus Professor of Biological Psychiatry, The University of Aarhus, Aarhus, Denmark
- ✓ Dr. Pierre Simon
Professor of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Paris, Paris, France
- ✓ Dr. Solomon Snyder
Distinguished Service Professor of Pharmacology and Psychiatry, and Director, Department of
Neuroscience, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, USA
- ✓ Dr. Costas Stefanis
Professor of Psychiatry, University Mental Health Research Institute, Athens, Greece
Past President, World Psychiatric Association
- ✓ Dr. Fridolin Sulser
Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry and Pharmacology, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, USA;
Past President, American College of Neuropsychopharmacology
- ✓ Dr. Gabor Ungvari
Professor of Psychiatry, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, China
- ✓ Dr. Herman M. van Praag
Professor and Head, Department of Psychiatry and Neuropsychology, Akademisch Ziekenhuis
Maastricht, Maastricht, The Netherlands

Dr. Per Bech

Professor of Psychiatry and Head, Psychiatric Research Unit, Frederiksborg General Hospital, Hillerod, Denmark

✓ Past President, European Association of Psychiatrists

✓ Dr. Thomas Bolwig

Professor of Psychiatry, Department of Psychiatry, Rigshospitalet, Copenhagen, Denmark

✓ Dr. Arvid Carlsson

Nobel Laureate in Medicine 2001

CINP-Pfizer Pioneer in Neuropsychopharmacology 2000

Emeritus Professor of Pharmacology, University of Goteborg, Goteborg, Sweden

Past President, Collegium Internationale Neuro-Psychopharmacologicum

✗ Dr. Gaston Castellanos

Professor of Psychiatry, University of Mexico, Mexico City, Mexico

✓ Dr. Jonathan O. Cole

Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Past President, American College of Neuropsychopharmacology

✓ Dr. Leon Eisenberg

Professor, Department of Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

✓ Dr. Max Fink

Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology, SUNY at Stony Brook, New York, USA

✓ Dr. Alfred Freedman

Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, New York Medical College, New York, New York, USA

Past President, American Psychiatric Association

Past President, American College of Neuropsychopharmacology

✓ Dr. Peter Gaszner

Professor of Psychiatry, Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary

President, Hungarian Association of Psychopharmacology; Editor-in-Chief, Neuropsychopharmacologia Hungarica

✗ Dr. Abraham Halpern

Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, New York Medical College, New York, New York, USA

✓ Dr. Turan Itil

Chairman and Clinical Professor, New York Institute for Medical Research, An Affiliate of New York University School of Medicine, New York, New York, USA

✓ Dr. Gordon Johnson

Professor of Psychological Medicine and Director, Mood Disorder Unit, The University of Sydney, Greenwich, Australia