

Tuesday, December 04, 2007

To the Dean
Prof. Dr. Ulla Wewer
Faculty of Health Sciences
Panum Institute
University of Copenhagen

In Ref: My dissertation "High altitude adaptation to High Altitude and to Sea Level, Acid-Base equilibrium and circulation in chronic hypoxia", delivered to the Faculty of health Sciences in July, 2007.

Dear Prof. Wewer:

I have received a letter dated 30 November, 2007 from one of your secretaries, and I now respond to you as the head of the Faculty.

Two of the proposed opponents Dr. Bengt Saltin and Dr. Peter Norsk, have not informed about their negative bias against my person.

1) In 1998, my father Prof. Dr. Gustavo Zubieta-Castillo, a member of the Bolivian Academy of Sciences, introduced the Danish-American research group headed by Prof. Saltin to the president of the Academy in La Paz. The initial offer was that I and other members from our clinic, the High Altitude Pathology Institute, Clinica IPPA, would actively participate in the research projects and we were given the research plan in detail. However, and much to our surprise, we were left out of all participation, once the research was initiated.

While in La Paz, Dr. Saltin presented an acute cardiac condition. We performed at our clinic a basic check-up that included, electrocardiogram, chest x-rays, blood and urine tests, biochemistry tests, lung volumes and arterial blood gases. At the clinic we are four doctors and one bio-analyst. We have the results and diagnosis in our database. This resulted in a bill covering clinical expenses, to Dr. Saltin, who did not pay. The following year, Dr Saltin again visited La Paz. The clinics' female book-keepers kindly contacted him at his hotel and confronted him with the unpaid bill. Dr. Saltin finally covered our clinic expenses, but he was furious and he has never spoken to any of us, since. Not even during my four years stay here in Copenhagen, where we have visited his Institute twice.

I have also been a last minute substitute for Dr. Saltin (who fell ill again) at a meeting of the Clinical Chemistry Society, lecturing about high altitude medicine, which has been my research topic for more than 30 years.

2) Dr. Peter Norsk, Dr. Paulev and I, set up several meetings in 2005 at the Faculty offices with a science advisor from the EU, concerning a mutual project. Dr. Norsk participated in the first meeting but never showed up in the next meetings without excuse or explanation. When we occasionally met with him in the area, he simply declared "I know nothing about high altitude physiology" and "high altitude has nothing to do with space sciences". On this background it is surprising to see him candidate as an official opponent.

These two behavioral patterns, as well as the actual behavior of both opponent candidates holding back the information about being negatively biased, are certainly not academic. Dr. Saltin and Dr. Norsk, do not qualify as neutral opponents in my case.

Sincerely yours,

Gustavo Zubieta-Calleja, M.D.