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Oliver Springs, TN 37840

Ms. Holly Adams
Inspector General
Office of Naval Research
875 North Randolph Street
Suite 1425
Arlington, VA 22203-1995

September 12, 2008

SUBJECT: Purdue University/Prof. R. Taleyarkhan

Dear Ms. Adams:

Because of my long-time association with Professor Taleyarkhan, including participating in the very beginnings of his sonofusion work, I am taking the liberty of writing to you about his present, distressing situation.

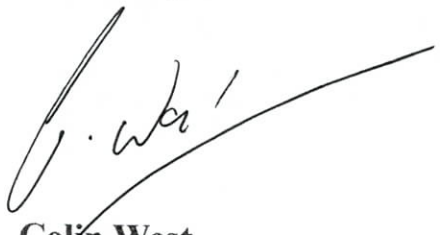
Purdue University organized at least two formal investigations of many specific allegations concerning research misconduct by Prof. Taleyarkhan. The first, in 2006, found none to be valid. A later investigation concluded that there were two instances of misconduct: the use in a published paper (of which I was a co-author) of the word "independent" to describe measurements by other workers at Purdue; and the addition of a co-author's name, a student, into what was originally a sole-author (Xiban Xu) manuscript describing those measurements.

The University then imposed sanctions on Taleyarkhan so unusually harsh - removal of his Named University Chair title, with consequent reductions in salary and funding, plus a three year ban on overseeing the thesis work of graduate students - that I was astounded to learn of them and incredulous that such a punishment could have been considered a just response.

I should like to add that in addition to the disproportionate punishment, I feel that the reviewers' case for misconduct was not proven. The researcher who performed the new tests, Xu, has given testimony under oath and an affidavit - which I have read - explaining how he carried out the work, and that it used a different experimental system from Taleyarkhan's experiment. Also, that Taleyarkhan played no role in setting up or conducting the experiment; in acquiring and analyzing the data; or in drawing the conclusions. His affidavit also states that it was Xu's own idea, not Taleyharkhan's, to invite Xu's colleague Butt to be a co-author. The Purdue investigators did not attempt to provide, as far as I know, any documented rebuttal or contrary evidence, but seemingly simply decided that Xu was wrong, or lying under oath, and that his results were not independent. As a result, not only do I believe that the University's sanctions were a disproportionate response to the findings, but also that, looked at in good faith, there is reasonable doubt about the findings themselves.

Because of ONR's major involvement in this work, and your support over many decades for all kinds of interesting and important research into the phenomenon of cavitation, I humbly ask that you review this affair, and if appropriate, make your views known. I am long since retired, financially independent, and am not even consulting at present, so I have nothing to gain from this for myself, except the satisfaction that would come from helping to right a wrong.

Sincerely



Colin West