

29th May 1969

Professor George D. Pappas
Department of Anatomy
Albert Einstein College of Medicine
1300 Morris Park Avenue
Bronx, N.Y. 10461
U.S.A.

Dear Professor Pappas

I wish things were as simple as all that. Of course science will not prosper if the State interferes with scientific knowledge, as in the Lysenko affair, but it can prosper fairly well in the absence of academic freedom in the broader sense, as we can see in the U.S.S.R.

It was kind of you to send me the documents about the dismissal of the Greek academics. Let me say straight away that I do not approve of dismissals without a proper right of appeal, and in this the Greek Government is clearly in the wrong. Having said that, I note that the majority of dismissals were either for actively supporting the Communist Party (which would also, if a power, not respect academic freedom) or for various forms of corruption. Do you wish these corrupt professors (mostly medical men) to be reinstated?

I am in correspondence with Francois Gros and Jacques Monod about what useful steps might be taken to make the present Greek regime more liberal. I would be glad to hear from you what precise steps we should ask the Greek Government to take so that academic freedom can be judged to have been restored. (Incidentally, I must remind you that the Communist Party is illegal in the United States!) It is useless to threaten not to hold meetings unless one states clearly under what terms one would be prepared to hold them. I am against empty gestures which produce no results except to ease the conscience of those who made them.

As to this Spetsai meeting, it is too late to cancel it now, but we can, of course, start to negotiate about a possible meeting in 1970. This matter will be discussed among the scientists meeting at Spetsai in July.

I do not think anything useful could be gained at this stage by publishing our letters. Jacques Monod feels that certain senior scientists should try to make an agreed statement on these difficult matters, but this will take a little time. In any case, I would much prefer that we try to reach agreement first, and then consider publication.

Yours sincerely

F.H.C. Crick