

**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

Memorandum

Date: July 12, 2006
From: Victor L. Yu, M.D
Subj: Written justification for closure requested
To: Michael Moreland, Director,

Thru: Frederick DeRubertis, Vice President, Medical Specialty Service Line
Thru: Rajiv Jain, Chief of Staff


I am responding to the memo signed by Dr. Jain on 7/5/06 and the verbal comments by Dr. Jain at the meeting between myself and Frederick DeRubertis on July 5, 2006. I was stunned by the decisions in the memo of 7/5/06. At the meeting, no clearcut justification for closure of the Special Pathogens Laboratory was given only - vague generalities that bordered on innuendo.

"The Special Pathogens Lab is a commercial lab that does not perform research." "The Special Pathogens Lab is a commercial lab that furnishes funds for your research." "Your research activities are not IRB-approved." All of the above statements are absurd and demonstrably false. If they are indeed the reasons, please place them in writing so that I can respond to them.

After I objected to this drastic action, Dr. Jain informed me I could appeal to Mr. Moreland. Two days later on 7/07/06, Nicholas Squeglia, Administrative Officer, informed me by telephone that the Special Pathogens Laboratory had been terminated, the 5 scientific personnel were to be fired that day, and Dr. Janet Stout had been demoted to a bench technician in the hospital microbiology laboratory.

My loyalty and commitment to the VA has been shattered in a very disheartening manner. The Special Pathogens Laboratory has existed for 25 years and is one of the great reference laboratories in the U.S. Documentation of the publications reporting on the patient lives in the VA that have been saved, and the discoveries that have affected management of patients in the VA and worldwide have already been given to you.

Given the abruptness and severity of the decision to close down the Special Pathogens Laboratory and terminate the employment of the individuals working in this laboratory with only 24 hour notice, detailed justification for this action should have been made in the memo of 7/5/06. In this memo, no justification whatsoever was given. I request the reasons for such a punitive decision in writing, so that we can adequately respond. Fairness in dealing with such a situation is a reflection of the integrity of the institution.


VICTOR L. YU, M.D.
Chief, Infectious Disease Section

Moreland SpecialPathogensLab
Yu/memo