Unclear Facts concerning the Mathematical Department at
Uppsala University
UNT, July 31rst.

RESPONSE. The deans’ article (Myths and Mathematics in an uncommon
alliance, UNT, June 17th) contains several statements about the appoint-
ment of a professor for applied mathematics. It is amazing that this par-
ticular matter takes up a large part of the article, especially as it has been
claimed that criticism of the appointment had nothing to do with the chaired
professors Burglind Jörice and Oleg Viro leaving the university. To prevent
misunderstandings, that the deans’ article might cause, we want to draw
attention to the following points:

1. The new professor has been welcomed to the Mathematical Depart-
ment. We, the undersigned, and many others at the department are
looking forward to cooperating with him in various ways in the future.

2. Historically, the appointment of chaired professors in Sweden was not
unfrequently surrounded by controversy since it determines the main
areas of research for a long time to come. Jörice and Viro expressed
their concern that the university would follow the recruitment group’s
recommendation and appoint the mentioned professor. After this group
had replied to the appeals by the applicants for the position, Jörice
and Viro did not longer comment on the matter.

We think it is important to stress these points in order to prevent new
myths. Another point that has worried us is the following sweeping statement
in the dean’s article: ”Employees left their jobs; many felt listless and insec-
ure at their place of work. Staff members suffered from insomnia.” - That
sounds indeed terrible. The phrase ”Employees left ...” is quite strong in this
context. It seems to suggest the interpretation that staff members handed in
their notice because of the bad working atmosphere before February 8th.

As far as the staff (ourselves included) knows,during the four or five years
that preceded Jörice’s and Viro’s resignation people only left because they
reached retirement age, because their employment contracts had run out or
because they were offered another job - not because of the reasons the dean’s
article seems to hint at.

Discrepancies in information of this nature may easily lead to assessments
which discredits the department and its staff unnecessarily. Since an open
and constructive attitude and mutual respect are preconditions for a good work environment we think, quite frankly, it would be wise to investigate the facts of this case publicly (once for all).

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