

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
5th November, 1985

An open letter to Britta Schall Holberg, Home Affairs Minister and
Niels Hammer-Jespersen, Director, Rigshospitalet, Copenhagen

It is with astonishment and dismay that I hear of plans to close the melanoma project at the Finsen Laboratory. You are doubtless aware of the increasing importance of melanoma research with the rising incidence in northern European countries of this malignancy which affects a young population. Malignant melanoma is one of the most aggressive cancers and is difficult to treat. Research is urgently needed in this field and the melanoma project at the Finsen Laboratory is among the leaders in the world in this field. I have the privilege of visiting the Unit and of collaborating with them, and I can assure you that their work is of the highest standard of scientific rigour, and their international

reputation in the melanoma field is well deserved. Dr. Ingolf Nielsen is a prominent and respected member of the European pigment cell community and of the International Pigment Cell Society, and news of the closure of the melanoma project will be greeted with deep dismay. It would be calamitous to close the Unit and bring to an end work of great promise in such an important area of cancer research. I appeal to you, urgently, to reconsider your plans and instead of closing the melanoma project at the Finsen Laboratory, permit this valuable and important cancer research to continue to flourish in Denmark.

Yours sincerely

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