

"Biggest scandal over 50 years"

One of Sweden's most distinguished mathematicians rises to speak in the inflamed debate regarding mathematics in Uppsala. Lennart Carleson held a professorship in Uppsala for more than 40 years. He contends that the action of Uppsala University against the two professors Viro and Jöricke is the biggest academic scandal in Sweden for over 50 years.

— If this is not a scandal, then I do not know what should be counted as a scandal. There are some things which one simply does not do, among those is to fire a professor in this indirect way.

To find a comparable academic scandal in Sweden one has to go back in time to the end of the 1950s and the so-called Selling affair, which concerned a professor at the Royal Academy of Sciences, says Lennart Carleson.

— The Academy then decided in some mysterious ways that they should try to get rid of Selling by declaring him insane, which of course failed. This is the only example I can think of which is comparable with what has happened in Uppsala.

Lennart Carleson points out that in this case the society acted by withdrawing the state funding of the Academy for a number of years. He also finds it strange that in the present case no reaction at all has come from higher authorities. The Vice-Chancellor Anders Hallberg's actions against Viro and Jöricke are, according to Lennart Carleson, hard to understand, since without presenting any evidence that they had destroyed the working environment, he exerted pressure on them to resign.

That Viro and Jöricke claimed that the standards at the department were not always upheld as they should, is something that Lennart Carleson understands.

— There are of course some distinguished people at the department, but on the whole it is not that spectacular.

The new head of department, Maciej Klimek, has said that he fully supports the actions of the Vice-Chancellor. Lennart Carleson says that this attitude is harmful for the department.

— This is a bad forecast for regaining of its balance and status.

Reporter Mårten Nilsson, Radio Uppland, July 10, 2007

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