

LETTERS

Trump travel ban requires balanced discussion

The *CMAJ* missed an important opportunity to provide a balanced discussion of an important moral dilemma.¹ Dr. Stanbrook, like myself, is a white male physician. How much better would it have been if there had been an accompanying editorial from a physician who, by nature of demographics, was directly affected by the change in US border regulations?

Similarly, I question Dr. Stanbrook's qualifications to talk about the impact of a conference boycott on the 25% of US physicians who trained outside of the United States.

More importantly, I was shocked to read the statement "Although the travel

ban targets individuals, its threat to the integrity and prosperity of scientific collaboration is of paramount concern."¹ I can only interpret this to mean that Dr. Stanbrook believes that the interests of science are more important than the rights of individuals. I am confident that most Canadians would not agree.

Is Dr. Stanbrook suggesting that physicians who do actually attend conferences in the US, or at least those that are allowed to attend, should voice their displeasure and then continue with business as usual with a free conscience? Surely fundamental human rights demand more of our attention?

I understand that face-to-face contact fosters research collaboration, but other means of communication for researchers are, of course, available.

I fully expect that many Canadian physicians and researchers will have concerns about discrimination against their colleagues and will decide not to attend conferences in the US.

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Reference

1. Stanbrook MB. Trump travel ban means academics must strengthen, not sever, US ties. *CMAJ* 2017;189:E420-1.

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