

Yale University



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Professor Krishna Kumar
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Dear Krishna:

My apologies for the long delay in getting back to you in response to your letter from the Racah Institute concerning Professor Marinov and his participation in the discovery of element 112.

I no longer have any contact whatever with these matters, fortunately, because I have been disappointed in what has been happening and, in particular, by the recent decision to name one of the elements after a still living researcher, something I think we all agreed should not have been done when this was first taken up.

When I was president of IUPAP I was contacted by the then president of IUPAC, then the director of the chemistry division of the National Research Council in Ottawa, who told me about the efforts that IUPAC had been making to get some kind of consensus concerning the naming of the transuranics generally. He admitted that they had had repeated failures and asked for IUPAP's help. To that end I appointed a committee chaired by Sir Denys Wilkinson that took their task very seriously. The committee had membership from both IUPAP and IUPAC and it visited the laboratories in Dubna, GSI, and Berkeley and I now talked with the people that had been involved in the search for element 102 in Sweden. I was not aware of any other visits that the group had made, but they did publicize very widely their existence and requested input from any interested party. I assume that Professor Marinov was in contact with them during that period.

Quite wisely, I think, Professor Wilkinson decided to break the activities of his committee into two parts. In the first, they focused on establishing what would be required to consist of discovery. In other words, what had to be demonstrated, what had to be done before one could rightly claim that one had discovered a new element. With that work behind them and the first phase report peer-reviewed by the international community, they

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then undertook the second part of the activity which involved applying the criteria that had been developed in the first to the various claims being made by the researchers working in this field. Out of this, they assigned discovery credit as seemed best to them and suggested, I think correctly, that the discoverers should then be given the opportunity to name the element that they had discovered.

This met with considerable opposition and, in particular, the American Chemical Society was pulled into the argument and the entire question became open once more under very strong political pressures from a few of the researchers.

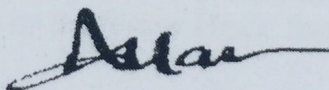
In the end, these researchers had their way, names were changed and the American Chemical Society was able to convince IUPAC to certify these new names as the official ones for the elements in question.

I now believe that this is a closed matter and unfortunately Professor Marinov's claims which may well have substantial value, unfortunately, no longer have any court of appeal to which they might be taken.

As I have said, I personally was upset by the entire process because I think that the Wilkinson committee had done an absolutely outstanding job of sorting out a very difficult situation. To have their recommendations overturned under political pressure was I think unworthy of the scientific community.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Allan Bromley', with a stylized, flowing script.

D. Allan Bromley