

Ms. Goodman:

Dr. Jean Maria Arrigo recently spoke on “Democracy Now” and made a substantial number of false and defamatory allegations regarding me and other members and staff of the American Psychological Association. She also omitted mention of several factors regarding personal her biases and troubled past. Sadly, listeners to “Democracy Now” will therefore have no way to evaluate the validity of her assertions. Until now, I have not commented in public about Dr. Arrigo’s personal difficulties, however her recent public statements on your broadcast demand full disclosure.

Dr. Arrigo stated that she, “*was one of the three civilian members of the 2005*

*PENS Task Force.*” That statement is patently false. Here are the facts. Six of the ten task force members and both members of the APA Board of Directors who participated in the meetings were civilians. Each psychologist (including Dr. Arrigo) was selected because of their knowledge and expertise, not as a function of employment. If we had intentionally sought to bias the work of the group we certainly would not have included the wide range of people we selected.

Dr. Arrigo also conveniently ignores the fact that the task force’s report was reviewed, edited and approved by the completely independent APA Ethics Committee, a group composed entirely of civilians.

Dr. Arrigo stated, “*The first irregularity was APA board liaisons who interfered in task force business. As I learned from these other insiders, APA task forces typically have only one liaison from the APA board. The liaison's role is to coordinate with the task force, but not to make decisions or to intervene in task force business. For us, a second board liaison was added: President-Elect Gerald Koocher. He exerted strong control over task force decisions.*”

Here are the facts. The PENS group was officially the Presidential Task Force on Psychological Ethics and National Security. It was appointed by 2005 APA President Ronald F. Levant. The Board of Director’s liaison was Dr. Barry Anton of the University of Puget Sound. Because Dr. Levant could not attend the meeting, I (as 2006 President) represented him at the start of the meeting to help the group understand it’s charge and . I was present for only the first six hours of the two day meeting.

During the introductions Dr. Arrigo disclosed that her father served as a military officer during the Korean War, he interrogated and tortured people, and he committed suicide. She has therefore made it her life's mission to campaign against torture and interrogation. Dr. Arrigo then advocated a broad expansion of the task force's mission and scope. At that time I spoke up, expressed sadness and respect for her traumatic life experiences, but noted that the task force had been budgeted for a single 2-day meeting and had a highly specific charge (i.e., to recommend to the Ethics Committee - the only body authorized to interpret our ethics code - what guidance might be offered to our members who found themselves in roles involving such matters). It was Dr. Arrigo, not me, who sought to

intervene in the business of the task force, and who became embittered when she was rebuffed by the full group.

Such was the nature of my alleged "strong controlling" behavior. Until now, I had remained respectfully silent in public regarding Dr. Arrigo's biases, history of personal trauma, and lack of boundaries, but will no longer do so. Her behavior during the portions of the meeting I attended, and in subsequent public forums, has underscored the sad emotional aftermath of a troubled upbringing complicated by the suicide of a parent who engaged behaviors she now abhors.

Finally, I want to address Dr. Arrigo's defamatory statements regarding the APA staff and observers in attendance at the task force meeting. Observers from APA staff or membership groups are common at such meetings and often add value by virtue of their special topical and organizational expertise. They do not participate in voting or report writing. Dr. Arrigo has no factual basis for the slanderous innuendos she casts at these hard working conscientious individuals.

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