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**The Community for
Psychologists
in Independent Practice**
WWW.DIVISION42.ORG

PSYCHOLOGISTS IN INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

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PAST PRESIDENT

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Dear Colleagues:

SECRETARY

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I am writing this letter in response to your request for **APA Division 42, The Community for Psychologists in Independent Practice** to consider joining the **Coalition for an Ethical Psychology's** resolution calling for an annulment of the *APA 2005 Report of the Presidential Task Force on Psychological Ethics and National Security (PENS Report)* and other opposition to the APA's policies concerning psychologists' involvement in national security settings. As the current president, I placed your requests on our agenda for the division's board meeting held in conjunction with the APA convention in Orlando in August and again in our telephone meeting in October 2012. Here are some of the issues raised by our board members present at those meetings.

TREASURER

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The Division 42 membership is quite diverse and our mission is to be a community for psychologists engaged in independent practice. That means we, as a board, embrace the various work settings in which our members engage in the practice of psychology, provided it falls within the ethical boundaries of our profession as espoused by the *APA Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards*. This includes the ethical practice of psychology in national security settings.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Armand Cerbone, PhD
June Ching, PhD
Kristina Roberts, PhD
Morgan Sammons, PhD
Michael Schwartz, PsyD
Lori Thomas, JD, PhD
Jeff Zimmerman, PhD

We disagreed with the Coalition's statement that the PENS report is "the defining document endorsing psychologists' engagement in detainee interrogations" as stated in the formal resolution submitted by the Coalition to the APA Board of Directors (BOD) and Council of Representatives (COR). Several of the members of our current Division 42 Board were present at the numerous discussions held at COR during the work of the PENS Task Force, the APA Ethics Committee, and in other places within the APA. We believe that the internal discussions were helpful in clarifying the current APA policies that have always been against psychologists' participation in torture and in strengthening those policies to make it clear to all that it is NEVER appropriate or ethical for psychologists to participate in torture. Further, we have clear policies enumerating exactly what is meant by torture, so that there can be no confusion or loopholes should a psychologist be asked to participate in such unethical behavior. We acknowledge the Coalition's role in helping all psychologists understand that participation in activities of torture is unethical.

**REPRESENTATIVES
TO APA COUNCIL**

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Doug Haldeman, PhD
Gordon Herz, PhD
Judith Patterson, PhD
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We are saddened by the Coalition's continued use of the public media to castigate and criticize the profession of psychology by making it seem that the APA condones psychologist's use of behavior defined as torture. This is not true and casts aspersions on all activities of all psychologists. We do not believe that it was wrong to invite psychologists who work in settings where national security is an issue to debate if and how psychologists can help protect detainees and keep interrogations "safe, legal, ethical and effective". Members of our division who have served in the armed forces, the department of corrections, and other national agencies charged with keeping citizens safe are clear that psychological principles can be used to protect as well as harm detainees.

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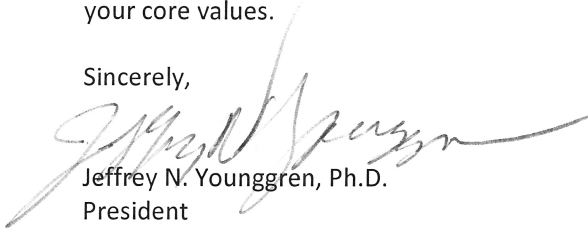
It is foolish to believe that interrogators do not have knowledge of psychology whether or not they are trained psychologists. There is a role for psychologists to play in counterintelligence and counterterrorism provided it is done responsibly.

Therefore, our Board makes the following response to your Coalition:

1. We request that your Coalition stop using the press to spread all negative information about its dissatisfaction with APA. You are harming our practice of psychology by giving false and biased information and therefore, impacting negatively on the ability of people who need psychological services to receive them from ethical and competent psychologists in independent practice.
2. We will not introduce or sign on to any resolution passed about recalling or annulling the PENS Report. In fact, we will vehemently oppose any further action on the report. It was properly vetted at the APA COR meeting that voted to accept it. It is not APA Policy. Rather COR merely accepted the information that may or may not be used in formulation of formal APA policies. Annulment would disenfranchise the COR members who voted to accept the report in 2005 and further would be disrespectful to the work done by members whose contributions may have helped the report be more honest than if only members who agreed with the Coalition's position were represented on it.
3. We will provide education to our members to make sure that the use of interrogation and interview techniques used by psychologists are differentiated and completely understood much like the definitions of torture that were disseminated. All professional psychologists are trained in interview techniques. We see a need for defining where the line crosses from interview to gain necessary information to assess and create treatment plans to being a part of torture. We have asked our forensic committee to begin discussing this issue.
4. By distributing copies of this letter, we will ask APA to maintain a vigorous response to any further complaints publicized by the Coalition in the media that may damage our members' independent practice of psychology. We believe that by giving only a partial story to the media, the Coalition is damaging the entire field of psychology.

Finally, we hope that you accept our response in the spirit in which it is given. We believe that we are ethical psychologists, advocates for social justice, and believe in human rights just like your Coalition states. Please understand that your behavior needs to be honest and demonstrate what you state are your core values.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey N. Younggren, Ph.D.
President

Cc: American Psychological Association Board of Directors
All APA Division Presidents