

Reply

Editor:

Dr. Meyers writes that “the professional integrity of the forensic psychiatrist is taken a bit too far at times, and that this is one of those times.” I disagree. Now is precisely the time to clarify that forensic psychiatry’s ethics principles of honesty and respect for persons preclude participation by psychiatrists in police and intelligence interrogations, where lying or coercive techniques may be used. We should not compromise our own profession’s ethics ideals in parallel with court decisions which allow police to lie or with legislation like the Military Commissions Act of 2006, which allows the President to authorize co-

ercive interrogation techniques on unlawful enemy combatants, as long as such techniques are not “grave breaches” of the Geneva Conventions.¹

In his letter, Meyers points out that acting as an interrogator compromises “the integrity of the police investigator.” We should not compromise psychiatry’s integrity by participating in such practices.

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References

1. Military Commissions Act of 2006, Sec. 6 (a)(3)(A). Available at http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109_cong_bills&doid=f:s3930enr.txt.pdf. Accessed January 4, 2007