

Introduction to Analysis of APA Task Force Report

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In his analysis of the APA Task Force Report on Megavitamin Therapy and Orthomolecular Psychiatry, John Hoffer writes in an objective and detached vein. If I can make any criticism of his detailed analysis, it is perhaps that he has taken even too soft a stance with the APA Task Force Report.

It was the American Psychiatric Association that set off the polemics regarding Orthomolecular psychiatry and megavitamin therapy when it wrote a full-scale vitriolic editorial in the April, 1967, issue of the **Psychiatric News** attacking the American Schizophrenia Association and all that it stood for. This was at a time when there were no scientific reports anywhere disputing any of Hoffer's work. The APA's opposition to megavitamin therapy and Orthomolecular psychiatry since that time has continued, unabated, and their Task Force Report is a political rather than a scientific statement.

The name of the Task Force Report alone is a misnomer. It does not cite any studies on megavitamins, nor on Orthomolecular psychiatry, but cites reports on niacin in schizophrenics only.

The APA Task Force Report, therefore, should be entitled, THE APA TASK FORCE PRELIMINARY REPORT ON NIACIN IN SCHIZOPHRENICS. The fact that even the title of the Task Force Report is false and misleading warns the reader that the contents of the report are not likely to be objective either.

There is only one textbook on Orthomolecular psychiatry published to date and that is by myself and Prof. Linus Pauling, and there is no reference to the book or its contents or to any of the hundreds of articles on Orthomolecular psychiatry which have appeared in the JOURNAL OF ORTHOMOLECULAR PSYCHIATRY. The report states that niacin alone is currently not the treatment of choice in schizophrenia. Nobody ever said that it was. Neither I nor any of my collaborators have frankly ever tried it. The Task Force Report includes a spurious, whining little criticism that the Orthomolecular psychiatrists are constantly improving their techniques and that these are tailored to fit the individual patient. If this is a criticism of Orthomolecular psychiatry, then conventional psychiatry is in worse shape than everyone thinks it is.

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