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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Date: April 1, 2025

Case: Columbia University, In Re:

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IN RE: :

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY :

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DEPOSITION OF DR. KATRINA ARMSTRONG

Washington, District of Columbia

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

10:34 AM

Job No.: 578933

Pages: 1 - 84

Recorded By: Joe Wilson

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Deposition of Dr. Katrina Armstrong,
held at the offices of:

US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

200 Independence Ave SW

Washington, District of Columbia 20201

Pursuant to agreement, before
Joe Wilson, Notary Public in and for the
State of District of Columbia.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

ON BEHALF OF THE US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES

SEAN R. KEVENEY, ESQUIRE

US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES

200 Independence Ave SW

Washington, District of Columbia 20201

ON BEHALF OF DR. KATRINA ARMSTRONG:

STEVEN ENGEL ESQUIRE

ANDREW LEVANDER, ESQUIRE

DECHERT LLP

1900 K St NW

Washington DC 20006

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A P P E A R A N C E S

ON BEHALF OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY:

SUSIE TEMPLETON, ESQUIRE

KIRKLAND & ELLIS

1301 Pennsylvania Ave NW

Washington DC 20004

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Washington DC 20001

ALSO PRESENT:

ANAT KUMAR

DANIEL SHIEH

ANTHONY ARCHEVAL

JOSH GRUENBAUM

NOAH MILLER

JARRETT ROWE

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C O N T E N T S

EXAMINATION OF DR. KATRINA ARMSTRONG PAGE

By Mr. Keveney 6

E X H I B I T S

(Attached to transcript.)

DEPOSITION EXHIBIT PAGE Exhibit 1 Report 8

Exhibit 2 Letter 23 Exhibit 3 Statement 73

3
4
5
6
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P R O C E E D I N G S

THE REPORTER: Dr. Armstrong, can you please raise your right hand? Do you solemnly swear or affirm under the penalties of perjury that the testimony you shall give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

THE WITNESS: Yes, I do.

THE REPORTER: You may lower your hand. Counsel, you may proceed. Whereupon,

DR. KATRINA ARMSTRONG,

being first duly sworn or affirmed to testify to the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, was examined and testified as follows: EXAMINATION

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Hi, Dr. Armstrong. Thanks for coming in. We met earlier, I'm Sean Keveney, I'm the acting GC. And we're interviewing you today pursuant to an investigation that the Office of Civil Rights at HHS has opened. Do you understand that?

A Yes.

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Q Okay. When did you become interim president? It was August of '24; is that right? A You know, the last year is really such a blur, but yes, my recollection would be that it's sometime in August.

Q Of -- of 2024, last year?

A Yes. So 2024.

Q I -- I -- I've put in front of you a report titled, Columbia University Student Experiences of Antisemitism and Recommendations for Promoting Shared Values and Inclusion. Do you see that?

A Yes. I see that.

Q And it's also dated August 2024?

A Yes, I see the report.

Q Have you seen this report before?

A Yes, I have seen it.

Q When did you first see this, approximately?

A Really, the last year has been such a blur. I'm not going to have a specific date for when I saw it.

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Q Would it have been shortly after you became the interim president?

A This last year has been the most challenging of my life. And it's really impossible for me to remember dates at this point.

Q But you do recall seeing this report before?

A Can I look at it?

Q Of course. Yeah, please.

THE REPORTER: And will we -- will we be marking this as an exhibit?

MR. KEVENEY: Yeah, that's fine.

THE REPORTER: Okay.

(Exhibit 1 was marked.)

THE WITNESS: So I recall having seeing a report from the Task Force. I can't tell you that this is the same report that I have in front of me. BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Okay. Well, we're not trying to pull a fast one on you, Dr. Armstrong. I'm pretty sure this is the report that Columbia prepared. It -- it includes a number of recommendations; do you -- do

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 9

you see that in the table of contents?

Check that -- that page right there?

A I see the table of contents.

Q And you see where it says, Numeral 2, Recommendations for Promoting Shared Values and Inclusion?

A Yes. Oh, yes. Yes. Improving the campus environment.

Q Yes. Did you do anything as the interim president to implement these

recommendations? A So since I took the position, and

actually my entire career, I have stood up against all forms of harassment and discrimination, including antisemitism.

While the last year is very much a blur, the -- the administration is deeply committed to addressing antisemitism. I

would need to look at specifics for any --

Q So I -- I --

A -- specifics.

Q I appreciate that, Doctor, but what I was asking you was, do you recall implementing any of the recommendations that were made

in this report?

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A Thank you for the question. And I guess my perspective is that given that this is some time ago for this report, I would need to look at the specific recommendations to be able to recall what was done.

Q So let me see if I can ask it a different way.

Sitting here today, do you have a specific recollection of implementing any of these recommendations?

A I appreciate your question. I would need to look at this to understand those recollections, and I'm happy to go through it.

Q So is it fair to say that, no, you don't have a specific memory sitting here today of implementing these?

A No, that's not fair to say. I'm saying --

Q I -- I -- ma'am, I appreciate that you --

to -- to answer the question specifically,

we -- we need to go through all the

recommendations to remember whether you

implemented any. And I'm not trying to trap

you. I'm just asking you, based on

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 11

your memory, sitting here today, whether you remember implementing any of these recommendations? A Sir, I'm not trying to not answer the question. I would like to look at the recommendations, if possible?

Q We -- we can move on. We can definitely take a break and have you look at them. It's -- this is not --

A Thank you.

Q -- it's not a got-you kind of question. If you don't remember, it doesn't mean you didn't do it. It just means you don't remember sitting here today, whether you did it. Did -- does that make sense?

A I very much appreciate and would be very grateful to be able to look at the recommendations. We received a lot of recommendations from different groups about addressing antisemitism. And would very much appreciate reviewing the recommendations.

Q Let me ask you this. Do you recall when the federal government first told Columbia

University that it was reviewing its funding?

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 12

Roughly; I'm not asking for a specific date. A So the last weeks -- you know, this has been the most challenging year of my life, so I don't have specific recollections of dates. Q So I -- I --

I'm not asking you for a date. Do you remember that the federal government told Columbia at some point in the last month that it was reviewing its funding?

A I think I would have to understand more specifically what you're referring to.

Q You don't recall Columbia University getting a letter from the General Services Administration saying, We're reviewing your funding? A Perhaps you could show me the specifics. We've received a lot of letters from the administration.

Q If -- if you don't remember, the answer is you don't remember. So let me just ask it again. Do you remember getting a letter from the General Services Administration

saying that Columbia's funding was
under review?

A What I'd prefer, if possible, is for you

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong
Conducted on April 1, 2025 13

to show me the specific letter given that we -- and I would be happy to look at the letter and tell you whether I remember it.

Q I appreciate that, but I -- I would like you to answer my specific question. And again, if you don't remember, that's fine.

Do you remember getting a letter from the General Services Administration saying that Columbia's funding was under review?

A So what I am hoping to share is that we have received, I -- I'm not sure, but it feels like dozens of letters from -- and I couldn't tell you whether they're coming from the General Services Administration or from some others. It often appears that there's multiple signatories to different letters. And so if you would like me to comment on a specific letter, I'm happy to review it. Q Do you recall at some point

that the federal government put a pause on funding to Columbia University?

A Again, I'd be happy if you have some

specific documents around this to review them.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 14

Q Doctor, are you --

A It has been --

Q Go ahead. Sorry. I didn't mean to cut you off.

A That's okay. It's obviously been an incredibly difficult period for me, for the University. And I think we've received many, many correspondence. From my perspective, they actually -- to my understanding they go to the General Counsel and I think that would then be sent and shared with my office.

Q I mean, I want to try to make the question very, very clear. And again, if you don't remember, it's fine to say that.

Do you remember a point at which the federal government cut off funding to Columbia University?

A I appreciate your question. What I would appreciate is seeing what you're referring to because there has been many, many discussions with the federal government.

Q Ma'am --

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A As to my understanding, over the last months.

Q -- I'm just asking for your recollection, sitting here today. Do you remember a point in the last month when the federal government cut the funding streams to Columbia University?

It -- it -- it -- I'm trying to make it a very simple question. If you don't remember, you can tell me you don't remember. But do you remember a point in the last month when the federal government stopped funding to the University of -- of Columbia?

A I'm asking you to show me what you're referring to.

Q I'm not going to -- to put the letter in front of you right now, ma'am, because I don't have it in front of me.

MR. KEVENEY: Noah, would you mind getting the letters?

MR. MILLER: Sure. Yeah.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q I'm really just asking for your memory.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 16

If you don't remember the federal government stopping funding, you can say that?

A So sir, there's been so many letters and I'm committed to making sure that I refer and answer specifically based upon whichever letter you're referring to.

Q Is it fair to say you don't remember the government stopping funding?

A What I am saying is that if -- I would like to see the letter that you're describing and then I'm happy -- there's been -- over the last months, maybe the last year, certainly since I started, my understanding, which is very limited given the blur of those months, is that we have received many, many letters from the federal government.

MR. LEVANDER: While he goes to get it maybe we can take a short break?

MR. KEVENEY: I was just going to say it might make sense to take a break. Thanks.

(A recess was taken.)

MR. KEVENEY: Okay. Dr. Armstrong, I

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 17

think your Counsel indicated he wanted to ask you something.

MR. LEVANDER: Without recalling a specific letter, which you now have in front of you, perhaps, do you generally recall that there was among the correspondence that you described as many, many letters with the government over the last period of time, there was at least one letter that concerned the issue of funding?

THE WITNESS: Yes. I appreciate the letter and understanding it in the multiple different correspondence. And yes, I recognize that amongst the many letters that we had, that this letter was one of them.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q So there did come a point in time where you understood that federal funding to Columbia University was in jeopardy?

A So over the course of those months, I think we had understood that there were concerns about Columbia and federal funding.

Q And did you understand that Columbia's

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federal funding was in jeopardy because of allegations that the University had tolerated antisemitism? I'm not asking you to agree; do you understand that that was the allegation?

A Obviously, my -- this was a challenging time, but -- and I understand that there were concerns here in this letter about the antisemitism, concerns of the federal government, and that those were expressed in this letter.

Q After you became aware of those concerns, did you go back and take a look at what we marked as Exhibit 1, the recommendations?

A So over the course of, certainly the months that I have been in this position, the team has worked to address the recommendations around antisemitism from multiple groups, including the Task Force. I don't have specific memories right now of exactly what I did after receiving this letter.

Q Do you recall that one of the

recommendations of the Columbia Task
Force was to implement the definition of
antisemitism? If you

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong
Conducted on April 1, 2025 19

look at the table of contents about halfway down, you'll see what I'm referring to; it -- it's right here, ma'am?

A I was just going to go to Page 45. Is that --

Q Oh, okay. Yeah, that's fine. Yeah.

A So this is not an area of my expertise in terms of definitions of antisemitism. I see the text here and appreciate that it was part of the report. And --

Q So I'm not --

A -- when I --

Q Go ahead. Sorry.

A -- the report was issued, my office put out a statement strongly in support of the work of the -- the Antisemitism Task Force.

Q After you got this report, did Columbia University implement the definition of antisemitism that was recommended?

A Again, this is not my area of expertise.

This area of definition, as they say, the

working definition of antisemitism for
pedagogy and training

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 20

purposes, this area is really implemented through others, including our General Counsel and others through the University. It's not my area of expertise.

Q And this question doesn't really call for any expertise. It's a simple yes or no.

Did Columbia University, after you received this report in August of 2024, implement the definition of antisemitism that was recommended? A There is -- if we read this report, it is a -- it really comes up as you see with multiple different parts of the definition. A working definition, it talks about pedagogy, it talks about training. When this report was written, multiple steps were taken to move forward on how to address antisemitism at Columbia. Multiple people have worked on that.

Q Ma'am, you still didn't answer my question. Did the University adopt the definition of antisemitism after this report came out? A This -- my -- my

experience and my
understanding is that this document was a

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 21

recommendation, as I said, that was then evaluated and worked with through multiple offices, including the General Counsel's office who oversees this work.

Q Did the University adopt the definition of antisemitism after this report came out? A I --

MR. LEVANDER: If you know the answer to that question, fine. If you only know it because of what the Counsel told you, that's privileged. And if you're not sure of the answer to the question, just say, you're not sure.

THE WITNESS: Yes, this is not something that I -- this is a multi-faceted, multi-level piece that includes even as they say it across multiple dimensions.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Yeah. I'm not asking about the definition that you keep pointing to. My question is -- is simple.

After August of 2024, did the University adopt the definition of antisemitism? It -- yes, no or you don't know; any of those are acceptable

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answers. I'm not trying to trick you, it's -- I'm really trying to ask a simple question.

A I think, and I -- I very much appreciate that. And I'm really trying to explain how this works from the University.

Q Did the University, after you got this report, adopt the definition of antisemitism? A This -- if we -- if we were to read this section, it talks about pedagogy training. And what I'm sharing is that a large group of people worked upon pedagogy and training, including Title VI training and many other things. That was not my area. That was done through the Counsel's office. Q And you're still not answering my question.

Did the University, after you got this report, adopt a definition of antisemitism?

A I do believe I'm answering your question. Q Let me ask you this --

A There's multiple pieces to it.

Q Do you recall getting this letter, the
March 13th letter from three agencies of
the federal

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong
Conducted on April 1, 2025 23

government?

(Exhibit 2 was marked.)

A Yes. I recall getting this letter.

Q What did you do when you got this

letter? A This -- I will just be clear
that the

last weeks, if not the last months or a
year is just incredibly challenging for me
to remember anything in specificity. It has
been the most challenging time of my life.

Q I appreciate that, ma'am. And so
you've said that a couple of times. I'm
just asking you -- A So --

Q -- what did you do, if anything,
when you got this letter?

A So what I'd like to share is that
this was the day that the discipline was
announced. And so the next few days were
spent managing how to ensure that the -- we
were effectively managing that process.

Q Can you look at the second page of this
letter. Do you see where it asks the
University to formalize, adopt and
promulgate a definition of

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 24

antisemitism? Do you see that?

A Yes. I see that.

Q That request was made because it's true, isn't it, ma'am, that the University, as of the date of this letter hadn't adopted a definition of antisemitism?

A I think it's impossible for me to know here why that request was made.

Q Let me put it this way. You got a recommendation in August of 2024 to adopt the definition of antisemitism. Isn't it true that the University didn't adopt the definition after it got that report, and instead, it took the federal government threatening to pull hundreds of millions of dollars to finally make the University take action and adopt the definition? That's true, isn't it?

MR. LEVANDER: Objection as to form. You can try to answer.

MR. KEVENEY: He's objecting because it's a compound question. Let me break it down.

THE WITNESS: I'm sorry. I'm new to this

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 25

in terms of like all of that.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q You got this report in August of '24, right, that's the date on it?

A I understand. I just haven't had a chance to go through the document that you're holding in your hand. So we're just going to have to --

Q Let me put it --

A -- understand that I haven't reviewed it.

We received a report from the Antisemitism Task Force in August 2024. At which point I put out a statement that I'm sure somebody can find about it.

Q That report asked the University to adopt the definition of antisemitism, didn't it? That was the recommendation in this report, right?

A I wonder if we should read that again now together.

Q We've already -- we've already -- you've already told me, ma'am, that that recommendation was in this report?

A Let's read it together about that.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 26

Q I'm not going to waste everybody's time by reading it.

A Well, then I would like to be --

Q We'll be here all day.

A -- clear for everybody that it's actually a two-page -- three page, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, paragraph section. That is much more complicated from my perspective than what you're saying.

Q Isn't it true, ma'am, that the University didn't adopt a definition of antisemitism until the federal government sent you the letter in your hands?

A We at the University, under the General Counsel's office, have moved forward on Title VI policy and training. That is under the General Counsel. They have provided all of that. I'm sure they'd be happy to share with you what they did. And the training that is included in that.

Q Has the University ever adopted a definition of antisemitism?

A I'm just going to say again, that this issue is from -- I am not an expert

in this issue.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 27

And from my understanding, this issue is much more complicated than how it is -- and I would suggest that we look at what was recommended. We look at what the General Counsel's Office did through Title VI training and through what we did through our Title VI policy. I don't have any of that in front of me. That was worked on by the General Counsel's Office and I would be happy -- I'm sure they'd be happy to provide it to you.

Q Let me ask my question again because I thought it was pretty simple.

Has the University ever adopted a definition of antisemitism?

A And I'm just going to say again, that the Title VI -- VI, the Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy from the University can be provided to everyone here. It falls under the General Counsel's Office, and I am sure they would be happy to provide that information to you and to others.

Q Are you aware, ma'am, at some point being told that a faculty member called

Jewish men wealthy

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 28

white capitalists who laundered dirty money? And I'm -- I'm looking at Page 22 of the report that you would have received.

A Sorry, I messed up the pages. Give me a second. Oh, here. I'll get it back together. Just give me a second if that's okay.

Q I underlined it for you.

MR. LEVANDER: I take it the question is, does she -- does she recall hearing that?

MR. KEVENEY: Correct. Yeah.

THE WITNESS: So I am sitting here, I am -- obviously remember reading the report. I certainly have no recollection at this point of specific things in the report. But I see exactly what's on the page in front of me.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Okay. So you do remember reading that at some point?

A I don't -- no, I don't remember reading the specifics at this point.

Q Is it concerning to you that a faculty member allegedly called Jewish men wealthy, white

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capitalists who launder dirty money?

A I am absolutely committed to fighting antisemitism and standing against antisemitism at all times.

Q I understand your commitment --

A It is exactly what I do at all times. Every form of antisemitism, of discrimination, I am -- you know, I can't even just share with you how deeply that is what drove me to stand up for this position. I believe so strongly that we must not tolerate --

Q So given --

A -- discrimination.

Q Given your clear personal strong belief in standing up for antisemitism, I assume it's fair to say that when you read that a faculty member said this, that you found that concerning?

A I am -- I don't remember the specifics in that report.

Q Is it concerning to you sitting here today that a faculty member allegedly said these things?

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A I will just say again, that I am -- deeply, deeply believe that we must have a campus full -- free of every form of harassment and discrimination. I'm personally incredibly concerned when anybody feels that they are discriminated or -- in any way.

Q So given your deep concerns, I assume you took steps to find out which faculty member said these things?

MR. LEVANDER: Objection. She said she doesn't remember reading this.

THE WITNESS: Yes. Well, that's a different question, sir.

MR. LEVANDER: Well, it's not. If you don't remember reading it, then it's hard to remember what you did if you didn't ultimately read it.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Did you ever try to find out whether a faculty member said antisemitic things?

A So I stand all the time against every piece and we -- I just will continue to say at

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 31

moment, and I've said it throughout this year to every community that I've been to, that I stand against every experience -- where any of our students experience anything that stops them from discrimination has been -- I'm happy to say that all of our processes for addressing those concerns go through established processes. And those are absolutely managed through OGC. All of them has reports. And that's how those things are absolutely managed.

Q I don't think you answered my question, ma'am. The question is fairly simple.

Did you ever try to find out whether a faculty member said something antisemitic? Do you recall ever trying to find out whether a specific faculty member said something antisemitic? Do you recall?

A And so I don't in my experience oversee that part, so I don't -- those management options for faculty members in pursuing claims of discrimination and harassment are done

through our established Title VI and other efforts. I think

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 32

that's something that you guys would be aware of here.

Q So is the answer, no, you didn't personally try to find out whether a faculty member said these things?

A I don't even remember reading that thing. It's been a year that you can't even imagine. Q Are you familiar with

somebody named

Joseph Massad?

A Yes. I'm familiar with Joseph Massad. Q And you're aware that after the October 7th attacks, he called those attacks awesome and remarkable?

A So I was at the medical center for October 7th. I was actually on service in the hospital and my -- was not involved in that period. I became aware of the concerns

about Massad's statement later. I don't remember the specifics. Q So you did -- you

did become aware of

concerns about some of his statements later; is that what you just said?

A So there were concerns about -- and I'm

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trying to -- like this has been such a blur in terms of timing or any of the specifics. So I just can't remember specifics of when -- any of the specifics.

Q Did you personally do anything to address Mr. Massad's comments?

A So as I -- I think I've said, the specifics over the last year, this was prior to my arrival in to the presidency. And as I understand those issues, you know, by the time I had taken over, the OGC and many others had been managing those issues.

Q Did you personally do anything as the interim president to address Mr. Massad's comments? A I -- you know, this has been a very challenging period and I can't at this point say that whether I did or I didn't. I just don't have a recollection of the specifics here.

Q It's -- if you don't remember, that's fine.

A Okay.

Q We'll get through this a lot

faster -- A I'm trying. I don't
remember.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 34

Q It's not a memory test. If you don't remember, it's perfectly fine to say you don't remember.

A Oh, okay. That's helpful.

Q So just so the record's clear. You don't recall doing anything personally as the president to address Mr. Massad's questions?

A Questions?

Q His comments, I'm sorry. Let me -- let me say it again so the transcript's clear.

You don't recall personally doing anything as the interim president to address Mr. Massad's comments?

MR. LEVANDER: Objection. She's answered. She does not recall one way or the other anything that she did about Joseph Massad's comments. BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q As interim president, in response to the letter you got with demands from the government, you agreed to have a provost review the Middle East Studies curriculum; do you remember that?

A I'm sorry. Can we just be clear about

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these different letters at this point. We're talking about the one --

MR. LEVANDER: Just try to listen to his question.

THE WITNESS: Well, these -- so many letters. I'm -- okay. I am listening.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q You recall getting the letter that we just looked at with demands from the government, right?

MR. LEVANDER: You're referring to the March 13th, correct?

MR. KEVENEY: Correct.

THE WITNESS: Yes. Just --

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q With the specific demands that the government was asking of Columbia; you recall that, right?

A I do. As I had previously stated, those two days were largely taken up with managing the disciplinary outcomes that had come out. And so we were really focused on that in my office for the --

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the -- because of our focus on that. So yes. Q We will get through this a lot faster, if you please just listen to my question and try to answer what I'm asking you.

A Sure. Sure.

Q I'm -- I'm not trying to pick on you. I'm just trying to move us along.

This letter had specific demands; do you -- do you recall those?

A Yes.

Q Did the University take any steps in response to those demands?

A So over the last time that I have certainly been in the leadership, we have been moving forward on many areas in response to concerns about harassment and discrimination, in response to concerns about management of disruption, in response to concerns about advancing our academic excellence. There's many, many letters supporting that. So we did -- stood up, and I'm proud that we both demonstrated our progress and our steps, because I believe those are right

for Columbia, for

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 37

our students. And we are very proud to have done that, and I am deeply committed to what we sent as our statement of our steps.

Q Is the answer, yes, the University took steps to implement the demands that the government made?

THE WITNESS: I --

MR. LEVANDER: There -- just objection. There -- there's a lot of demands in this letter. She's said, generally what they've done, but do you have a specific -- you know, or -- or she or -- or, you know, did they respond to this letter? The answer is probably, yes, she can testify to that. If the question is, did -- did they implement each or -- or -- or accept each of these demands, that's hard to --

MR. KEVENEY: I got it. We can go through them individually.

THE WITNESS: And we have a statement, I think, that we made about it that I don't know if you have, but I'm happy to review it with you. BY MR. KEVENEY:

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 38

Q After you got the government's letter, did Columbia University implement the mask ban? A I would like, if possible, if we're going to review the statement that we made of what we did, I'd like if we can to share that statement. I don't know if that's possible.

Q I'm just asking for your recollection. After you got this letter, did the University change its policies with respect to masks?

A So I'd like to -- given how, you know, challenging this has been, if possible, if we could, and I just would like to say that we made and have been making multiple steps forward for the University to address multiple concerns, including identification, public safety.

And I'm happy to review what's in the statement that we made. And I stand by everything that we said in that. I don't have it in front of me and so given the challenges of the blur of the last weeks, I would appreciate being able to review it with you.

Q Sitting here today, do you remember

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 39

whether the University changed its mask policy after getting this letter?

A I just would really appreciate, given the complexities of the wording and everything and how challenging words are and people's interpretation, to have a copy of this statement so that I can review it with you of what we said.

Q I understand what you're asking, but -- but I would like you to answer my question, please? A Would it be faster if I got it?

Q Can you just please answer my question? MR. LEVANDER: Can I -- can I help here?

MR. KEVENEY: Yeah.

MR. LEVANDER: At a very high level, with regard to whatever the words may be, did the letter that was sent to the administration in response address the issue of masks?

THE WITNESS: So -- yes.

MR. LEVANDER: Okay.

THE WITNESS: Yes. I'm happy to say that my memory is that in the statement that we made about how we were addressing

discrimination and

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 40

harassment, that we talked both about our identification policies, which we've been working on and our public safety policies, which we had been working on.

MR. LEVANDER: Including masks?

THE WITNESS: Including the mask that is in the public safety policy. Yes.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q And you communicated that decision by way of a letter to the University; is that right? MR. LEVANDER: To the University or to the White House?

THE WITNESS: I'm sorry.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q To the University?

A So -- and I do just want to be precise, which is why I'm trying to make sure I'm answering your questions correctly. So -- so what I recall is that on -- and I'm not having the dates here very effectively given everything that's gone on. But what I recall is that at some point during that week, we -- I sent from my office, it

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 41

wasn't me obviously, it goes through teams, it's not my sending it. But there was a letter from my office to the University community that included a statement of all of what we were doing because of the right things to do that we then also sent to the government and put on a website. That is my memory. Q Do you remember having a meeting

with

faculty after you put out that statement?

A I have had many meetings with faculty. Q You put out that statement on a Friday. Do you remember having a meeting with faculty the following weekend that was on Zoom?

A I'm sorry to be so precise. I'm really not trying to make this take longer. I just want to make sure that I'm being very precise given -- you -- when you say the following weekend, you mean that Saturday and Sunday, right after the Friday? MR.

KEVENEY: Yes.

THE WITNESS: Yes.

Q What did you say during that meeting?

A And this has been the most challenging

time. I do not have precise recollections
of what I

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 42

said in that meeting or other meetings related in the following days.

Q You're aware there's a transcript of that meeting?

A I have understood that.

Q In fact, you knew it was being transcribed at the time by a feature on Zoom, right? A It -- so I was not involved in that part of it. My understanding is it's a closed caption thing that is destroyed at the end of the Zoom meeting.

Q Do you recall anything you said during that meeting?

A Certainly not with any level of precision. Q Isn't it true that you indicated that the University was not going to comply with the steps you indicated on Friday that it would take? A To the degree that there was any imprecision in my language or any confusion, I put out a public statement making it very clear that I was deeply and fully committed to the steps in that statement.

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Q Isn't it true that in private with the faculty, you backed away from what you said the University was going to do?

A To the degree -- I have been and remain and have always been fully committed to the steps in that statement. They are the right thing to do. And there was no intention on my part to ever back away from any of those statements. They are the right thing to do for Columbia. They're the right thing to do for our students. We'd been working on them for months, I believe strongly that they are the right things.

Q Have you ever encouraged a faculty member not to speak to the government?

A Certainly not to my memory.

Q Have you ever yelled at a faculty member because they were going to speak to the government? A Certainly I have no memory of anything like that.

Q Have you ever threatened a faculty member with revocation of lab privileges if they spoke to the government?

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A No memory of anything like that.

Q Have you ever tried to interfere in the government's investigation into Columbia

University? A I have no memory of interference of -- I have no memory. I have spoken again and again about the importance of following the law. I have -- Q So if a

faculty member told the task force that you chastised him for preparing to speak to the government, that wouldn't be true?

A I have no memory of chastising anybody and would never. I followed the law.

Q Are you aware of reports that students at Columbia spit on Jewish students?

A That is so heartbreaking to hear, and I had not heard those reports.

Q You've never heard -- I'm sorry. Go ahead.

A That is just absolutely heartbreaking. Q I understand that you disagree with somebody doing that, ma'am. But my question

is, did you ever hear a report that a student had spat on a Jewish student?

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 45

A I have no memory of hearing that report. Q As -- as the president, isn't that something that would stand out in your memory? A I have -- sir, we have had -- day after day, I have spent time making sure that we do everything that is right for our students. I have not heard -- I have no memory here of hearing that report.

Q You don't recall reading in this Antisemitism Report from August of '24, that students spat on Jewish students?

A We -- I -- it has been a very, very, very challenging year. I do not have specific recollections sitting here of what is in this report or what I recall from this report.

Q That seems like something that would jump out to the leader of a university. I -- I -- I'm just -- I don't understand how you could read that in this report and not remember hearing an

allegation that a student had spit on
a Jewish student?

A Over the last eight months, maybe it's

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong
Conducted on April 1, 2025 46

longer, it feels like a lifetime. I have met with so many students and I have listened to them and done everything I can to address their concerns.

Q Did doing everything you can to address their concerns include investigating whether a student spat on a Jewish student?

Let me rephrase it. Did you ever, as the president of the University, investigate an allegation that a student spat on a Jewish student? A It -- I'm trying -- so my understanding and memory of how this works is that all these investigations go through our Title VI and

Anti-Discrimination Office. That is how the University handles these allegations handles these investigations. I'm sure the General Counsel and that team can bring that information back to you. That is -- the University takes these responsibilities extraordinarily seriously.

That is how those investigations are done at the University. Q Let me ask it this

way. Did you

personally ask questions of anybody about
an allegation that a student spat on a
Jewish student?

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong
Conducted on April 1, 2025 47

A I appreciate your question. What I
-- MR. KEVENEY: And I would
appreciate if
you answered it.

THE WITNESS: I'm --

MR. KEVENEY: Maybe we should -- let's
take a break. Let's take a break because
I'm -- I'm starting to get a little
frustrated. Let's take a break.

THE WITNESS: Okay. Sure.

(A recess was taken.)

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Dr. Armstrong, a few of your answers
earlier, you talked about the Title VI
Office. Do you recall that?

A Yes, I do.

Q Okay. You're aware that there isn't
actually a Title VI Office at the
University of Columbia?

A My -- this is not, again, my area of
specific expertise, but my understanding
is that we have an Anti-Discrimination and
Harassment Policy that sits within our
Office of Institutional Equity.

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And that is my understanding.

Q So, Under the charter of the University, the president shall be the chief officer of the University and subject to the trustee shall have general charge of the affairs at the University. Do you see that first sentence there?

That's my only copy. Sorry.

A Yes. I see that first sentence.

Q So the -- the buck stops with you, right? Under the Charter, like you -- you're in charge? A So my understanding of the Charter is

that the trustees have full responsibility for the University. My understanding, and I haven't reviewed this here, is that -- that there is also other components of the University, including the faculties of the different groups. And there are other pieces in the statutes.

Q Did you have any actual authority as the interim president?

A My understanding is that I had some authority as the interim president.

Q And you keep saying that the issue of

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antisemitism is not your area of expertise,
but that was a major issue for the
University, wasn't it? MR. LEVANDER:
Objection. I'm not sure
she said that. She said that the processes
that were handled by the Office of the
General Counsel were not her area of
expertise. And definitions and rules and
regulations, the specific wording was not
her area of expertise.

MR. KEVENEY: It -- it -- that's fair to
say. So let me ask it a different way.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Would you agree with what your Counsel
just said that what you were telling me
earlier is that the processes for dealing
with allegations of antisemitism weren't
in your area of expertise?

A So the processes, the specifics of
the definitions and the policies that were
created, were overseen by the Office of
General Counsel. And that is not my
specific area of expertise.

Q Is it fair to say that you were very

concerned about the issue of antisemitism
on campus? A Yes. I've been concerned about

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 50

discrimination, harassment and antisemitism both on campus, and absolutely.

Q So despite the fact that you had authority, you were concerned about antisemitism on campus, you never developed expertise in the processes for dealing with it, did you?

A I -- at Columbia University, the processes for overseeing our discrimination and harassment, are managed by the Office of General Counsel. I rely on them, their lawyers -- I'm a physician -- to do what is correct for the investigation of concerns of discrimination and harassment.

Q Well, you told me earlier, ma'am, is that those processes weren't your area of expertise. Isn't that what you told me earlier? We can go back and check the -- the transcript.

A What we're saying -- or what I am saying is that as president, we rely upon the processes that are in the Office of Institutional Equity that are overseen by

the General Counsel.

I don't have specific expertise in

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 51

definitions of antisemitism, which is my understanding of what you were referring to. Those processes are managed through our Office of General Counsel.

Q It's fair to say, isn't it, ma'am, that despite having authority as a president, you didn't bother to tackle this problem yourself, you just deferred to all these other processes; that's what you keep telling me, right?

A So we have many processes at the University for addressing discrimination and harassment in multiple different levels that I care deeply about. And that I believe I appointed the best possible people to lead those efforts. Q Do you think those processes work to actually address the issue of antisemitism on campus? A I believe that we are doing the processes that are needed to address the issues of antisemitism on campus and that there has been substantive progress and that we are continuing, as we said in that statement, to take steps forward to address

discrimination and harassment on campus.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 52

Q So is your answer yes, you think the processes that were in place worked to address antisemitism?

MR. LEVANDER: Objection. She stated what she stated. And specifically, she said there was substantive progress and they were still working on it.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Did the processes in your view do anything to address prior to getting the government's letter in March, the antisemitism on campus?

A I believe that our processes are making and we're making substantive process -- progress. I'm sorry, progress. And that they're continuing and what we committed to and what I commit to every day is to make that progress to address antisemitism, discrimination and

harassment. Q How long did it take to expel the students who took over Hamilton Hall?

A I'm not going to have a specific memory of how long that took.

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Q What kind of doctor are you?

A Actually can I -- I'm sorry, can I -- so I do know, obviously when the judiciary -- because we were just talking about that. So on March 13 was when the -- I think they -- they call it -- we call it sanctions were delivered.

Q It took almost a year to expel to the students, didn't it?

A That, I don't -- again, I was Uptown for the -- for the first year, but that seems like a reasonable estimate to me.

Q Do you think that's a reasonable amount of time to take to discipline the students who took over a university building and held people hostage? A So I believe that we

must -- I do not think that it is a reasonable amount of time. And we worked very, very hard across many teams to improve those processes so they could be a -- much more effective, efficient and do I think what was needed. I have made multiple statements about that.

Q Are you aware of any efforts by

faculty members to interfere with the
disciplinary process

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 54

for those students?

A No. I'm not aware of any efforts by faculty members that I can remember. I

just -- Q Do you know --

A -- want to be clear. I do not remember any efforts by faculty members to interfere with disciplinary processes for students.

Q What kind of doctor are you, Dr. Armstrong? I mean, do you have a specialty? A I'm an internist.

Q And you went to medical school, obviously, right?

A Yes.

Q Where?

A I went to Johns Hopkins.

Q You had to memorize a lot of things to get through medical school, right?

A I'm trying to think about if there's a way to actually answer this, that it's -- so actually what we teach in medical school is clinical decision making. It's actually how to process information. I taught a course at Penn called

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Clinical Decision Making. It's not about facts. Facts change very quickly in medicine. So I -- I don't know how to --

Q You didn't have to memorize a lot of anatomy when you were in med school?

A So med school is both about the facts that exist at that time. And yes, we memorized things, but those change very quickly. And so we don't teach people to memorize facts. What was true 20 years ago in medicine is not true today.

Q It's fair to say though, that when you were in medical school, you had to have the mental faculty to memorize and remember a lot of things, right, I mean, that doesn't seem like a controversial statement?

THE WITNESS: So I'm -- what --

MR. LEVANDER: I -- I object to the form as being vague and hard to answer, but you do the best you can.

THE WITNESS: Yeah. So when you're in medical school, and I guess I'm just going to continue to say this and -- is

the way we teach in

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 56

medical school is yes, there's information. When I was there, it was mostly in books. Now, it is on the electronics and on the electronic medical record. What we teach students is how to gather that information, not to memorize it, but to gather it because it changes so quickly and then to apply it to an individual patient.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q I guess, I'm just trying to understand how you have such a terrible memory of specific incidents of antisemitism when you're clearly an intelligent doctor?

MR. LEVANDER: Objection. Objection as to form.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Can you explain that to me; how do you not remember all these horrible specific things that happened on campus?

MR. LEVANDER: Objection. She's testified repeatedly that she heard lots of horrible things. And she's unable, as she sits here today, to specifically recall certain events that you've

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asked her about. But she recalls hearing numerous reports of terrible things that happened, including antisemitic incidents that she was concerned about. BY MR.

KEVENEY:

Q Is that -- is that accurate what your Counsel just said?

A Yes. And I believe that's what I've said. Q Can you remember anything specific you did with your authority as president to address the -- all those horrible things you heard?

A I -- yes.

Q Anything specific?

A Of course. And I believe that by us having our anti-discrimination policies and office that were set up, that was under my role as president, they were run through the appropriate processes. I believe that those are very important and substantive steps to address forms of discrimination and harassment, including antisemitism.

Q These are the same processes that resulted in taking 10 months to expel those

students?

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 58

MR. LEVANDER: Argumentative.

THE WITNESS: No, they're not. These are our Office of Institutional Equity policies that are policies related to addressing discrimination and harassment.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Can you recall any of the specific horrible things you heard from Jewish students, anything specifically?

A You know, I think that it's really hard for me to come up with specifics. But my memory was that the most hurtful things that I heard were about friends no longer being friends. So that people that they had counted on were no longer friendly. And I remember being heartbroken to hear that friendships had no longer been --

Q I'm sorry, go ahead.

A -- continued.

Q That's the worst thing you remember hearing?

A That -- I'm not saying that's the worst thing. You asked me, could I remember anything and

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that was at the top of my mind.

Q Do you remember learning that students were calling for the destruction of the state of Israel?

A I remember meeting with many students and hearing many things.

Q I -- is that one of the things you remember?

A Sitting here, I have, you know, no specific memory of hearing that, but I recognize the concern about that and understand that.

Q After you became interim president, did you ask that any faculty receive training on the federal Civil Rights laws?

A Again, under our policy that was developed around discrimination harassment, there was mandatory training that was done of faculty and staff.

Q Did you receive that training?

A Yes.

Q What form was it in?

A So again, this has been a very, very

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challenging year to remember the specifics. In general, our trainings are done on the internet with different forms of like -- I'm so sorry. Like -- but like PowerPoint and video and other types of, you know, content, maybe is the word I'm looking for.

Q Do you recall three deans being placed on leave in the summer of 2024?

A So I was not, again, in the interim president role. I do remember and recall that there was issues going on related to an event that happened with some of the student-facing professionals.

Q Do you recall that they had sent texts talking about Jewish control of finance?

A No, I was -- I was not at the medical -- I was at the medical center there and simply don't recall the specifics of it.

Q So when you became interim president, did you do anything to look into the texts that those deans had allegedly sent?

A So when I became interim president, my
understanding is that that process had
been managed

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong
Conducted on April 1, 2025 61

through our General Counsel and through the president. My understanding is those individuals were no longer at Columbia. It was not specific. I did not have specific memories or engagement in the -- I just don't remember that issue being on my plate.

Q Do you have any recollection of a finding in the Columbia task force that numerous incidents of antisemitism took place in dorm rooms?

A Again, I have met with many students. I have heard many reports of things and don't have a specific memory right now of this document and what was in it. But I've heard many reports. When we had a report, we would send it through the appropriate processes, which fit under our Office of Institutional Equity.

Q Did you interview any students who had alleged that they had been victims of antisemitism? A So over the last eight months, I have met with many, many students and do not have specific memories of individual conversations. But I -- I am

sure I have met with students around
concerns of

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 62

antisemitism, because I met with many, many students over the last eight months.

Q Are you familiar with a group called Students for Justice in Palestine?

A So yes, I know the name. I'm not aware of specifics to some degree, but yes, I am familiar. Q And was there a chapter of that group at Columbia?

A So again, this is from before I was at -- in the interim president role. But my understanding is that there was a chapter of that group at Columbia.

Q And you're sure that that chapter never existed while you were interim president?

A Again, I don't have specific memories of -- of specifics that are here. But my understanding is that the chapter, and again, I don't have a specific word for what -- how those student groups are managed, but there's -- and if we had the wording here, I'd be happy to review it.

But there's three things that, as I understand it, maybe I'm imprecise in this again,

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that student groups are no longer -- and I want to be careful because I don't have the right word. But that group, my understanding is -- was not actually recognized at Columbia or was -- somehow that status had been changed the year before. So the status was changed prior to my arrival.

Q What do you know about Students for Justice in Palestine?

A I know that their status was changed prior to my arrival.

Q Do you know anything about the group other than its status?

A I know the name. I -- I understand -- no, I -- I'm sorry. You'll have to be more specific. Q Do you understand that they're alleged to have ties to terrorist organizations?

A No, I am not -- I'm not in the -- this -- I don't have access to data on ties to terrorist organizations in the way that you're talking about, but I --

Q Isn't that something as president you would want to know about?

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A I would like to say, as president, I stand against all forms of terrorism, all forms of violence. And if I have any information that we are risking anything for our students, I would, of course stand against that.

Q Information about ties to terrorist groups with the Students for Justice in Palestine is public knowledge, ma'am. How could you not as the president know about that?

MR. LEVANDER: Objection as to form. You can try to answer.

THE WITNESS: So as the president, we have a very large public safety and other group that works very closely with the counter-terrorism offices across multiple different areas. And so all of that is I think an extraordinary team who is deeply committed to addressing any concerns about terrorism. Of course, I stand against terrorism and any concerns.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q And you're personally deeply

committed to that, too, right?

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 65

A You're going to have to -- committed to -- Q To opposing any forms of terrorism or links to terrorist groups out on campus?

A Yes, I am personally deeply committed to opposing terrorism --

Q So deeply -- deeply committed that you didn't know that Students for Justice and Palestine has links to terrorist organizations? That makes absolutely no sense, ma'am.

MR. LEVANDER: So that -- that's not a -- that's not a question.

MR. KEVENEY: It's not a question. It -- it is -- I -- I'm just shocked. I'm shocked. BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Let me ask you this. Do you think it's important for Columbia University to cooperate with federal law enforcement?

A Yes. I believe strongly that it's important for Columbia University to cooperate with federal law --

Q You believe so strongly that -- that the University should cooperate with federal law

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enforcement that you said you were heartbroken to learn that federal agents were on campus; isn't that true?

A Yes.

Q In fact, you said it's heartbreaking to have federal law enforcement officers doing their job on the campus of your university; isn't that what you said at one point?

A So I would like to specify here that the events of that evening, and I think at this point, I want to be careful because that was managed by Counsel and outside Counsel and the events of that evening --

MR. LEVANDER: So I'm instructing you not to tell -- testify about anything you were told by Counsel. But if you have a way of answering that question without revealing what you were told by Counsel, please try to do so.

MR. KEVENEY: I can withdraw the question. Let me just ask it this way.

THE WITNESS: Yeah. I'm trying to figure that one out.

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MR. LEVANDER: The question was been withdrawn.

THE WITNESS: It has? I'm sorry.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q On March 13th of 2005 (sic), you wrote that you were, Heartbroken that federal agents were on campus. Isn't that true?

A I don't have the -- it -- could I see the -- I don't have a specific memory sitting here of everything I've written. And if you'd like to show me the document, I'm happy to look at it.

Q You don't remember saying you were heartbroken that there were federal agents on your campus?

A So can I say that I remember using the term heartbroken because of the experience. But I do not remember it being about federal agents on campus. I remember saying I was heartbroken. And I'm happy to look at it.

Q We'll find that statement.

A Okay.

Q Are you aware that the University has

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been sued in a lawsuit captioned, Students against Antisemitism v. Columbia?

MR. LEVANDER: You may answer -- you may answer that question, yes or no. And then be careful about revealing any attorney-client privileges. So you can say yes, I -- I -- I -- I know there's a lawsuit. No, I don't know there's a lawsuit or I don't -- I'm not sure if I know that lawsuit.

THE WITNESS: Yeah. I'm just not sure that I know that specific lawsuit.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Are you aware of a lawsuit that alleged that Columbia professors distributed materials justifying the attacks of October 7th?

A I am not sure I'm aware of that specific lawsuit.

Q As the interim president, shouldn't you be aware of an allegation that your professors were distributing materials justifying the attacks of October 7th?

A So I -- we have had, to my understanding,

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multiple lawsuits over the last months. And I am not here to be able to tell you the specifics of any given lawsuit and would have to rely on Counsel for that.

Q Shouldn't you, as the president of the University, be aware of an allegation that your professors distributed materials justifying the attacks of October 7th?

A So as the president of University, I receive many concerns and allegations, including, you know, many things that have been highly problematic. And we refer them to the appropriate office for investigation and resolution. That is a procedure that I stand by.

Q Had you personally done anything to look into allegations that Columbia professors were trying to justify the events of October 7th? A So as the president, these

-- I

personally request that these offices manage every form of concern. Those are reported through those offices and I am

personally committed to that process.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 70

Q Who were the professors who were alleged to have distributed materials justifying October 7th? MR. LEVANDER: If you know. If you don't know just say you don't know.

THE WITNESS: I don't know.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Because you didn't bother to find out, did you?

A Those processes are managed through the appropriate offices.

Q Did you bother to find out who those professors were alleged to be?

A I -- I will just restate that as president my responsibility is to ensure that every single report goes through those offices. It is not to identify individuals by name.

Q Is that a no, you don't know if you don't know who those professors are -- were?

A I don't hear or have any memory of any of the names of specific professors that you're referring to.

Q And you never bothered to find out the

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names, did you?

A Those efforts are managed, not -- my personal role as president is to ensure that those processes get the reports are -- they -- I do not get individual names.

Q I supervise about 600 lawyers. And if I found out that one of them did something egregious, like trying to justify October 7th, ma'am, I would find out who that was personally. Why didn't you do that as the president of the University? Why didn't you find out who was alleged to be justifying October 7th?

MR. LEVANDER: Objection as to form.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q I -- I -- I -- I am baffled of your leadership style, I guess, is what I'm saying. Why didn't you bother to find this out? Are you -- are you concerned at all that there might be professors who were trying to justify the events of October 7th?

A So I am absolutely committed to addressing, I think, as we have said again and again --

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Q So committed that you didn't bother to find out who those professors were? I'm -- I'm sorry, I'll take that back.

MR. LEVANDER: You interrupted her. Do you want her to finish her sentence?

MR. KEVENEY: No, it's okay. I'll withdraw the question.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Are you familiar with the phrase, From the river to the sea?

A Yes. I'm familiar with the phrase.

Q What do you understand that to mean?

A So again, the interpretation of each of these types of statements is done through our Office of Institutional Equity and Policy.

Q Can I ask you --

MR. LEVANDER: -- just answer the question. Do you have an understanding of the phrase, From the river to the sea?

THE WITNESS: I do not have a specific understanding. What I understand is that

different groups interpret it differently.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 73

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Are you aware of any student saying, The 7th of October is going to be every day for you, to the Jewish students?

A I have no specific memory of that statement.

(Exhibit 3 was marked.)

Q So earlier I was asking you about your statement about being heartbroken. Does that refresh your memory of your specific statement? A Yes. Thank you. I appreciate it.

Q So you said you were heartbroken that federal agents were on campus, right?

A So what it actually says is in -- to university residences, but yes, I said I was heartbroken. I'm writing heartbroken to

inform you. Q Are you aware of any allegations that students at Columbia University were in communication with Hamas terrorists before October 7th?

A No, I am not aware of allegations that students from Columbia University were doing that.

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Q If you were aware of that, that would be concerning, right?

A Yes. That would be concerning.

Q Are you aware there's been public reporting to that effect?

A No, I'm not aware of public reporting to that effect.

Q Nobody at the University bothered to bring that to your attention?

A So over the last -- no, I -- I have not had that been brought to my attention. We recognize there's a lot of public media out there.

Q Of the students who were arrested in Hamilton Hall, how many of them were allowed to graduate?

A Again, this was before my time and I don't have the specific numbers in front of me. Q You didn't sign any of their diplomas? A No, I started in August.

Q All right. I want to get you out of here, Dr. Armstrong. So let me take a quick break and then I think we can wrap

it up.

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 75

MR. LEVANDER: Very good.

THE WITNESS: Okay. Thank you.

(A recess was taken.)

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Dr. Armstrong, what was your understanding of the University's Senate's role in Columbia's response to allegations of antisemitism at the University?

A So the University Senate is described in the statutes. And to my knowledge, it doesn't have a specific role in responding to antisemitism, but its rules are described in the statutes that are here in front of us.

Q I'll ask it this way. Did the University Senate play any role in responding to the allegations of antisemitism?

A So my memory is that sometime, and I don't remember the specific dates, that the University Senate put out a statement against antisemitism on campus. I don't remember the specific dates for that.

Q Was the Senate involved in slowing down

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efforts to discipline the Hamilton Hall students? A So my understanding of -- is that there were multiple legal challenges that held up the discipline of the Hamilton Hall students, as well as the other students that were involved. And I would want to -- those were managed by Counsel so I just want to be thoughtful about those legal challenges and whether or I should be speaking about them. Q Do you know -- I don't want you to tell me anything that your lawyers told you. Do you know Professor D'Armiento?

A Yes, I do.

Q How do you know her?

A I'm sorry. Did you say Vice Dean?

Q No, I just said, how do you know her?

A Oh, I'm sorry.

Q That her -- D'Armiento, am I saying that right?

A Yes. I actually don't know how, but let's assume you are. I know she's --

MR. LEVANDER: She's saying she goes
(crosstalk) --

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THE WITNESS: She goes by Jeanine. I don't -- don't know how to pronounce her last -- she goes by Jeanine. I'm sorry.

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q Okay. How do you know Jeanine?

A She is a faculty member at the medical center, which is where I got to know her first. And she is now the -- and I don't get these words specific. So she's now I think the -- and it would be -- the words would be in here, like Chair of the Senate potentially, but we'd have to look up the specific words.

Q Did she have any role in responding to the allegations of antisemitism at the University? A You know, to my knowledge,

the -- the

role of the Senate is separate from the University of -- it was separate from the President's Office and the statutes. And the specifics of how the Senate works really is determined in the statutes. So I don't feel comfortable commenting on the Senate's role in responding to antisemitism. But I do believe that they

put out a statement about

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Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong

Conducted on April 1, 2025 78

antisemitism.

Q Have you had any conversations with Jeanine about antisemitism at the University? A Yes. So when that statement was -- I was in favor of putting out a statement. I again, don't remember the specifics or the dates.

Q What conversations do you recall with Jeanine about antisemitism?

A Again, I remember talking about the statement and my support for the statement, but don't remember more of the specifics or the dates. Q Did she have any role in delaying discipline for the students who took over Hamilton Hall?

A My understanding is that the primary reasons that there were delay related to some of the legal challenges, to my knowledge -- I'm hesitant to -- let's just go with Dr. D'Armiento -- is that -- D'Armiento. To my knowledge, she did not have a role in delaying discipline.

Q So why did you take the job as interim president?

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MR. LEVANDER: I -- I --

THE WITNESS: Can I actually honestly answer that?

BY MR. KEVENEY:

Q I mean, if you can honestly answer as opposed to not honestly answer it?

A Well, so let me tell you, like I -- my children asked me to do it. I have three kids who are college age. And they believe that Columbia mattered too much not to have somebody stand up for the students at Columbia University. That's the truth. I initially said, no. And then my kids got up, actually because it happened all at like 9:00 in the morning. And then my kids got up and said, Mom, you have to do it.

Q Do you think it's been difficult to be a Jewish student on campus in the last couple of years? A My perspective is that it has

been

difficult to be a Jewish student. It's

been difficult for many of our groups

on campus. Q And why did you step down

as interim

president?

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