

The following statement concerning the Orgone Energy Devices, proposed for the treatment of cancer by Wilhelm Reich, M.D., Founder, Wilhelm Reich Foundation, was recently distributed to the 58 Divisions of the American Cancer Society for their information.

### Orgone Energy Devices

After careful study of the literature and other information available to it, the American Cancer Society has found no evidence that treatment with the Orgone Energy Devices results in any objective benefit in the treatment of cancer, or that diagnosis by means of the Reich Blood tests is a reliable method of detecting cancer in human beings.

#### Orgone Energy Accumulator

The orgone energy accumulator was invented by Wilhelm Reich, M.D. to treat cancer and other diseases by absorbing "blue bions" or "Cosmic Orgone Energy," also known as "COE," from the atmosphere through several layers of alternating organic and metallic material around the patient. A "shooter" was used to concentrate "orgone energy" on specific sites. The accumulator itself was a tall cabinet resembling a telephone booth. According to the instructions, different sized accumulators should be used by different sized persons so that the inner metal walls would "not be further away from the surface of the body than approximately 2 to 4 inches." A blanket for bed patients, a cone for treatment of the head, and other variations were also developed.

#### Proponent

The inventor of these devices and the discoverer of "cosmic orgone energy" was Wilhelm Reich, who received a Doctor of Medicine degree from the Medical School of the University of Vienna in 1922, and was for several years associated with Dr. Sigmund Freud. According to an article in *Science*, in October 1954, "Wilhelm Reich's early work in psychoanalysis in Austria and Germany was generally accepted by psychoanalysts as an important contribution. His collected papers on character formation, published in book form in 1933, were considered a pioneer clinical study of both ego psychology and the techniques of character analysis." But Dr. Reich's status suddenly changed. In 1934, according to the translator's preface to the second edition of *Character Analysis*, he was excluded from the International Psychosomatic Association. He went to Norway, where according to the article in *Science*, "he claimed discovery between 1936 and 1939 of 'a visible ubiquitous cosmic energy,' and began to publish a magazine on sexual economics. About 1940, he came to this country."

In this country, Dr. Reich bought a 280 acre estate in Rangeley, Maine, which he called Orgonon, and established a press, an institute,

research laboratories and the Wilhelm Reich Foundation, together with a branch research laboratory at Forest Hills, Long Island, New York. At the Orgone Energy Observatory at Orgonon, Rangeley, Maine, Dr. Reich concentrated on orgone biophysics and orgone therapy, developing the devices already described. He claimed that these devices greatly benefited patients with various conditions and diseases, including cancer, and advanced the Reich blood tests for use in judging the treatment and its results.

#### Tests

The only information in the American Cancer Society's files on these tests was contained in a letter dated April 25, 1949, from a correspondent who wrote in support of Dr. Reich's methods, stating: ". . . Dr. Reich discovered that the cancer is a total body disease, the tumor being merely a symptom of a disintegrative process in the total organism. Based on his finding that erythrocytes are charged with a biological energy (which he has termed 'orgone') and that unhealthy erythrocytes have a low orgone charge, he succeeded in developing 4 tests for cancer: a culture test, a biological resistance test, a disintegration in physiological salt solution test, and a blue-margin test. These tests show clearly the difference between healthy and cancerous blood, and can spot the cancer disease before the development of a tumor . . ." Elsewhere in this letter it was noted that an account of these blood tests was published in 1942 in *The International Journal of Sex-Economy and Orgone Research*, Volume 1.

#### Federal Action

In March, 1954, a permanent injunction was issued by the Federal District Court of Portland, Maine, enjoining Dr. Wilhelm Reich, his wife, Ilse Ollendorff Reich, and the Wilhelm Reich Foundation, from distributing "orgone energy" devices on complaint of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that these devices were misbranded by false and misleading representations in the labeling, stating that they provided adequate and effective treatment of cancer and other diseases and conditions. The decree was won by default, since Dr. Reich contended that the court had no jurisdiction to deal with and inquire into the realm of basic research and "Basic Natural Law," and he failed to appear or answer the complaint for injunction. The decree instructed the defendants to recall for destruction or for salvage

of materials all the devices on out-of-state rental, together with all the misleading labeling which included 10 books by Dr. Reich, some selling at prices up to \$10, and many magazines, pamphlets and bulletins. His followers strongly protested, charging interference with freedom of the press and "book burning."

A fact sheet from the Food and Drug Administration stated: "The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act includes authority for the investigation of devices such as Orgone Energy Accumulators and we made an extensive investigation of the various orgone energy devices which were distributed by Wilhelm Reich and the Wilhelm Reich Foundation. Thorough tests were made by the best medical clinicians available to determine whether the devices exerted any beneficial effect in cancer and other serious disease conditions. Outstanding physicists were also engaged to subject the devices to the closest examination and testing to determine whether any energy such as 'Orgone' was accumulated by the devices. The results of all the clinical and physical tests conclusively established that orgone energy accumulators were worthless in the

treatment of diseases and that no energy such as that described by Dr. Reich is detectable by any scientific method. The conclusion was inescapable that the Reich devices were illegal under those provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act which bans therapeutic devices from interstate commerce if their labeling is false or misleading in any particular."

In May, 1956, Dr. Reich, and Michael Silvert, M.D., of New York City, with whom Dr. Reich had continued to carry on the business transactions and affairs of the Wilhelm Reich Foundation, were convicted by jury of criminal contempt of the injunction. Dr. Reich was sentenced to 2 years and Dr. Silvert to 1 year and a day in jail. After appeals were carried to the Supreme Court and denied, both men served prison sentences. Dr. Reich died in prison; Dr. Silvert died shortly after he was released. The Foundation was also found guilty of contempt and fined \$10,000. Since Dr. Reich's death, several of his books have been reissued, thus keeping the interest in "Orgone Energy" alive. It is not known whether it is being used to treat cancer at the present time.

#### HE WHO SEEKS FINDS

One of our graduates, class of 1963, who spent a year with us as a cancer training fellow, has recently gone into practice. He is now with the school on a part time basis, serving in the admitting and diagnosis clinic. On the days when he is in the clinic we have a decidedly higher number of requests for exfoliative cytology and biopsy examinations than when older instructors, well versed in dental procedures but less alert to soft tissue lesions, are in charge. This young dentist within the last six months has found in his private practice two cases of oral malignancy, established by biopsy diagnosis. The older dentist with whom he is associated has not seen a single case of oral cancer in many years of practice.

—Paul E. Boyle, D.M.D., "Role of the Dentist in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Oral Cancer." *Arizona Medicine* 22: 811-814, 1965; p. 811.