

December 15, 1971

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Telecon: Dr. Eugene Saenger and Mr. Otha Linton

Re: Letter from Senator Mike Gravel to Dr. McConnell concerning radiation therapy project, University of Cincinnati Medical Center.

Dear Dr. McConnell:

You have probably learned about Dr. Eugene Saenger's experiments irradiating cancer patients with partial and whole body exposure under a Department of Defense contract. Three stories have already appeared in the Washington Post, and I have placed them, plus additional information taken directly from two of Dr. Saenger's reports, into the record on October 15. This is S16370-73, October 15, 1971. A copy is enclosed for your convenience. It is my intention to propose an amendment to the Defense Department's Appropriation Bill which would terminate Dr. Saenger's experimentation unless satisfactory answers have been provided to several questions.

- 1) Animal Data: Don't experimental animal trials, as a rule, precede human experimental trials in the testing of new medical therapies and drugs? What animal trials using partial or whole body irradiation to treat cancer were completed before Dr. Saenger began his human experimentation? Did Dr. Saenger begin this special therapy before or after Defense Department support?
- 2) How does Dr. Saenger follow up his own patients to find out if his treatment has been helpful or harmful to them? Does he measure the tumors he hopes to reduce?
- 3) Control Groups: What control groups does Dr. Saenger have, or has he arranged for, at our great cancer research institutes so that he can determine how this special treatment is working?
- 4) Private Patients: Does Dr. Saenger treat any private cancer patients, or offer consultation on private patients; and if so, does he recommend either partial or whole body radiation therapy for paying patients? Does he know any doctor who does?
- 5) Trickery: Is there any trickery of the patients involved?
 - a) Do the patients really understand that the experiment is largely to help the Department of Defense prepare for nuclear warfare?
 - b) Do you consider the release the patients signed to be sufficient evidence that they understand?

- c) Do the patients understand that the experiment may cause severe discomfort, such as hours of vomiting?
- d) Do the patients understand that partial or whole body irradiation may shorten their lives, and if so, by how much?
- e) Do the patients understand whether or not there exists any basis for suggesting that the treatment may reduce the size of their tumor or reduce their pain as Dr. Saenger suggested in the Washington Post on October 8, 1971?

I am looking for your opinion on whether or not there is justification for this type of work in this type of country. I expect that you will wish to inspect Dr. Saenger's reports and interview statements yourself. I have copies of them which could be duplicated for you, but I anticipate that you can easily obtain them directly from Dr. Saenger in the original.

Since a non-expert, like myself, can turn only to responsible people, like yourself, for advise, I hope you will give this inquiry more than casual attention. Since the Defense Appropriations Bill may come up at any time, I would appreciate an interim reply from you.

Sincerely,

Mike Gravel