

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF WILHELM REICH

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Here is a perspective about Reich written only five years after Reich's death in 1957. Kelley said at the time that: "*The discussion of Reich's life is difficult because little material is as yet available about the man Reich. At least three biographies are said to be in preparation so this need may soon be met. The events leading to Reich's imprisonment and death are difficult to discuss despite volumes of available material, because passions about them in all who lived through those terrible days ran, and still do run, so high.*" The facts presented in this article were first described by the author in a public lecture of the same title at Hewitt Auditorium, Cooper Union, New York City, on June 20, 1962. Many of the facts about Reich's early life derive from an anonymous outline appearing in the *Orgone Energy Bulletin*, Vol. V, Nos. 1-4, pp. 5-9. This article consists of a brief synopsis of the life and work of Wilhelm Reich and a more detailed description of Kelley's viewpoint of events leading to his imprisonment and death. – EJK 2007

The Life of Reich

Wilhelm Reich was born in Austria on March 24, 1897, the child of a well-to-do farmer. German was his native tongue. He retained his Austrian citizenship until 1938. He was of Jewish descent but was raised without religious training. As a child, he was taught by private tutor. He learned quickly and took early to science. He had his own breeding laboratory and collected and bred insects and plants under his tutor's supervision beginning at the age of eight.

Reich was in a German high school when World War I began. His father died at this time and Reich, then 17 years old, ran the thousand-acre farm himself while continuing his studies. He graduated from high school with academic distinction in 1915. He then entered the Austrian army, became a lieutenant, and fought on the Italian front. During the war the farm was completely destroyed.

At the end of the war in 1918 Reich entered the University of Vienna medical school, working his way as a tutor. A brilliant student, he completed the six-year course in four years with excellent grades, receiving his medical degree in 1922.

Reich had become a member of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society under Freud in 1920 while still an undergraduate. He received his training analysis under Paul Federn, who found him to be the most brilliant of students, with an uncanny talent for diagnosis. Reich was poor at this time and ate many of his meals at the Federn house, to the pleasure of Federn's children, who took to him, and the displeasure of Federn's wife, who did not. Reich believed Federn was active some years later in getting him ejected from the International Psychoanalytic Association. Political differences may have brought about Federn's estrangement, which took place at a time when Reich was taking an active part in the Communist movement.

Reich played an important role in the development of psychoanalysis from 1922 to 1933, holding a series of responsible posts. He was First Clinical Assistant at Freud's Psychoanalytic Polyclinic in Vienna from its foundation in 1922 until 1928, Vice Director of the Polyclinic from 1928 to 1930, leader of the Seminar for Psychoanalytic Therapy at the Polyclinic from 1924 to 1930, and a member of the teaching staff of the psychoanalytic Institute in Vienna from 1924 to 1930. Some of the best known psychoanalysts and psychiatrists studied under Reich at this time, including several Americans now eminent in the field.

Reich differed from Freud and his followers in his concern with the social responsibilities of psychoanalysis and the prevention of neurosis. He also differed with them on the key issue of the

energetics of neurosis, which proved to be the essential turning point in the development of his own theory. Reich used as his point of departure Freud's early *libido* theory, elaborating it into his view that neurosis developed because of a disturbance in the energy economy (sex economy) of the orgasm. He rejected Freud's theory of the death instinct, a product of Freud's later years.

Reich had become active as a physician working for Communism. He was striving to incorporate sex-economic principles into the movement, to make it a real movement for freedom. He spent hundreds of hours working for little or nothing in clinics for working people. He was learning, but had not yet learned, that the masses were characterologically incapable of freedom because of the biological rigidity -- or armoring -- of the great majority, which had to be remedied before true freedom could become possible for them.

In the early 1930's, much opposition had built up against Reich within the Psychoanalytic Association and the Communist movement. The Communists could not tolerate Reich's work toward true freedom within the movement and his insistence on the role sexuality and sexual freedom played in true freedom. Psychoanalysts, on the other hand, could not tolerate Reich's insistence on the social responsibilities of psychoanalysis nor his independence of Freudian doctrine, particularly his expanded view of the role of the orgasm function in neurosis (sex economy) and his development of character-analytic methods. Reich was excluded from the International Psychoanalytic Association by underhanded political maneuvering. He was never openly voted out. He took his exclusion very hard. During the same period, his work in the Communist movement was being destroyed as Communism moved in the direction of sexual repression and Fascism.

The year 1933 was fateful and tragic for Reich. He was forced out of the Communist movement, forced out of the International Psychoanalytic Association, forced to leave Germany to escape from Naziism. He was also separated from his wife, Anna Rubenstein, and their two daughters. His wife, a psychoanalyst herself, remained bitter toward Reich after their separation. Their oldest daughter, Eva, became reconciled with her father on reaching adulthood. A physician also, she assumed an important role in his work in the later years of his life.

Reich fled Hitler's Germany to Norway. He lectured and did research at the University of Oslo from 1934 to 1939. It was during this period that his bion experiments took place and the special life energy Reich called orgone was discovered. In 1939, after a vicious sensationalistic press campaign against him and before the Nazi movement into Norway, Reich came to America. He joined the faculty of the New School for Social Research in New York, a move made possible by the efforts of the eminent American psychiatrist, Dr. Theodore Wolfe. Reich taught at the New School from 1939 to 1941, during which years his American organization was started. Originally it bore the unwieldy title: "The American Branch of The International Institute For Sex Economy and Orgone Research." Staffed primarily by physicians in training or trained by Reich, it became The Orgone Institute with headquarters in Forest Hills, New York.

Orgonomy developed rapidly in the 1940's in the growth of therapeutic techniques, in the steady advance of research, and in the growth of Reich's following. Scientists as well as physicians became interested in Reich's work and in studying with him. During the early 1940's the orgone energy accumulator, Reich's tool for concentrating life energy, began to be employed therapeutically by physicians trained by Reich. Accumulators were distributed through medical orgone therapists. Fees asked (but not required) for their use and income from their sale were employed to support Reich's research program and in time became a major source of revenue for it.

In 1946 Reich moved to Maine, taking a large piece of land near Rangeley for his home and the headquarters of his research activities. On this land; which he christened "Orgonon," research and training laboratories were built. The Wilhelm Reich Foundation was established at Orgonon in 1949. Reich's research interests had expanded and he was working primarily in the field of orgone physics. He

appointed Dr. Elsworth Baker training therapist and Dr. Baker took over the training of medical orgone therapists, a responsibility that has been his ever since.

During the late 1940's and early 1950's Reich was living in Orgonon with his second wife, Ilse Ollendorf, and their young son, Peter. The whole period from 1940 to 1954 was the most stable and happy period in his life. These were also extraordinarily productive years, the years during which his greatest work was produced.

In February, 1954, the Pure Food and Drug Administration of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare filed a complaint for injunction against Reich, his Foundation and his associates, charging that orgone energy did not exist and that Reich was guilty of fraud and misrepresentation in the distribution of orgone energy accumulators. Reich replied to the court that it could not decide a matter of basic science like the existence of orgone energy, and he did not appear to contest the complaint. On March 19, 1954, an injunction was issued by the court which ordered Reich's - publications burned or banned and orgone accumulators destroyed, and which gave the Food and Drug Administration agents access to the files and papers of Reich and the Wilhelm Reich Foundation.

Reich was charged with contempt of court for violating the injunction and was convicted in May 1956. The judge ordered a sanity hearing for Reich, which found him sane. He was sentenced to two years in prison. His conviction was appealed unsuccessfully all the way to the Supreme Court while Reich remained free on appeal bond.

Reich had separated from his second wife, Ilse Ollendorf, prior to his conviction. He took a third wife, Aurora Karrer Reich, before entering prison.

Reich's scientific journals and other soft cover publications were burned and his books banned from circulation by virtue of the original injunction obtained against him. He was imprisoned in March, 1957, after pleading that being sent to prison meant certain death for him. On November 3, 1957, he died during the night in his prison cell in the Federal Penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Autopsy indicated that his death was caused by a heart attack.

The Work of Reich

Wilhelm Reich did more than any man in history to advance our understanding of the creative process in nature. A listing of his achievements must sound incredible and pretentious at this time to those who have not carefully studied his work. This writer considers the following to be the major mile- posts:

Energetic Basis of Emotion. This knowledge Reich developed almost from the outset and it grew as his understanding of the nature of the energy involved progressed from the *libido* concept to *bioenergy* to *orgone* energy.

Function of the Orgasm. Reich's investigation of the function of the orgasm was the key that opened the door to his knowledge of energetic processes both within and outside of the body. It was his persistence in examining this forbidden area of nature that made his other achievements possible.

The Sickness of Man. To me the most important aspect of Reich's work was his discovery of the nature and the extent of mankind's universal sickness. This discovery includes such major subdivisions as:

- The discovery of *muscular armor* and its effect on emotional life.
- The three levels of character in armored man; the rooting of secondary emotion in the armor.
- The role of sexual expression in the development of armor.
- The psychology of Fascism; political and social effects of the armoring of the masses.

- The pathology of mysticism and its antithesis, mechanism.
- The nature of cancer.
- The emotional plague and its significance in human life.
- The existence of a life-inimical form of energy in the earth's atmosphere which he called *dor*, which plays a major but not yet clearly-defined role in the sickness of man.

The Creation of Life. This includes Reich's work on biogenesis, including the bion experiments, "Experiment XX," and his work on the natural organization of protozoa. Although Reich did not fully explain the creation of living things, he went a long way toward its explanation..

Orgone Physics. In the last years of his life Reich devoted himself to the study of orgone energy in the non-living realm. The monumental discoveries arising from this work include:

- The concentration of free orgone energy by an apparatus, the orgone accumulator.
- The functioning of orgone energy in the atmosphere and its control to affect the weather.
- The creation of kinetic energy from orgone energy, making it possible to operate an orgone energy motor.
- The "Oranur" reaction of concentrated orgone energy to nuclear radiation, a reaction that can exceed millions of times the destructive effect of nuclear radiation with normal orgone energy concentrations; the measurement of oranur effects via the Gieger-Muller counter.
- The creation of matter from energy: a) in the universe, in the form of superimposition of cosmic streams of orgone energy to form spiral galaxies; and b) in the laboratory, employing orgone energy devices to bring into existence new matter appearing in .the universe for the first time.
- Substantial progress, but no solution, to the understanding and control by man of gravitational forces. This author believes that if Reich had been left unmolested in his work, he might well have produced before he died a functioning device to produce gravitational forces other than those occurring as a result of mass. Reich was working on this problem at the time he was imprisoned and he felt substantial progress had been made.

Reich's work in orgone physics was in progress and was very incomplete at the time of his imprisonment. He never had the chance to organize his discoveries into a well-rounded physical theory, or to relate them systematically to the theories of orthodox physics. His discoveries are so coherent and interrelated logically, however, that it seems reasonable to expect that such a development will not be too many years in taking place.

Reich and the Food And Drug Administration

The beginning of the events leading to Reich's imprisonment and death was a 1947 article by left-wing writer Mildred E. Brady in Henry Wallace's *New Republic*. This article gave an extremely distorted impression of Reich's work which she conveyed by a combination of pseudo-scientific jargon and flippant derisive descriptions of Reich's discoveries. Brady originated the falsehood that orgone accumulators were supposed to bring orgasmic potency. In *Orgonon*, said Brady, Reich built accumulators of orgone energy, "which are rented out to patients who presumably derive orgasmic potency from it" (p. 20). Describing the functioning of the accumulator, she states: "The orgone then seeps through the metal

(lining the accumulator) thus stepping up the orgone concentration inside the box. Why it doesn't seep right out again is a mystery that has bothered Reich considerably; and he has not yet solved it" (p. 22).

She goes on to appeal to psychoanalysts to repudiate Reich publicly and to describe the need she saw for "public protection" from Reich and his work.

The Brady article touched off a chain reaction of other smear articles and of word of mouth rumors that grew more and more grotesque. It was soon alleged that orgone accumulators were designed to provide sexual stimulation, that Reich had been hospitalized for mental illness, and that medical orgone therapy was a sexual racket. Thus the most vicious conceivable lies came to be spread about Reich and orgonomy. The rumor that orgonomists masturbate their patients, for example, spread like wildfire at this time. It was traced to a physician who had told other physicians that a particular female patient of his had gone to the Orgone Institute and there been masturbated by an orgone therapist. In this case the physician was confronted and confessed that no such thing had ever occurred. The patient in question (who had been named) had never been to the Orgone Institute or to any orgonomist. The lie, although exposed, persisted and still persists along with dozens of others, large and small.

Perhaps the most distressing aspect of the attack on Reich and orgonomy triggered by the Brady article is that corrections and denials, issued in a steady stream by the most authoritative sources in orgonomy, utterly failed to stem or even to slow the tide of falsehood that grew and spread and persists to this day. The lies about orgonomy embodied in the Brady article, although exposed repeatedly and denied again and again, are taken up and repeated with embellishments in new smear articles that continue to appear every few months.

The Pure Food and Drug Administration of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare began an investigation of Reich based on the Brady article. The Food and Drug Administration appeared to presume from the outset that they were dealing with some sort of sexual racket, an understandable presumption, considering the source of their information. They had every right to investigate Reich, of course, and to consider the therapeutic effectiveness of the orgone energy accumulator, for the Food and Drug Administration is charged by law with overseeing the use of therapeutic devices as well as food and drugs. Reich did not always concede them this right, although at the outset he welcomed the investigation, thinking it would give him a chance to demonstrate his claims for the orgone energy accumulator. The Food and Drug Administration refused absolutely to cooperate with Reich in setting up a fair test of the accumulator, however. They insisted on sponsoring "tests" by doctors having no qualifications whatsoever for using the accumulator, conducted with no help from Reich or any of the physicians trained by Reich in its use. It was as if when X-rays were first discovered it had quickly been found they could be employed therapeutically to treat cancer when employed skillfully by those trained in the proper technique; a government agency wishing to test this therapeutic claim then barred anyone so trained from assisting or serving as consultants in the test, which the agency turned over to doctors who hadn't the faintest knowledge that X-rays even existed, much less their properties, their biological effects, or their therapeutic employment. It didn't happen with X-rays, but that is exactly what happened with orgone energy accumulators.

On February 10, 1954, the Food and Drug Administration issued a complaint for injunction against Reich. This complaint is an almost unbelievable document, so vicious are its distortions, misrepresentations and outright lies about Reich and his work. The complaint alleged that there was fraud in the rental and sale of orgone energy accumulators. Reich's books and other writings, including those in which the orgone energy accumulator is never mentioned, were described as promotional materials for the sale and rental of accumulators. Orgone energy does not exist, alleged the complaint, and the honest descriptions of a dozen doctors of their experiences with the accumulator, failures and successes alike, are presented in the complaint as a dirty scheme to promote the sale and rental of the device.

Certain photographs and interpretations which are cited in Reich's writings as evidence for the existence of orgone energy are referred to in the complaint and asserted to be false. These are specific

points for which the Food and Drug Administration had doubtless obtained alternative explanations from orthodox scientists, plus some experimental evidence of their own to pit against Reich's. None of the Food and Drug Administration's evidence appeared in the complaint, however; nor in any of the court actions which followed, nor has any of it ever been made public although news of the supposed existence of such evidence has been leaked to writers of smear articles about Reich.¹

To understand the effect of the complaint and the way it was met by Reich, it must be realized that it was so vicious, so false, so twisted and sick, that it was difficult to believe it could ever be taken seriously in court. It was and is a truly incredible document. It was rendered more incredible by the fact that it was signed by one Peter Mills, United States Attorney, the same Peter Mills who had previously served as attorney for Reich and the Wilhelm Reich Foundation, even while the Food and Drug Administration was investigating Reich.

Reich regarded the need to leave his work to become involved in litigation with the Food and Drug Administration as more of a threat than the patently absurd charges in the complaint. He wrote the judge that he could not appear in court as a defendant in questions of basic science, saying in part:

“Scientific matters cannot possibly ever be decided upon in court. They can only be clarified by prolonged faithful bona fide observations in a friendly exchange of opinion. never by litigation. The sole purpose of the complainant is to entangle orgonomic basic research in endless, costly legal procedures as la Panmonjon, which will accomplish exactly NOTHING rational or useful to human society.

“Inquiry in the realm of Basic Natural Law is outside the judicial domain, of this, OR ANY OTHER KIND OF SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION ANYWHERE ON THIS GLOBE, IN ANY LAND, NATION OR REGION.

“Man's right to know, to learn, to inquire, to make bona fide errors, to investigate human emotions must by all means, be safe, if the word FREEDOM should ever be more than an empty political slogan.

“If painstakingly elaborated and published findings over a period of 30 years could not convince this administration, or will not be able to convince any other social administration of the true nature of the discovery of the Life Energy, no litigation in any court anywhere will ever help to do so.

“I, therefore submit, in the name of truth and justice, that I shall not appear in court as the “defendant” against a plaintiff who by his mere complaint already has shown his ignorance in matters of natural science. I do so at the risk of being, by mistake, fully enjoined in all my activities. Such an injunction would mean practically exactly nothing at all. My discovery of the Life Energy is today widely known nearly all over the globe, in hundreds of institutions, whether acclaimed or cursed. It can no longer be stopped by anyone, no matter what happens to me.”

So saying, Reich placed his fate in the judge's hands and failed to appear to contest the injunction. In this failure, Reich was being naive and trusting. He had an almost childlike faith in American government and its courts. In addition, it did not matter enough to him if the distribution of accumulators was enjoined for him to become involved in time-consuming litigation.. He probably did not think that anything worse would happen as a result of his failure to appear than granting of an injunction against the distribution of orgone energy accumulators.

¹ Commissioner George P. Larrick of the Food and Drug Administration again this year [1962] refused to release any of this material to this author or even to permit it to be read at his office, although his predecessor had promised in 1954 that it would be made available once court action against Reich was concluded.

I believe that Reich's failure to appear to contest the complaint was a serious error in judgment. Certainly it was most terribly in its effect. By refusing to appear to defend himself in court against charges of perpetrating a scheme to promote the sale of worthless therapeutic devices (of which he was unquestionably innocent) Reich was forced to appear instead to defend himself against charges of violating a Federal Court injunction, of which he was unquestionably guilty. -- And by not appearing to contest the complaint, he sacrificed his right to appeal the injunction's provisions.

Reich's contention that the court had no authority to decide the basic scientific questions raised in the complaint such as the existence or non-existence of orgone energy was obviously correct. His contention that to appear would concede that it did have such authority, however, was not. His appearance before the court would have conceded nothing but the right of the court to require him, or any other citizen, to appear and reply when a complaint is legally filed, no matter how false, absurd or atrocious the charges in the complaint, or how much the charges are outside the court's authority to render a decision. It is the court and not the citizen which decides the court's jurisdiction.

On March 19, 1954, the United States District Court in Maine issued an injunction against Reich of sweeping and unprecedented harshness. It not only required all orgone energy accumulators to be recalled and dismantled or destroyed, it ordered all of the scientific journals and other soft cover publications of the Orgone Institute Press to be destroyed as well, and all of Reich's books, by name, to be banned until statements about orgone energy were "deleted" from them. The injunction stated in part:

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED:

. . . . (5) That all copies of the following items of written, printed, or graphic matter... which contain statements and representations pertaining to the existence of orgone energy...

- The Discovery of the Orgone by Wilhelm Reich
- The Sexual Revolution by Wilhelm Reich
- Ether, God and Devil by Wilhelm Reich
- Cosmic Superimposition by Wilhelm Reich
- Listen, Little Man by Wilhelm Reich
- The Mass Psychology of Fascism by Wilhelm Reich
- Character Analysis by Wilhelm Reich
- The Murder of Christ by Wilhelm Reich
- People in Trouble by Wilhelm Reich

shall be withheld by the defendants. . . . in the event, however, such statements and representations, and any other allied material, are deleted, such publications may be used by the defendants; and

. . . . (6) That.... all documents, bulletins, pamphlets, journals, and booklets entitled in part, as "follows:..... ORGONE ENERGY BULLETIN, ORGONE ENERGY EMERGENCY BULLETIN, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEX-ECONOMY AND ORGONE RESEARCH, INTERNATIONALE ZEITSCHRIFT FUR ORGONOMIE, EMOTIONAL PLAGUE VERSUS ORGONE BIOPHYSICS, ANNALS OF THE ORGONE INSTITUTE, and ORANUR EXPERIMENT, but not limited to those enumerated, shall be destroyed

.....the defendants shall permit said employees of the Food and Drug Administration.....to have access to and to copy from, all books, ledgers, accounts, correspondence, memoranda, and other records and documents in the possession or under the control of said defendants, including all affiliated persons, corporations, associations, and organizations..... relating to any matters contained in this decree.....

March 19, 1954

/s/ John D. Clifford, Jr.
United States- District Judge
for the District of Maine.

The injunction against Reich, like the complaint against him, was an incredibly vicious, horrible document. Unlike the complaint which was signed only by Reich's turncoat attorney, the injunction was signed by a Federal judge and carried with it the full weight of Federal law -- and, because it was issued in default, the injunction could not be appealed.

Reich found himself in a grisly trap. The orgone energy accumulator had been only an incidental off-shoot of his work, although it had provided a convenient and needed source of funds to support his research. His writings, however, were his life work, and the injunction was designed to destroy it.

The Food and Drug Administration has no authority in law to burn or ban scientific literature. They do have the authority to secure court directed seizure of therapeutic devices which have been misbranded. These may, together with their labeling, be destroyed on order of the court. The burning and banning of Reich's writings was secured by the Food and Drug Administration only by the most preposterous and deliberate falsification. The Food and Drug Administration claimed that such books as THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION; ETHER, GOD AND DEVIL; THE MASS PSYCHOLOGY OF FASCISM: and the others named above in the quote from the injunction, plus all issues of all the above-listed scientific journals were "labeling" for the orgone energy accumulator and descriptive of its use in the cure, mitigation and treatment of disease. The monstrosity of the Food and Drug Administration lie is shown by the fact that most of these writings have nothing whatsoever to do with the orgone energy accumulator, many of them not even once mentioning it or referring to it in any way.

I have described elsewhere my own reactions on learning of the injunction and my futile efforts to prevent the Food and Drug Administration from carrying out its horrible provisions (Kelley, 1960). Like the efforts of several others, my work proved totally fruitless. All that I accomplished in my contacts with the highest officials of the Food and Drug Administration and of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare was to establish .for the future their complicity and guilt in the crime against humanity that was perpetrated by the banning and burning of Reich's scientific works. Years before the torch had been put to a single page, I personally informed the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, Charles Crawford, the Deputy Commissioner who has since become Commissioner, George P. Larrick, and other high officials exactly what they would be doing if their book burning injunction were carried out. They knew in advance -- knew perfectly.

The interim period from 1954 to 1956, after the injunction was issued and prior to Reich's arrest for violating it, was an active one for individuals fighting the injunction, the medical orgone therapists, the Food and Drug Administration and Reich and his co-workers. These activities will be described in turn.

Individuals. Several individuals and small groups were, like myself, active in attempts to countermand the Food and Drug Administration injunction. Newspapers, hundreds of officials, politicians, editors, etc., were contacted and senators written. If one important politician or major publication had taken a strong stand against the Food and Drug Administration's crime at this time the worst of its effects could no doubt have been averted. None did -- none has since.

Medical Orgone Therapists. After the injunction the medical orgone therapists felt obliged to take action. They had recommended the use of the orgone energy accumulator in most of the cases in which it was used and they had each been served copies of the injunction. They had written much of the enjoined literature slated for burning, particularly that dealing with the medical uses of the accumulator. They filed a suit for intervention in Reich's case on the grounds that the injunction affected their practices, but they had not been served with the complaint for injunction and given the opportunity to be represented at the

hearing at which the injunction was issued. Judge John Clifford, who issued the injunction, denied the petition for intervention. He held that the therapists were exempt from the terms of the injunction in their own practices, and that their use of the accumulator had never been adjudicated. Thus he was responsible for the absurdity that orgone energy accumulators, which he himself had branded illegal under terms of the Food and Drug Act, were illegal only for Reich and his co-workers who supervised their construction, but not for the physicians who contacted patients, recommended and arranged for their use, and wrote "labeling" (sic) that the injunction ordered, destroyed.

Food and Drug Administration. During the interim period the Food and Drug Administration moved slowly to obtain enforcement of the injunction, or evidence of its violation. They were denied access to the records of Reich and the Foundation as ordered by the court but did not charge Reich with violating the injunction on this account. They instead kept a careful watch over Reich's co-workers and the therapists. They were waiting for evidence that accumulators were still being distributed, evidence that was slow coming, for the distribution and collection of funds for the use of accumulators was discontinued by Reich, who thus moved into partial compliance with the injunction's terms.

Reich and His Co-Workers. During this period Reich carried out some of the most exciting of his research. Experiments in the creation of matter (Oranur chemistry) were successfully conducted. The Reich weather control apparatus and radioactive material used in the "Oranur" experiment were used together to make of the apparatus a much more powerful tool to affect weather. An expedition to the Arizona desert supplied evidence that this tool could be used to bring moisture and precipitation to the desert and begin a reversal of the processes of desert formation. Operation of the powerful apparatus in Arizona also brought evidence of the presence above the atmosphere of unfriendly visitors from outer space. This is an astounding claim but one that, based on the evidence of the reputable scientists present on the expedition with Reich, merits fullest investigation.

An important part of the funds supporting Reich's research after the injunction was supplied by therapist Michael Silvert, who obtained contributions from the users of accumulators and turned them over to the Foundation. This fact assumed importance in further developments with the Food and Drug Administration.

The fight against the Food and Drug Administration conducted by Reich in this interim period took on the aspect of a war. Reich believed that the action against him was Communist-inspired and directed and began trying to gather proof that there was a Communist-led conspiracy directed against him. He gathered a bulky file of letters and documents together as evidence. He was optimistic about the outcome of his fight with the Food and Drug Administration. In August 1954, he told me: *The Food and Drug Administration is paralyzed; they can't do anything.* Dr. Silvert, who played such an important role in this interim period, echoed Reich's optimism: *The injunction can never be enforced,* he said.

In 1956 Dr. Silvert needed more accumulators for would-be users in New York. He obtained and transported these accumulators from where they were stored in Maine without telling Reich, no doubt feeling that by acting without Reich's knowledge and consent, he would be taking the responsibility himself and protecting Reich. The Food and Drug Administration, carefully watching, then moved in. Reich and Silvert were arrested for criminal contempt of court, with proof that accumulators owned by the Wilhelm Reich Foundation had been transported to New York, in addition to other evidence of non-compliance with the injunction.

The trial of Reich and Silvert has been described elsewhere by Dr. Myron Sharaf. (Sharaf 1958.) I take issue with Dr. Sharaf on several points. I believe that he was overly impressed by the mask of judicial fairness of the judge and was affected himself by a strong ambivalence toward Reich at the time of his account. Nevertheless, his account is highly valuable. It is too much to expect perfect objectivity on such an emotionally-charged subject from a former co-worker of Reich's.

Reich served as his own lawyer during the trial, a second important error in judgment in his fight with the Food and Drug Administration. Throughout the trial a highly capable trial lawyer, Mr. Charles Haydon, sat at Reich's elbow, permitted by Reich only to advise and not to represent him.

Reich's defense was ineffectual, not heroic, as his supporters wished and some imagined it to be. It was, in fact, a shambles. Perhaps no defense could have helped Reich by that time, so strong was the evidence that the injunction had not been complied with. The judge took the position that however horrible, fraudulent, or illegal the injunction, Reich had had to obey it or be guilty of contempt. He thus refused to consider the content of the injunction. If the injunction had ordered Reich to shoot himself, it would still have been irrelevant what the injunction ordered, as the judge interpreted it. It was thus made impossible for evidence of the atrocious and unconstitutional nature of the injunction to be brought before the court. Without such evidence, Reich's case was hopeless. He was quickly found guilty by the jury.

After a sanity hearing ordered by the judge had found Reich to be sane, he and Silvert were brought for sentencing. On May 25, 1956, he was sentenced to two years in prison. Dr. Silvert was sentenced to one year in prison while the Wilhelm Reich Foundation was fined \$10,000. Reich and Silvert were each released on \$15,000 bond during appeal, which was to be carried all the way to the Supreme Court during the ten months that followed.

Free on bail after the trial, Reich resumed his research work while preparing his appeal brief, and when the First Circuit Court of Appeals rejected his appeal, he filed his own petition for a Supreme Court hearing. He used Mr. Haydon again as a legal advisor but not as his attorney. Reich expressed important and profound ideas in his court documents mixed with unproved allegations of spying and conspiracy, apparent irrelevancies, and sweeping scientific claims that were true, or largely true, but which sounded so grandiose as to be unbelievable in the context. The following are excerpts from Reich's appeal brief:

OUTLOOK AT CROSSROADS AHEAD

1. The first and immediate consequence of orgonomy will be a basic change, already under way in our world, of the handling of newborn infants and small children. . . . A new type of man is being created who sooner or later will not reject in terror what is obviously true and immediately evident to every unarmored living soul.
2. The discovery of the Cosmic Life Energy will inevitably lead toward the mastery of gravity. . . . The technological mastery of positive gravity will further lead to counter-gravity, already known today in a theoretical orgonometric manner. . . . From the functions of negative and neutralized gravity a logical path of research will lead into the technological problems of Space Travel, inevitably, just as the discovery of galvanic electricity led to today's electric motor.
3. The Space and Space Travel Functions will depend entirely on the final orgonometrically, that is, functionally correct abolition of g, the symbol for gravity in mathematical logic, from all our space equations. With the abolition of g, man will for the first time in his history have left the surface of the globe, theoretically at least.
4. The Cosmic Energy Motor will be the lever which will turn our present civilization into that of the coming Cosmic Age. The Cloudbuster and the Spacegun are the twin brothers of the OR motor.
5. Medical DOR -Buster. This device will do in the living organism what the Cloudbuster does in the atmosphere. Since organism and atmosphere are interdependent and inseparable, a new type of curative and preventive medicine will come into being: "Atmospheric Medicine". The Medical DOR-Buster will be its basic tool, from which other medical techniques will branch out. All disease is basically DOR sickness. It will be fought at the very roots of disease; by removal of DOR from both atmosphere and organism. . . .

6. Orene not only contains the formative principle of life; it actually shows the power to penetrate, form, change such materials as granite. The artificial production of organic oil and similar natural products are certainly already on the horizon in this connection. It may be safely predicted that Orene sooner or later will make it also possible to grow any kind of foodstuff artificially.

7. Making deserts green and fruitful: The discovery of the cosmic Life Force, ORENE, Melanor, Orite, in 1953 made it possible to approach the task of fructifying desert lands. The laboratory experiments of 1953 with Orene, conducted in Maine, were tested in the desert of Arizona during the winter months of 1954-1955. The experimentation in the Arizona desert proved the results obtained from laboratory findings in Maine to be correct. Desert land in Arizona became green after removal of DOR from the atmosphere.

During the appeal period, the bookburning provisions of the injunction were enforced. On August 23, 1963, two Food and Drug Administration agents appeared at the offices of the Orgone Institute Press in New York to enforce them. A crew of men was required to load the many thousands of volumes onto a large truck, which carried them to the Gansevoort Incinerator in Lower Manhattan, where they were burned. The agents, on orders from higher Food and Drug Administration officials in Washington, attempted to get the representatives of the Press to agree to having those books that were not ordered destroyed by the injunction (but only banned) burned also. This was not agreed to and was never required.

During the appeal period, Reich was again unrealistically optimistic. Faced with a two-year prison term, he exuded a baseless confidence that he would win the case on appeal. Worshipful followers echoed and amplified this optimism. After the Court of Appeals upheld the lower court's verdict, the optimism continued unabated. The following month, which was January 1957, those of us contributing to Reich's defense fund received a letter from the hard working director of the fund containing these amazing paragraphs:

Developments are in our favor despite what seems to be another setback. Courtroom procedure has seen a new development in which malevolent, psychopathic behavior is directly confronted as such. The lie, approached this way and forced to drop its legal trappings, has succeeded only, with time, in more fully exposing its own monstrosity. "The Devil hates the light." Cornered and exposed, the HIGs resort more and more to out and out slander -- a clear sign of desperation.

How the Court continues to handle this case has become what amounts to its own personal problem. We trust it will overcome the embarrassment of finding itself in a new position in relation to the truth. The case has now been offered for review to the Supreme Court.

In the same month, a greeting from Reich to contributors of the fund said in part:

The battle could not have been conducted in our favor, as it has been, without the manifold kindnesses of people, close and distant alike.

This mood of optimism on the part of Reich and his colleagues was completely unrealistic. Their earlier conviction that the injunction could never be enforced was replaced by the equally baseless conviction that the prison sentences would never be carried out.

This unrealistic attitude on Reich's part, like other aspects of his inadequate behavior in response to the Food and Drug Administration attack, was not a consequence of mental illness or insanity although those looking at Reich's documents and actions without knowing all the circumstances involved are likely to draw this erroneous conclusion.¹ Reich was badly out of contact with the social scene, highly

¹ For example, Jack Green's *Newspaper*, Issue 9, is devoted to Green's conclusion that Reich was mentally ill. The author previously took issue with Green's conclusion in: Kelley, C. R., "Reich's Last Years," *The Creative Process*, Vol. I, No.2, November 1961.

unrealistic, but as a consequence of circumstances, not of mental illness. I spent some time with Reich in the period after the Food and Drug Administration attack. He was informal, straightforward, direct, friendly, easy-to-contact -- the exact opposite of the paranoid schizophrenic. I am a psychologist and I judge Reich to have been completely sane. His co-workers included several highly trained psychiatrists far better qualified than I to evaluate his sanity, who also judged him sane. He was carefully examined by the court-appointed psychiatrists who had available the most "damning" of the evidence with respect to his sanity, and they concluded that he was sane. To my knowledge, no qualified person in a position to know has held Reich to be other than sane.

Reich prepared his Supreme Court petition quickly, using essentially the same material used in the appeal brief. The petition was rejected perfunctorily as the Court refused to review the case. Reich and Silvert appeared to serve their sentences and were imprisoned on March 11, 1957. Reich pleaded not to be imprisoned, saying truthfully that his imprisonment would: "mean the certain death in prison of a scientific pioneer in the hands of psychopathic persons."

Confinement was the sheerest torture for Reich, as a stay on Ellis Island coming into this country had shown him. He attempted to adjust to prison life, however. He became interested in how prisons functioned and how they affected their inmates. Most significant, he wrote his last book in prison; advising his family as it progressed.

As the time for Reich to become eligible for parole approached, the Food and Drug Administration moved to prevent his release from prison. A correspondent told me that the judge who sentenced Reich was induced to write a letter to the parole board recommending against parole. I have not confirmed this. However, Reich died before he was eligible. He was found dead in his cell in the Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, Federal Prison on the morning of November 3, 1957. Autopsy showed the cause of death to be heart disease.

The manuscript for Reich's last book disappeared in prison and has never been recovered, despite the most strenuous efforts of his family to locate it. Officials of the prison claim they had no knowledge of the whereabouts of the manuscripts which was apparently stolen, perhaps even by one of the prison officials.

So ended tragically and unnecessarily the life of one of the great creative geniuses of history, a victim of the forces in society he had exposed so clearly in the MURDER OF CHRIST, a martyr despite himself. To summarize important facts in the Reich case as I see them:

1. The attack by the Food and Drug Administration was unquestionably vicious in the extreme. The complaint and injunction were maliciously false and could only have been originated by a twisted mind and supported after they appeared by morally corrupt individuals. Decent human beings do not abrogate to themselves the right to judge the deepest and most difficult scientific questions, such as the existence of the creative process as Reich described it. They do not brand as fraudulent and a promotional scheme what is obviously a sincere medical endeavor by highly qualified physicians. They do not burn, or support the burning, of scientific literature under any pretexts, much less the flimsy and far-fetched fabric of lies and half truths used by the Food and Drug Administration in their scheme to destroy the work of Reich.

2. The attack on Reich and the atrocious burning of his writings was actively pursued by the highest officials in the Food and Drug Administration and has been supported or condoned by the highest officials in the government, including Oveta Culp Holby and Abraham Ribicoff, Secretaries of Health, Education and Welfare.

3. The vicious coordinated attack on Reich, coupled with the "chain reaction" defamation triggered by writer Mildred Brady, showed a pattern or logic which led Reich to believe, I think wrongly, that he was the victim of a Communist conspiracy. The evidence Reich presents for the existence of such a conspiracy is extremely weak.

4. Reich botched badly the legal handling of the contest with the Food and Drug Administration and so contributed to its tragic outcome. Reich never needed to either go to prison or to compromise his principles. He did need to appear in court to answer the complaint and to follow sound legal advice as the case developed including the use of a competent attorney to represent him.

5. Reich was misled by mystical worshipful admirers who echoed and amplified the most unrealistic aspects of his thinking. By trying to make of Reich a hero, they succeeded in making him a martyr.

6. Reich showed poor judgment, naivety, lack of contact with the social scene, misdirected suspicions, self-deception as to how much he was understood and accepted by others, and an unduly idealistic trusting view of American government and law. His thinking with respect to the Food and Drug Administration attack was unrealistic and in some ways badly so. However, I believe Reich was not insane or mentally ill, but that he maintained his emotional integrity and his remarkable creative power until the end of his life.

7. Reich's death was the result of a prolonged, malicious, coordinated attack which he and his followers fought ineffectively. He believed it was a Communist led conspiracy. I believe it was a massive unconsciously coordinated defense reaction by armored men to knowledge that threatens the very basis of their existence.

8. Wilhelm Reich was not guilty of any crime except in the empty legalistic sense. He died innocent of wrong-doing.

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