

Factual content has been verified with primary sources.

Draft of Letter:

Dear Congressman Curtis:

Now that Atomic Energy is here to stay and so much of it is in the news for industry and science, I decided to let you know of the work of my late husband, ~~Dr. Saul Hertz~~, who pioneered in the peaceful uses of Atomic energy in medicine and was the first to use Radioactive Iodine successfully as a cure of Graves disease (toxic goitre). *which started a whole new field in medicine*

He came upon the idea at a lecture given at Massachusetts Institute of Technology by the late President Carl T. Compton who asked the doctors to work on the sister Sciences. Dr. Hertz was then in charge of the Thyroid Clinic at the Mass. General Hospital and was working on endocrine problems. He knew that Iodine which ~~was~~ *was* one of the treatments used for the disease ~~was~~ *was* not satisfactory *for goitre patients* and he asked Dr. Compton if there was any way he knew that Iodine could be made to be retained in the Thyroid Gland, since the ordinary iodine was not entirely satisfactory. *Only 1/2 of the cases were cured* The enclosed letter from Dr.

Compton to Dr. Hertz ~~is~~ *is* was his reply and was the beginning of a three year grant *of \$1,000,000* from the John and Mary Markle fund ~~which gave \$1,000,000.00~~ *for* to the project. It obtained the

Cyclotron at M. I. T. and the material was ~~obtained~~ *obtained* from it. to ~~xxxxxx~~ *was made by bombarding. later called the atomic cocktail for* Tellurium or RA 131. Dr. Hertz *quite* wrote several papers on the use of the material on animals *with* with Dr. Roberts at M. I. T. as the physicist,

One of Several Correspondences Between Representative Curtis and Mrs Hertz:

LAURENCE CURTIS
10TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS
(NEWTON, BROOKLINE, BOSTON
WARD 4, 8, 10, 12, 19, 20, 21)
COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

October 30, 1958

Dear Friend:

It has been a privilege to represent you in Washington, and I have spared no efforts in trying to do this to the very best of my ability.

I hope that you will feel that my representation of you was satisfactory and merits your support.

Yours sincerely,

Laurence Curtis

C

Dear Congressman Curtis:

Now that Atomic Energy is here to stay and so much of it is in the news for industry and science, I decided to let you know of the work of my late husband, Dr. Saul Hertz who pioneered in the peaceful uses of Atomic energy in medicine and was the first to use Radioactive Iodine successfully as a cure of Graves Disease (toxic goitre), which started a whole new field in medicine. It is the first cure of a disease by atomic energy!

He came upon the idea in a speech by the late President Karl T. Compton of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before a Harvard Medical School Colloquium in the fall of 1936. This inspired Dr. Hertz in the initiation of an original investigative program. Dr. Compton asked doctors to work on the sister Sciences. Dr. Hertz was then in charge of the Thyroid Clinic at the Massachusetts General Hospital and was working on endocrine problems. He knew that iodine was not satisfactory for goitre patients and he asked Dr. Compton if there was any way he knew that iodine could be made to be retained in the Thyroid Gland, since the ordinary iodine was not satisfactory -- only one-third of the cases were cured. The enclosed letter from Dr. Compton to Dr. Hertz was his reply and was the beginning of a three year grant of \$1,000,000 from the John and Mary Markle fund for the project. It obtained the Cyclotron at M.I.T. and the material obtained from it was made by bombarding tellurium or RA 131, later called the atomic

cocktail for goitre. Dr. Hertz wrote several papers on the use of the material on animals with Dr. Arthur Roberts at M.I.T. as the physicist. The first patient was treated July 24, 1941. Several other patients received treatment by Dr. Hertz at the Thyroid Clinic that year. The fund was extended for another three years for this work. Before Dr. Hertz left for service in the Navy as a Lieut. Commander in 1943, he had a series of patients who received the radioactive iodine treatment or RA 131 as it was called from the Cyclotron. All were cured and doing very well with no signs of recurrence. Dr. Means who was the Chief of Medicine at the hospital asked that Dr. Hertz let another doctor follow the cases while he was in the service. Most of the doctors were in the service, but Dr. Earle Chapman was chosen for the job. Dr. Chapman had not worked on this project in the past but he was an internist on the Massachusetts General staff. Up to this point, Dr. Hertz did not want to publish the therapeutic paper on this work as he felt he wanted more time to elapse to be definitely sure. He felt that he could follow the cases if he had reports from Dr. Chapman and he was not sent overseas.

When Dr. Hertz returned from service he was informed by one of his doctor friends that Dr. Chapman and Dr. Means were going to publish a paper on the radioactive iodine treatment and that they had a series of their own as they stated at a

lecture at Harvard. When Dr. Hertz heard of this he went to see Dr. Howard Means and was told that Dr. Chapman had been giving his series of patients higher doses of radioactive iodine than in Dr. Hertz's series. Dr. Hertz had started by giving his series minimum doses and iodine at the same time because the iodine helped retain the medicine in the gland, and it was entirely unnecessary to give large doses of RA 131 as the extra amounts were excreted through the urine. He only wanted a patient to have what was necessary to do the work. Dr. Chapman's doses were almost twice and three times in excess. Dr. Chapman sought to publish his work first but Dr. Karl T. Compton heard of the story and told Dr. Means, the chief of medicine at M.G.H. that he was being unfair and to see to it that Dr. Hertz had his paper published first. Dr. Hertz offered Dr. Means the opportunity to have his name on the paper, but he refused. He then decided not to have his name on Dr. Chapman's paper either. However, he instructed Dr. Hertz to send his paper to the Journal of Endocrinology and told Dr. Chapman to send his to the American Medical Journal. A good friend of Dr. Hertz, Dr. Aub told Dr. Hertz that if he sent his work to the Journal of Endocrinology his paper would not be published for six months and Dr. Chapman would get his paper published in about six weeks and then he would get the credit for the work. Dr. Hertz decided to recall his paper and send it to the American Medical Journal. When Dr. Fishbein,

then the editor , received two papers on the same work, from the same clinic, he wrote to Dr. Means and asked him which was correct and which was prior. Dr. Means was very peeved about this and it was decided to publish the two papers in the same Journal, with Dr. Hertz's paper first, with a note from Dr. Karl T. Compton. Copy of this article is enclosed.

Dr. Means was very angry because he probably didn't want Dr. Hertz to get the credit for the work. He had been above Dr. Hertz in the endocrine clinic and always thought a hormone would do the trick. When he gave lectures at various places, he invariably asked Dr. Hertz what he was working on and would ask him to come to his office so that he could "pick his brains." He would say "Hertz at the clinic is working on this and that, etc." After the paper was published he would add his name on it. When he gave the lectures, and after writing another paper on the subject, he would then only write it with his own name on it. Several times Dr. Hertz brought home papers to show me how it was accomplished. Dr. Hertz had so many research ideas that Dr. Hertz was asked to give them to Dr. Lerman and also Dr. Roulon Rawson when they had to give papers at the Goiter Society. Both of these doctors were in the Thyroid Clinic at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Rawson is now at Memorial Hospital in New York and is a member of the Sloan-Kettering Institute in New York. I feel sure Dr. Means sponsored him. To get back to

Dr. Hertz. Dr. Hertz was not given his year at the Massachusetts General Hospital when he returned from the service and there are several letters pertaining to this when he asked to work on Cancer or anything else and at least wanted to be on the staff after giving eighteen years to the Massachusetts General Hospital. He was refused, saying "there wasn't any room for him". Nevertheless, the Massachusetts General Hospital ran a full page ad in the newspapers regarding the discovery of the Atomic Cocktail treatment being discovered there when they wanted support from the public for building new buildings and sponsoring research. The Cyclotron was now being used for Physics. By this time the Atomic Bomb was in existence and the Tellurium was used for the treatment. This is a by-product of the atomic bomb. The Atomic Energy Commission was in charge of this and the Massachusetts General Hospital had a set-- lead shield, etc. meeting specifications of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Dr. Means suggested that Dr. Hertz go to the Beth Israel Hospital and speak with Dr. Blumgart. Dr. Blumgart was a frequent visitor at the Massachusetts General Hospital. He was interested in depressing the Thyroid function of Angina patients and at one time he claimed that operation accomplished this purpose. There was a feud at that time between Dr. Samuel Levine and Dr. Blumgart regarding this operation and Dr. Levine went to the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital and is recognized as one of the leading Heart Specialists. Dr. Blumgart was interested in this idea and asked Dr. Hertz many times if he thought it could be worked out with radioactive iodine. Dr. Means thought it would be a good idea if he went to the Beth Israel Hospital and since he was a pioneer in

this field, the Atomic Energy Commission would allow a set-up if the doctor was qualified and had done work in this field. Dr. Blumgart decided to have Dr. Hertz come to the Beth Israel Hospital (he is the Chief of Medicine) and write a protocol and see if he would get a fund to back the project. The Navy came through with a grant for this work and for the Thyroid work. Dr. Hertz was given the title of Associate in Medicine and was on the Harvard staff. He was also part of the Endocrine Clinic there and helped with the heart cases. Dr. A. Stone Freedberg was another doctor who was a heart man and he was asked by Dr. Blumgart to get all the information he could from Dr. Hertz and learn how to treat these patients. Dr. Blumgart as far as I know, never came downstairs in the basement where the research was going on. Dr. Freedberg always kept Dr. Blumgart informed of what was going on. I know that Dr. Hertz told me he treated the first three cases of this series of patients. Dr. Hertz became ill with Colitis and was confined in the hospital. When I was visiting him, Dr. Freedberg came into the room and asked Dr. Hertz about the dose for a patient and I heard the conversation. Dr. Hertz told him how much RA to give.

While Dr. Hertz was at the Beth Israel Hospital, he looked up the research work done by Dr. Blumgart and found that his claims were not true compared to the records of the patients at the hospital. He told me that after the work was published and the work was evaluated by other doctors, they too, found that the total thyroidectomy was a failure. I believe he probably spoke to someone

about it and word got back to Dr. Blumgart because of the events that followed, which I will go on to describe.

Dr. Blumgart asked Dr. Hertz to write up the paper on the heart cases and bring it to him, which he did. Dr. Hertz told me he never saw the paper again. I believe he wrote it in his own handwriting. A short while after that, Dr. Hertz came home and told me that Dr. Blumgart published the paper on the heart cases and all the substance of it was what Dr. Hertz had written. However, Dr. Blumgart did not put Dr. Hertz's name on the paper and Dr. Hertz was hurt about it, having come to the Beth Israel hospital with the set-up and the years of knowledge about the medicine, plus the fact that he was indoctrinating Dr. Freedburg and was acting in the capacity of a consultant and treating patients for the project. He could not understand why Dr. Blumgart left his name off the paper. He never knew what Dr. Blumgart did with his paper. I do not have it in the files and I believe Dr. Blumgart never returned it. (I do have Dr. Hertz's handwritten doses in a book).

After the paper was published the fund to continue with thyroid patients ran out but as I understood it, the fund (research) from the Navy was continued for research with heart cases. I believe these patients were called Angina patients. Dr. Hertz believed that the treatment for these patients accomplished the purpose of putting less strain on the heart for these afflicted people but it was at best something that would prolong the life span, perhaps about three years longer than otherwise.

Along about this time, the Yamins Research Building was about to be built and there was a ground-breaking ceremony which I attended with Dr. Hertz. There was no mention of Radioactive Iodine research being done there, Dr. Alexander spoke about his work on blood and Dr. Blumgart never mentioned the Radioactive Isotope work. He did say that up to the present time they had poor facilities for research work. However, I understand that when they wanted research funds they took people to visit the laboratories and were very proud of the Isotope work. Also, at that time, Dr. Blumgart said that Dr. Hertz could practice and be a part of the Endocrine Clinic with staff privileges. The Navy did not give an extension on their grant for Thyroid research as it was proved, but continued the grant for research on heart cases. By this time the Thyroid work was being used and evaluated by clinics all over the United States where a set-up could be obtained through the Atomic Energy Commission at that time, limited to hospitals with affiliations to Universities. Along about this time, one of the doctors in the clinics had a patient for treatment and referred her to Dr. Hertz. Dr. Hertz treated her and sent a bill as she was a private patient. He was called upstairs to Dr. Blumgart's office and told that he would be taken off the hospital staff for doing that. Dr. Hertz remembered that Dr. Blumgart sent a bill to a man treated at the Massachusetts General Hospital for the same thing, in fact both Dr. Blumgart and Dr. Hertz sent him a bill. This man was one of

the original series of patients for the treatment. I have his name and he was treated in 1943 at the Massachusetts General Hospital as a private patient. Dr. Blumgart had a meeting of the Medical Executive Committee and had Dr. Hertz taken off the staff by means of asking him to take a leave of absence and then after that was over, removing him completely using as his excuse the incident of the bill described. Prior to the bill incident he had summoned Dr. Hertz's brother, Dr. Roy Hertz from Bethesda, Maryland, who was with the Public Health office at that time, and now with the Atomic Energy Commission and told him that he thought Dr. Hertz should see a psychiatrist. Dr. Hertz said he would be glad to see anyone at all but he thought that Dr. Blumgart should see one too. In my opinion Dr. Blumgart should have. I understand that his first wife died in an insane asylum and that he even convinced her father, Judge Mack who sponsored him at the Beth Israel Hospital, that she was insane. He later married the present Mrs. Blumgart and got her to divorce her husband. Her ex-husband went out West to live. I do not know any of the details on this. I think he tried to convince Dr. Hertz's brother that Saul was mental. I can tell you that Dr. Hertz was a wonderful man. Everyone loved him and I have so many letters to show you what a wonderful person he was. Even now, I get mail from people out of town and on Christmas long distance calls.

Dr. Hertz I believe, did not recognize the fact that he was so far advanced that the other doctors would be jealous of him. He did go to see Dr. Flannagan at 270 Commonwealth Avenue and I feel sure you can ask him anything you want to. He can tell you that when Dr. Hertz returned to the Beth Israel hospital for his

personal papers, he didn't receive them and had to write letters and was treated shamefully. At one point he was refused the use of the medicine to treat his own patients. Another doctor was asked to do it, instead. All the most difficult cases were given to him at the Endocrine clinic. One woman had an incurable disease, called Scleroderma, and Dr. Hertz discovered something that would be of great help for her. He did some more research at the Peter Bent Brigham hospital on this work and published it from there. He went to see Dr. Geroge Thorne and asked him if he would be able to work at the Peter Bent Brigham hospital. Dr. Thorne was a good friend of Dr. Hertz's. Several years ago when Dr. Hertz was at the General, Dr. Thorne was under him and he was very grateful for all the help he had given him in research. He could not arrange it as there was a meeting of the chiefs of Harvard connected hospitals and both Dr. Means and Dr. Blumgart did not vote for him to be on the staff of the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. Dr. Thorne and Dr. Castle of the Boston City Hospital wanted him, but it could not go through since all four professors had to approve the appointment. Dr. Thorne said "How could he go against the wind?"

Dr. Hertz was very hurt and unhappy. He tried writing to the Atomic Energy Commission to see if he could get a set-up for radioactive treatments but the medicine was limited at that time and only University connected hospitals with set-ups could give treatments. He couldn't treat his own patients, but Dr. Chapman

at the Massachusetts General Hospital could, and he was treating them. To date he has treated several hundred people. If Dr. Hertz had a patient he would have to send the patient to Dr. Chapman for treatment. He being the originator could not treat his own patients and was not on the staff, See Dr. Means book "Ward 4". pages 62, 66 and 89.

Sincerely,

(Mrs) Saul Hertz