

STATEMENT OF MRS. GRACE P. MONACO
PRESIDENT
CANDLELIGHTERS (METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON)
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR-HEW OF THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

JUNE 15, 1971


Last year at this time when representatives of the Candlelighters testified before you, the national funding priorities did not indicate undertaking anything but a holding operation with respect to cancer research and its application. However, this Subcommittee from its unique vantage point recognized that if our country was to receive the benefits of an ongoing cancer program in terms of extension and ultimately the preservation of productive lives, a substantial increase in funds was required. This Subcommittee recognized that the time had arrived to follow up substantial breakthroughs in cancer research and its application. This Subcommittee put its backs against the wall for cancer victims everywhere in the face of substantial opposition and voted the significant increase in funds that spearheaded a reordering of national priorities in the cancer area, which should insure the eventual conquest of cancer.

Last year, this year, and in the years to come the Candlelighters across the country -- 16 formal organizations and another 30 in the formative stages -- hope to provide a unique service for the benefit of this Subcommittee and the national interest in achieving an optimum cancer conquest program. As individuals whose children or other affected relatives are benefitting from the cancer effort, we are in a position to keep you informed of the effect of your funding efforts on the primary level. To inform you of what the results of your efforts have been and from this information to bring to your attention where increased general funding levels, clinics, specific program funding and so forth are required.

As we emphasized to you last year, our children are the barometer of your efforts. The success of the cancer program is directly translated into the saving and extension of productive lives. We realize that we cannot expect life for most of the children already diagnosed with some form of cancer. As a result of your efforts, however, we can expect and are already noting an increase in a more comfortable, happy longevity, permitting normal or near normal activity. Our children are the guinea pigs whose experiences move us toward the day when we will not have to lose a child to this terrible disease. It is imperative to speedy progress towards our common goal that these children be the best possible guinea pigs. Your action last year is productive of that aim. The Subcommittee's fiscal 1971 funding increase particularly in the chemotherapy area has made possible the release of additional drugs to clinics for experimental application.

We request that you appropriate \$50,000,000 over the administration's recommendation to insure funding of worthwhile approved research projects particularly in chemotherapy and immunotherapy which would remain unfunded under the administration's proposal. Through this additional appropriation we can be assured that all avenues essential to success will be explored and that the lives of those children that must be forfeit will be instrumental in providing information at an accelerated pace that will eventually keep more fortunate children with their parents for increasingly longer periods of time, -- eventually forever.

I would like to think that my own daughter, Kathleen, who died of leukemia last summer shortly before her fourth birthday, has made a significant contribution to the cancer effort. Parents in the Candlelighters all share this same sentiment. We ask you to use our children effectively during the time remaining to them so that others will not have to lose their children.



Recently our Candlelighter Groups in California have called our attention to a problem which threatens to frustrate the goals made possible by your action here last year. Apparently the Office of Management and Budget has refused to release funds approved by NCI and appropriated by this Subcommittee for training grants and fellowships over the fiscal 1969 level. OMB's action presumably can be traced to Secretary Richardson's testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee on the fiscal 71 budget in which he indicated that since the administration at that time did not intend to increase the money committed to the basic research base at NIH, the appropriations committees should not increase funds devoted to training grants and fellowships. Specifically he stated that:

Until conditions permit us to increase the amount of funds devoted to medical research, it does not make sense to continue to increase the number of researchers. The funds simply do not exist to support their research once they are trained, and we are creating a vicious cycle if we continue to train researchers but not provide funds to support their research.

The Subcommittee in the 1971 budget both expanded the research base and appropriated funds necessary to insure the quantity of trained clinical researchers and personnel to implement the cancer program at the level funded. In the fall of 1970 the President agreed to release all funds appropriated and, of course, with the \$100 million dollar supplemental, it is evident that the research base is being expanded and that therefore additional trained personnel to pursue and implement that research are required.

We would like to attribute this fund freeze to a misunderstanding on the administrative level. It is difficult, in the face of the President's avowed support for the increased funding, to believe that he would knowingly sanction such a course of action. In

discussing this area, the Candlelighters are not concerned about funds which you may determine should properly be removed from earmarking in the cancer-research programming and earmarked for inclusion in aid to medical schools. We are talking about fellowships and grants going to established, fully trained researchers, and oncologists and hematologists ready to be physician-partners in the cancer effort but for a brief period of specialized technique training.

Please discover the truth of this issue and if you discover that your effort in providing sufficient funds for physician-partners to implement effectively the expanded research and application program has been neutralized by OMB action, take whatever steps you consider appropriate to counteract this negative effect.

We thank you for your assistance in the past, we know that you will continue to act in the best interests of an expanding effective cancer conquest program.