

Defendant Dr. Cyril Wecht

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Facts of the case

The case involved the prosecution of Dr Cyril Wecht on the grounds of theft and fraud. The defendant was accused of using his position as the coroner of Allegheny County illegally and committing honest services fraud, including mail and wire communication, and stealing money from an organization financed by the federal government. The primary parties concerned include the US government, Dr. Wecht, and media interveners, as well as individual companies such as the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, WPXI, and WTAE. Distinct factors influenced their involvement in the case. The government is the plaintiff that indicted Dr. Wecht, the defendant, for allegedly misusing his official position to participate in various crimes, which are stealing from a federal-funded organization, counterfeiting transportation records and enticing a local college with corpses to get a space in their laboratory, for his personal financial interests. The media's interventions were motivated by the decision by the court that certain information regarding the case should not be disclosed to the public.

Discussion of the issue

Dr. Wecht engaged in various illegal practices, making him a concern of the government prosecutors, who felt that he had to be charged and sentenced to face the consequences of his actions. Regarding the information given by the plaintiff, defendant, media and court, who is truthful in this legal case? Is it the government or Dr. Wecht? Following the allegations against him, the defendant termed them as unsupported and claimed that they were influenced by political aspects. Further, he claimed that the government was after him to protect the attorney general, Stephen Zappala, from what he illustrates as practices of racism after he failed to prosecute a white police officer involved in the killing of African-American citizens whose deaths Dr. Wecht concluded there were homicide. Zappala, according to the defendant, issued the FBI with search warrants to probe his activities as a way of defaming him and making his forensic results regarding the homicides irrelevant before the public. (National Research Council, 2009) It is possible, therefore, that the defendant is somehow telling the truth, and everything is politically influenced to protect a particular individual. The judiciary is obliged to make a decision that reflects its moral ethics and standards in ensuring that justice and equality are given to everyone protected by the Constitution. Making a hasty decision is unwise, considering that Dr. Wecht might be innocent and the government is just trying to protect one of its own. Hence, it should be a matter of ethical decision-making to avoid giving justice to the offender and an unfair sentence to the innocent. The defendant's primary role is to ensure that he provides sufficient evidence to prove his innocence, if he actually is, and to ensure that the matter is left to the judiciary

to prove their moral uprightness in administering justice for all.

Discussion of the argument

Whatever decision the court eventually makes regarding this case will be consequential to both the plaintiff and the defendant. If there is a proper evaluation of the situation, an ethical right will be made. Otherwise, there will be no justice practised either on the plaintiff or the defendant, depending on their stand on the case. Supposedly, Dr Wecht is innocent, as he claimed in his defence; if the court rules in his favour, then justice will have been given to the right party, but if the decision is against him, the judiciary will have denied him his constitutional rights. Correspondingly, if he is guilty and the court decides to dismiss all the charges against him, the victims of his actions will have been denied the justice they deserve, as illustrated in the U.S. Constitution, but sentencing him will be an indication of morally influenced ethical decision-making. Therefore, the eventual decision concerning this case between the US federal government and Dr. Wecht significantly reflects the efficiency of the court's representatives in evaluating situations by utilizing the evidence provided to them. (Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals, Inc., 1993)

Conclusion

Although the court made several rulings during the period the case was going on, there were none that dismissed Dr. Wecht's indictment or justified his innocence. Considering the time taken in the attempt to give a verdict regarding the case, the court ought to have made a decision that either sentenced the defendant or affirmed his innocence; hence, from my viewpoint, I don't agree with it. Leviticus 19:11 says, "You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie on one another." Considering this verse in the Bible, the lack of a significant verdict implies that Dr. Wecht might have gone free, yet he was guilty of the allegations made against him, including stealing from an organization funded by the government. Hence, Christianity is affected in that one violates the directives of the Bible and yet goes free instead of being prosecuted according to the laws enacted in the Constitution. The judiciary should enhance its workforce to ensure that it efficiently evaluates the evidence provided to improve its decision-making mechanisms.

References

National Research Council. (2009). *Strengthening forensic science in the United States: A path forward*. National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/12589>

Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals, Inc., 509 U.S. 579 (1993).
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