

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 22, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

---

THE WHITE HOUSE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

On June 23 the National Institutes of Health released guidelines for the conduct of research involving the creation of new forms of life used in studying genetics (recombinant DNA experiments). These guidelines establish carefully controlled conditions for experiments in which foreign genes are inserted into microorganisms, such as bacteria. The objective of the guidelines is the containment of these possibly dangerous organisms while permitting research of great potential benefit to mankind.

The guidelines extend a moratorium that the scientists themselves imposed on certain experiments involving recombinant DNA. I am advised by the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare that recombinant DNA research has great potential in medicine as well as in science and technology generally. There are risks, however. The NIH guidelines prohibit certain types of experiments and require special safety conditions for other experiments. The provisions are designed to afford protection with a wide margin of safety to workers and the environment.

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare expects these guidelines to be supported by the largest part of the scientific community and will use them to govern research at laboratories of the National Institutes of Health and at those of its grantees and contractors.

Secretary Mathews will be convening an interagency committee to review Federal policies on the conduct of research involving recombinant DNA.

I expect the full cooperation of each department and agency conducting or supporting recombinant DNA experiments with Secretary Mathews, who will take the lead in this.

GERALD R. FORD

# # # # #