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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 4, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

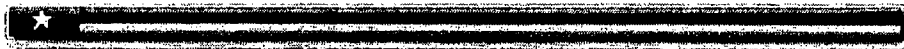
SUBJECT: Prohibition on Federal Funding
for **Cloning** of Human Beings

Recent accounts of advances in **cloning** technology, including the first successful **cloning** of an adult sheep, raise important questions. They potentially represent enormous scientific breakthroughs that could offer benefits in such areas as medicine and agriculture. But the new technology also raises profound ethical issues, particularly with respect to its possible use to **clone** humans. That is why last week I asked our National Bioethics Advisory Commission to thoroughly review the legal and ethical issues associated with the use of this technology and report back to me in 90 days.

Federal funds should not be used for **cloning** of human beings. The current restrictions on the use of Federal funds for research involving human embryos do not fully assure this result. In December 1994, I directed the National Institutes of Health not to fund the creation of human embryos for research purposes. The Congress extended this prohibition in FY 1996 and FY 1997 appropriations bills, barring the Department of Health and Human Services from supporting certain human embryo research. However, these restrictions do not explicitly cover human embryos created for implantation and do not cover all Federal agencies. I want to make it absolutely clear that no Federal funds will be used for human **cloning**. Therefore, I hereby direct that no Federal funds shall be allocated for **cloning** of human beings.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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White House Press Release

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLONING LEGISLATION

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 9, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT ANNOUNCEMENT OF **CLONING** LEGISLATION

The Rose Garden

11:56 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Dr. Shapiro, for that fine set of remarks and for your report. I thank all the members of the President's Committee of Advisors. I'd also like to thank Secretary Shalala and Dr. Varmus for being here today, along with the President's Advisor on Science and Technology, Dr. Jack Gibbons. And I thank Congressman Brown and Congresswoman Morella for being here and for their interest in this important issue.

But mostly let me say again, I am profoundly grateful to the National Bioethics Advisory Commission and to Dr. Harold Shapiro for preparing this report on a difficult topic in a short period of time, requiring an extensive inquiry. Your commitment and your courage in breaking new ground in policy is deeply appreciated.

As the Vice President has said and all of us know, we live in an era of breath-taking scientific discovery. More and more, our future in the world depends upon advances in science and technology. And more and more, the scientific community will influence the course of the future and the lives that our children will lead in the new century that is upon us.

As I said in my commencement address at Morgan State University last month, our scientific explorations must be guided by our

commitment to human values, to the good of society, to our basic sense of right and wrong. Nothing makes the necessity of that moral obligation more clear than the troubling possibility that these new animal-**cloning** techniques could be used to create a child. That is why I acted in March to ban the use of federal funds for **cloning** human beings and to urge the private sector to observe the ban voluntarily while we initiated a national dialogue on the risks and the responsibilities of such a possibility, and why I asked this commission to issue this report.

For three months, the commission has rigorously explored the scientific, moral, and spiritual dimensions of human **cloning**. It has talked to leading scientists and religious leaders, to philosophers and families, to patient advocates and to the general public. From many opinions and beliefs, as Dr. Shapiro said, one unanimous conclusion has emerged: Attempting to **clone** a human being is unacceptably dangerous to the child and morally unacceptable to our society.

I believe strongly that this conclusion reflects a national consensus, and I believe personally that it is the right thing to do. Today I am sending legislation to the Congress that prohibits anyone in either public or private sectors from using these techniques to create a child. Until the day I sign the legislation into law, the ban on federal funding I declared in March will remain in effect. And once again, I call upon the private sector to refrain voluntarily from using this technology to attempt to **clone** a human being.

I want to make clear that there is nothing inherently immoral or wrong with these new techniques -- used for proper purposes. In fact, they hold the promise of revolutionary new medical treatments and life-saving cures to diseases like cystic fibrosis, diabetes and cancer, to better crops and stronger livestock.

This legislation, therefore, will not prohibit the use of these techniques to **clone** DNA in cells and it will not ban the **cloning** of animals. What the legislation will do is to reaffirm our most cherished belief about the miracle of human life and the God-given individuality each person possesses. It will ensure that we do not fall prey to the temptation to replicate ourselves at the expense of those beliefs and the lives of innocent children we would produce.

Finally, the legislation will ensure that we continue the national dialogue we began three months ago and will provide the nation and the Congress another opportunity to take a look at this issue in five years.

To make sure that all our voices are heard as we explore human **cloning**, the legislation specifically requires the National Bioethics Advisory Commission to continue its study and report back in four and a half years. At that time, we will decide how to proceed based on what has been accomplished and agreed upon and debated and discovered in the intervening period.

Banning human **cloning** reflects our humanity. It is the right thing to do. Creating a child through this new method calls into question our most fundamental beliefs. It has the potential to threaten the sacred family bonds at the very core of our ideals and our society. At its worst, it could lead to misguided and malevolent attempts to select certain traits, even to create certain kind of children -- to make our children objects rather than cherished individuals.

We are still a long way from understanding all the implications of the present discoveries, but it is our moral obligation

to confront these issues as they arise and to act now to prevent abuse. Today, I hope other countries will see what we are doing and do the same. And I pledge to work with them to enforce similar bans around the world that reflect these values.

Once again, let me say a heartfelt thank you on behalf of our entire nation to the National Bioethics Advisory Commission for the remarkable work you have done and the work you have agreed to continue doing in the coming years. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

12:02 P.M. EDT



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White House Press Release

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT ON CLONING

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 4, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT ON **CLONING**

The Oval Office

9:25 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. I'm glad to be joined this morning by the Vice President, Secretary Shalala, Dr. Harold Varmus, the head of NIH; Dr. Harold Shapiro, the President of Princeton and the Chairman of our Bioethics Advisory Commission; and Dr. Jack Gibbons, the President's Advisor on Science and Technology, all of whom know a lot about and care a lot about this issue we are discussing today.

The recent breakthrough in animal **cloning** is one that could yield enormous benefits, enabling us to reproduce the most productive strains of crop and livestock, holding out the promise of revolutionary new medical treatments and cures, helping to unlock the greatest secrets of the genetic code. But like the splitting of the atom, this is a discovery that carries burdens as well as benefits.

Science often moves faster than our ability to understand its implications. That is why we have a responsibility to move with caution and care to harness the powerful forces of science and technology so that we can reap the benefit while minimizing the potential danger.

This new discovery raises the troubling prospect that it might someday be possible to **clone** human beings from our own genetic material. There is much about **cloning** that we still do not know. But this much we do know: any discovery that touches upon human creation is not simply a matter of scientific inquiry, it is a matter

of morality and spirituality as well.

My own view is that human **cloning** would have to raise deep concerns, given our most cherished concepts of faith and humanity. Each human life is unique, born of a miracle that reaches beyond laboratory science. I believe we must respect this profound gift and resist the temptation to replicate ourselves.

At the very least, however, we should all agree that we need a better understanding of the scope and implications of this most recent breakthrough. Last week, I asked our National Bioethics Advisory Commission, headed by President Harold Shapiro of Princeton, to conduct a thorough review of the legal and the ethical issues raised by this new **cloning** discovery, and to recommend possible actions to prevent its abuse, reporting back to me by the end of May.

In the meantime, I am taking further steps to prevent human **cloning**. The federal government currently restricts the use of federal funds for research involving human embryos. After reviewing these restrictions, our administration believes that there are loopholes that could allow the **cloning** of human beings if the technology were developed. Therefore, today I am issuing a directive that bans the use of any federal funds for any **cloning** of human beings.

Effective immediately, no federal agency may support, fund, or undertake such activity. Of course, a great deal of research and activity in this area is supported by private funds. That is why I am urging the entire scientific and medical community, every foundation, every university, every industry that supports work in this area to heed the federal government's example. I'm asking for a voluntary moratorium on the **cloning** of human beings until our Bioethics Advisory Commission and our entire nation have had a real chance to understand and debate the profound ethical implications of the latest advances.

As we gain a fuller understanding of this technology, we must proceed not just with caution, but also with a conscience, by insisting that not a single taxpayer dollar supports human **cloning**. And by urging a moratorium on all private research in this area, we can ensure that as we move forward on this issue, we weigh the concerns of faith and family and philosophy and values, not merely of science alone. Thank you very much.

Q Mr. President, how do you think the Vice President did in his rebuttal yesterday, and do you agree with him that you two are in a separate category in terms of fundraising from federal property?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I agree with -- number one, I thought he did very well and I agree with the statement he made and I agree that what he did was legal. But I also agree with the decision that he made.

I would remind you just that we knew that we had a very stiff challenge. We were fighting a battle not simply for our reelection, but over the entire direction of the country for years to come, and the most historic philosophical battle we've had in America in quite a long time -- over the direction of the budget, over our commitment to education, over whether we would dismantle large chunks of our environmental regulations and our public health regulations. It was a significant thing for America, and we knew that we were going to be outspent and outraced, but we knew we had to do everything we could to at least be competitive enough to get our message out.

In fact, that is what happened. We were outspent and outraised by more than \$200 million; but thanks to the Vice President's efforts and those of thousands of others and a million small donors, we were able to get our message out.

Q But did you overdo it in a sense that now you're regretting, obviously -- you must be -- all the things that have happened since then?

THE PRESIDENT: The only thing I regret -- and I regret this very much as I have said -- is that a decision was made which I did not approve of or know about to stop the rigorous review of checks coming in to the Democratic Committee so that some funds were accepted which should not have been accepted. I regret that very much. And I have said that I feel, as the titular head of the Democratic Party I feel responsible for that; I think all of us in the line of command are. And I was very proud of Governor Romer and Mr. Grossman and the entire Democratic Committee when they made a full accounting; they went over all the checks, they did something as far as I know no party has done in modern history, and they gave back money that was not only clearly illegal, but that was questionable, and they're going on. I regret that very much, because that never should have happened in the first place.

For the rest, I think the Vice President said he thought that some changes were in order, but I don't regret the fact that we worked like crazy to raise enough money to keep from being rolled over by the biggest juggernaut this country had seen in a very long time. And I think it would have been a very bad thing for the American people if that budget had passed, if their plans to dramatically dismantle the environmental protections and the public health protections the country had passed, and I am glad we stood up to it. I'm glad we fought the battles of '95 and '96, and I'm glad it came out the way it did, and we had to be aggressive and strong within the law, and I'm very proud of what the Vice President did.

Q Don't you think it puts the Vice President in a vulnerable --

Q Mr. President, what is the extent of your order today? How much funds -- do you know how much funds were being spent toward this human **cloning**, if any?

THE PRESIDENT: We attempted previously to have a ban on this, going back to '94, I believe. The nature of the new discovery raised the prospect that the technology was not covered specifically by the nature of the ban. So as far as I know, nothing is going on in government-funded research. I just want to make sure that we keep it that way, because our research dollars are spread all across the country in different institutions.

With regard to the private sector, let me say that our staff here in the White House has been in touch with a number of people in the biotech industry, and they seem to be glad that we called and anxious to participate in a moratorium until we think through the implications of this.

I mean, I imagine a lot of you, not as journalists but in your own private homes have sat around talking about this discovery in the last few days; I know we have in our home. And I just think that we need the best minds that we can bring to bear and the distinguished people on the Bioethnics Advisory Committee to think through this, tell us about what we may be missing about if there's anything positive that could come from this, and also think

through the other implications.

How can we get the benefits of our deep desire to find any possible cure for any malady that's out there without raising the kind of ethical implications that, in effect, we're in the business where people are trying to play God, or to replicate themselves.

Q Mr. President, Democrats and Republicans are bogged down in Congress over whether to conduct hearings on the fundraising issue. Do you want to see that happen, and would you so tell your Democrats, you fellow Democrats up on the Hill?

THE PRESIDENT: My understanding is that the Democrats have no objection whatever to the hearings, they just believe that they ought not to go on forever and that they don't need to -- they're disputing whether \$6.5 million needs to be spent. That's something that they need to work out among themselves.

I certainly have no objection to hearings. I've always assumed that they would occur, but I think that the American people are entitled to know that some prudence will be exercised in how much money is spent, because there's a lot of other things out there to be done, and we have the public's business to get on with as well -- a lot of other issues that need to be dealt with. And what I'm hoping that we can do is to just reconcile how this is going to be dealt with, and maybe spend some of that money to properly fund the Federal Election Commission so they can do the kind of audits they're supposed to do, and do the job that they actually have the power to do on the books right now, and get on with the big business, get on with balancing the budget, get on with passing the education program, get on with doing the other things that are out there for us to do. And so I'm going to do everything I can to facilitate that.

But it is a decision for the Senate and for the House, and the House to decide how these hearings will proceed and how they will be funded. But I don't think anybody objects to having hearings. We want them to be fair, we want them to be bipartisan, we want them to be balanced, and as I understand it, the big fight in the Senate is, will there be a date certain for ending and will there be a limit to how much is spent.

And let me say this: whatever the hearings produce, in the end, the only real question is, will they produce campaign finance reform. Whatever they produce, will they produce campaign finance reform. I still believe that the only way for the Congress to really deal with this and any questions from the past is to change the system. And we have the McCain/Feingold bill out there, it's a good vehicle, I have endorsed it, I would happily sign it the way it is, but they may want to debate that in some way or another. But the main thing that I want to say again is that there is no excuse for not voting on and passing a good bipartisan campaign finance reform bill this year. There is no excuse. That is the main issue.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

9:35 A.M. EST



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