


THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 17, 1954

My dear Mr. Chairman:

The President today signed an Executive Order entitled "Administration of Scientific Research by Agencies of the Federal Government," and a statement was issued in connection therewith, copies of which are enclosed.

Very sincerely yours,


WILLIAM J. HOPKINS
Executive Clerk

Honorable Adm. Lewis L. Strauss,
Chairman,
Atomic Energy Commission,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure

Received in Office of General Manager

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3672

March 17, 1954

James C. Hagerty, Press Secretary to the President

THE WHITE HOUSE

The President today issued an Executive Order designed to strengthen the conduct and administration of the scientific research and development programs of the various departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

The order directs the National Science Foundation to make studies of the scientific activities of the Nation and to recommend to the President policies to strengthen the research effort and define the Federal Government's role in it. The Foundation, over a period of time, is expected to become increasingly responsible for providing Federal support for basic research carried on in universities and other nonprofit institutions. Other Federal agencies, however, will continue to carry on basic research which is closely related to their statutory missions.

The Foundation will also study the effects of Federal research support on the Nation's educational institutions and recommend policies and procedures to promote the attainment of the Federal research objectives while safeguarding the strength and independence of the educational institutions.

The order also directs the head of each agency engaged in research to make sure that such research programs reflect urgent needs and are carried on economically and with regard to the efficient use of scientific manpower. In this connection the order provides a new method to facilitate the exchange of scientific equipment and facilities among the Federal agencies so as to avoid buying new equipment or building new facilities when another agency has unused equipment or facilities available.

In connection with his approval of the order, the President made the following statement:

"Science has a vital role in our Nation's security and growth. During the past half-century, it has brought about a vast transformation in industry, in agriculture, in medicine, in transportation, and in communications. Military science has been revolutionized by technological development. The impact of science is increasingly felt in every field of public policy including foreign affairs. All this has been brought about through a combination of vision, initiative, business enterprise, a strong educational system, and the dedicated enthusiasm of the scientific community.

"The responsibilities of the Federal Government toward science have likewise changed greatly. In 1940, the Federal Government spent about one hundred million dollars in supporting research and development. The budget which I have just transmitted to the Congress calls for expenditures for these purposes in the next fiscal year of over two billion dollars. This is convincing evidence of the important role of science and technology in our national affairs.

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"This rapid expansion of Federal responsibility requires prudent administration. More than half of all the investment in the Nation today for scientific research and development is being made by the Federal Government. In large measure, these Federal funds are paid to industry and educational institutions for the conduct of research and development projects. Thus our Federal policies and practices regarding research and development are felt immediately and substantially by industry and our educational institutions.

"More than ninety percent of this Federal support is presently going into applied research and development. This is the practical application of basic knowledge to a variety of products and devices. However, only a small fraction of the Federal funds is being used to stimulate and support the vital basic research which makes possible our practical scientific progress. I believe strongly that this Nation must extend its support of research in basic science.

"While the Executive Order which I have signed today calls upon the National Science Foundation to carry out important responsibilities in regard to scientific research, it is also designed to strengthen the conduct and support of vital research and development in the several agencies where science is important in achieving their assigned missions.

"This order will, for the first time, set in motion important steps leading to a thorough and continuing review of the status of the Federal Government's activities in science, and thus enable the Government, together with industry, higher education, and the scientific community to move forward with assurance toward the achievement of the Nation's goals.

"I expect and believe that this order will clarify the position of the Government toward the support and advancement of science in the Nation, and that it will contribute in a constructive sense to the development of our national policy in this important and critical area."

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EXECUTIVE ORDER

10521

ADMINISTRATION OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
BY AGENCIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS the security and welfare of the United States depend increasingly upon the advancement of knowledge in the sciences; and

WHEREAS useful applications of science to defense, humanitarian, and other purposes in the Nation require a strong foundation in basic scientific knowledge and trained scientific manpower; and

WHEREAS the administration of Federal scientific research programs affecting institutions of learning must be consistent with the preservation of the strength, vitality, and independence of higher education in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in order to conserve fiscal and manpower resources, it is necessary that Federal scientific research programs be administered with all practicable efficiency and economy; and

WHEREAS the National Science Foundation has been established by law for the purpose, among others, of developing and encouraging the pursuit of an appropriate and effective national policy for the promotion of basic research and education in the sciences:

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. The National Science Foundation (hereinafter referred to as the Foundation) shall from time to time recommend to the President policies for the Federal Government which will strengthen the national scientific effort and furnish guidance toward defining the responsibilities of the Federal Government in the conduct and support of scientific research.

Section 2. The Foundation shall continue to make comprehensive studies and recommendations regarding the Nation's scientific research effort and its resources for scientific activities, including facilities and scientific personnel, and its foreseeable scientific needs, with particular attention to the extent of the Federal Government's activities and the resulting effects upon trained scientific personnel. In making such studies, the Foundation shall make full use of existing sources of information and research facilities within the Federal Government.

Section 3. The Foundation, in concert with each Federal agency concerned, shall review the scientific research programs and activities of the Federal Government in order, among other purposes, to formulate methods for strengthening the administration of such programs and activities by the responsible agencies, and to study areas of basic research where gaps or undesirable overlapping of support may exist, and shall recommend to the heads of agencies concerning the support given to basic research.

Section 4. As now or hereafter authorized or permitted by law, the Foundation shall be increasingly responsible for providing support by the Federal Government for general-purpose basic research through contracts and grants. The conduct and support by other Federal agencies of basic research in areas which are closely related to their missions is recognized as important and desirable, especially in response to current national needs, and shall continue.

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Section 5. The Foundation, in consultation with educational institutions, the heads of Federal agencies, and the Commissioner of Education of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, shall study the effects upon educational institutions of Federal policies and administration of contracts and grants for scientific research and development, and shall recommend policies and procedures which will promote the attainment of general national research objectives and realization of the research needs of Federal agencies while safeguarding the strength and independence of the Nation's institutions of learning.

new Section 6. The head of each Federal agency engaged in scientific research shall make certain that effective executive, organizational, and fiscal practices exist to ensure (a) that the Foundation is consulted on policies concerning the support of basic research, (b) that approved scientific research programs conducted by the agency are reviewed continuously in order to preserve priorities in research efforts and to adjust programs to meet changing conditions without imposing unnecessary added burdens on budgetary and other resources, (c) that applied research and development shall be undertaken with sufficient consideration of the underlying basic research and such other factors as relative urgency, project costs, and availability of manpower and facilities, and (d) that, subject to considerations of security and applicable law, adequate dissemination shall be made within the Federal Government of reports on the nature and progress of research projects as an aid to the efficiency and economy of the overall Federal scientific research program.

Section 7. Federal agencies supporting or engaging in scientific research shall, with the assistance of the Foundation, cooperate in an effort to improve the methods of classification and reporting of scientific research projects and activities, subject to the requirements of security of information.

Section 8. To facilitate the efficient use of scientific research equipment and facilities held by Federal agencies:

(a) the head of each such agency engaged in scientific research shall, to the extent practicable, encourage and facilitate the sharing with other Federal agencies of major equipment and facilities;

(b) a Federal agency shall procure new major equipment or facilities for scientific research purposes only after taking suitable steps to ascertain that the need cannot be met adequately from existing inventories or facilities of its own or of other agencies; and

(c) the Interdepartmental Committee on Scientific Research and Development shall take necessary steps to ensure that each Federal agency engaged directly in scientific research is kept informed of selected major equipment and facilities which could serve the needs of more than one agency. Each Federal agency possessing such equipment and facilities shall maintain appropriate records to assist other agencies in arranging for their joint use or exchange.

Section 9. The heads of the respective Federal agencies shall make such reports concerning activities within the purview of this order as may be required by the President.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

THE WHITE HOUSE,

March 17, 1954.