

biomedical and agricultural advances. Genes, cells, tissues, and even whole plants and animals have been cloned to develop new therapies for treating such disorders as cancer, diabetes, and cystic fibrosis. Cloning technology also holds promise for producing replacement skin, cartilage, or bone tissue for burn or accident victims, and nerve tissue to treat spinal cord injury. Therefore, nothing in the "Cloning Prohibition Act of 1997" restricts activities in other areas of biomedical and agricultural research that involve: (1) the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer or other cloning technologies to clone molecules, DNA, cells, and tissues; or (2) the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer techniques to create animals.

The Commission recommended that such legislation provide for further review of the state of somatic cell nuclear transfer technology and the ethical and social issues attendant to its potential use to create human beings. My legislative proposal would implement this recommendation and assign responsibility for the review, to be completed in the fifth year after passage of the legislation, to the National Bioethics Advisory Commission.

I urge the Congress to give this legislation prompt and favorable consideration.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
June 9, 1997.

**Statement on General Joseph W. Ralston's Withdrawal From Consideration as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

*June 9, 1997*

I respect General Joe Ralston's decision to remove his name from consideration as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

I am pleased that General Ralston has agreed to Secretary Cohen's request to continue in his current post as Vice Chairman. For 32 years, in war and in peace, General Ralston has served our Nation with uncommon distinction. As Vice Chairman, he is a valued adviser to me, and he has played a key role in the Pentagon's review of its post-cold-war mission. The Joint Chiefs and our

country will benefit from his continued service. He is an outstanding officer.

I also welcome Secretary Cohen's action to forthrightly and thoroughly review the military's standards and procedures involving personal conduct. It is essential that our system is reasonable, consistent, and fair for those who serve our country and that it is perceived to be so by the American people.

I look forward to receiving Secretary Cohen's recommendation for the Chairmanship of the Joint Chiefs.

**Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Legislation**

*June 9, 1997*

*To the House of Representatives:*

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 1469, the "Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act, FY 1997." The congressional majority—despite the obvious and urgent need to speed critical relief to people in the Dakotas, Minnesota, California, and 29 other States ravaged by flooding and other natural disasters—has chosen to weigh down this legislation with a series of unacceptable provisions that it knows will draw my veto. The time has come to stop playing politics with the lives of Americans in need and to send me a clean, unencumbered disaster relief bill that I can and will sign the moment it reaches my desk.

On March 19, 1997, I sent the Congress a request for emergency disaster assistance and urged the Congress to approve it promptly. Both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees acted expeditiously to approve the legislation. The core of this bill, appropriately, provides \$5.8 billion of much-needed help to people in hard-hit States and, in addition, contains \$1.8 billion for the Department of Defense related to our peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia and Southwest Asia. Regrettably, the Republican leadership chose to include contentious issues totally unrelated to disaster assistance, needlessly delaying essential relief.

The bill contains a provision that would create an automatic continuing resolution for