research is small given the track record of scientists so far. But this modicum of uncertainty elicited a different response from others. The reason Gottesman proposed her version of mandatory guidelines is that a few types of experiments, in her opinion, still warrant oversight. "If they are to be watched, then it makes sense to make the guidelines mandatory," she said. Others concurred, arguing that until more data become available on risks associated with the small number of experiments, it is better to err on the side of caution. Elena Nightingale of the Institute of Medicine said, "We should keep in mind that the probability of something going wrong is small, but . . . [if something goes wrong] the consequences are large. A powerful technology has powerful consequences."

Although the committee voted in favor of Gottesman's proposal primarily because of its mandatory requirement, it also found other provisions attractive. The proposal retains institutional biosafety committees, which the RAC proposal eliminated. The members seemed to agree that the groups have provided a useful forum for discussion between scientists and the community.

The proposal eases restrictions on the special handling of organisms—or containment rules. In particular, experiments involving nonpathogenic, one-celled organisms would be carried out at the least restrictive category. It does not lower containment levels as much as the RAC proposal.

In addition, the voluntary plan would drop prohibitions on three types of experiments but would require prior approval by the committee, NIH, and the local biosafety group. Experiments that would now be permitted under Gottesman's proposal are those that deliberately release into the environment organisms containing recombinant DNA, such as organisms to be used as agricultural pesticides; those that deliberately form material containing genes that translate into certain lethal toxins; and those that deliberately transfer a drug resistance trait to microorganisms if it could jeopardize the use of a drug that currently controls disease.

The committee plans further refinements of the Gottesman proposal at the next meeting in April. For now, the committee has decided a fundamental issue that has been discussed for 2 years. It is not to everyone's liking in the research community but the more moderate proposal they chose is likely to gain public acceptance more easily than a clean sweep of regulations for now.

—MARJORIE SUN

Final Draft of Classification Order

The third and final draft of the Reagan Administration's Executive Order on Security Classification came out on 4 February, little changed from the second draft. If Reagan signs the order, a 30-year trend toward reducing classified information will be reversed. For example, basic scientific research will be classifiable, as will research funded by grants, whether or not the funding agency itself has the power to classify (*Science*, 5 February, p. 636).

Congress has been given until 22 February to consider the final draft of the executive order—a time frame that a number of congressmen find too brief. Congress recessed on 10 February and will not return until 22 February. On 10 February, Glenn English, chairman of the House subcommittee on government information and individual rights of the Government Operations Committee, wrote to national security adviser William Clark asking that the deadline be extended. "No change should be made in the executive order without allowing for thorough review," he wrote. Seven other subcommittee chairman signed English's letter. A spokesman for English's subcommittee says that his and a number of other subcommittees would like to hold hearings on the executive order.—***Gina Kolata***

DOD and University Presidents to Meet

A newly formed committee consisting of seven university presidents, Defense Science Board members, and Defense Department administrators will have its first meeting this month to discuss a broad range of issues relating to the mutual concerns. Donald Kennedy, president of Stanford University, and Richard DeLauer, under secretary for research and engineering at the Department of Defense (DOD), are cochairmen of the committee.

Among the issues to be discussed are technology transfer and export controls, research support for universities, graduate education in the physical sciences and engineering, the universities' needs for new laboratory instruments, and the nation's needs for more students trained to know foreign languages and as experts on other countries. The committee was set up at the Defense Department's request by the Association of American Universities (AAU), the American Council on Education, and the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges.

Richard D. DeLauer

Donald Kennedy

According to John Crowley, executive assistant to the AAU president, the idea for such a committee came from two sources. One was the AAU, which was asked last year by DeLauer to prepare a report on major issues in research training that would be of concern to the Defense Department. The AAU presented its report in October, including the recommendation that it would be useful to establish a forum for the DOD and universities to talk to each other. In the meantime, the Defense Science Board came out with the same recommendation.

The establishment of the committee, says Crowley, "is a reflection of the seriousness of the situation and a recognition generally shared across DOD, universities, and Congressional committees that if the administration's fundamental objective is to rebuild our

0036-8075/82/0226-1080$01.00/0