I hope that NIH will not fail to capitalize on any opportunity to contribute to the control of this epidemic or to interpret the events of this "experiment of nature" to further our understanding of processes underlying health and disease.

/s/ James B. Wyngaarden

James B. Wyngaarden, M.D.

cc: NIH Kaposi Sarcoma Working Group
Director, CDC
Commissioner, FDA
Dr. J. Curran, CDC

RSGordon:neg(7/9/82)
Official file located in OD file

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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JUL 13 1982

Director. NTH

Working Group on Epidemic of Acquired Immunosuppression, Opportunistic Infections, and Kaposi's Sarcoma

BID Directors

This current epidemic, of obscure cause, began among homosexual males, but is apparently increasing in incidence and spreading to other segments of the population. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has been the USPHS agency most actively involved in surveillance, study, and attempts to control the epidemic, working in collaboration with State and local health departments in affected areas. CDC is coordinating this effort through a task force chaired by Dr. James Curran (FTS: 8 236-3472). Dr. Curran is otherwise research director in CDC's venereal disease control program.

While NIH does not bear a direct responsibility for controlling the outbreak, it is apparent that an epidemic of this sort may offer significant scientific opportunities, particularly since immunoregulation and the causation of cancer are areas of intense research activity among several BID's and their extramural communities. For that reason, I believe that NIH should establish an informal working group of concerned intramural scientists and extramural staff from those program areas that are, or are likely to become, involved in these studies. The responsibilities of this group will be to foster exchange of information among BID's at NIH, and to provide a ready channel to make current research findings available to CDC and other agencies that may be involved in the control of the outbreak. I have received the suggestions that were forwarded from your offices in response to our brief conversation at the BID Directors' meeting on June 30.

I have asked Dr. Robert Gordon of my office to chair this group, and to maintain liaison with Dr. Curran at CDC. The others whom I wish to have serve on the group are:

Dr. Heinz Berendes, NICHD
Dr. Amoz Chernoff, NHLBI
Dr. James Goedert, NCI/DCCP
Dr. John Hooks, NIDR
Dr. Arthur Levine, NCI/DCT
Dr. Michael Luster, NIEHS
Dr. David Madden, NINCDS
Dr. Henry Masur, CC
Dr. Robert Nussenblatt, NEI
Dr. Harold Schoolman, NLM
Dr. Kenneth Sell, NIAID (co-chairman)
Dr. M. Raphael Shulman, NIADDK

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ES	Hager	7/12						