

# Heart Month

WASHINGTON— President Nixon signed a proclamation designating February as American Heart Month. He urged public support for programs needed to solve the problem of heart diseases, which, he said, "imposes a heavy burden on the nation" in death, suffering and economic loss.

Notable progress has been made to date in fighting the disease, President Nixon noted.

"For continued gains, we look to the National Heart and Lung Institute, as the chief Federal partner, and to the American Heart Association, as the principal voluntary ally," Mr. Nixon added.

"Given the support of all our citizens to reinforce and sustain these efforts, we can have cause for optimism," The President said in the proclamation.

Since 1949, the Heart Association has conducted programs of research, medical and public education, and community service supported by public contributions to the Heart Fund, conducted annually during Heart Month. With allocations to date, approximately \$164 million has been invested in research alone.

The proclamation stated in part:

"Cardiovascular disease imposes a heavy burden on the Nation. More than half of all deaths in the United States result from Heart disease. It is also a major cause of disability, taking a tremendous toll in both suffering and economic loss. The number of Americans who have some form of heart and blood vessel

is estimated at more than 27 million. In 1968, the economic cost of such diseases was estimated at more than \$31 billion.

"Despite the vastness of the problem, notable progress is being made in the struggle against this disease—largely through research and its application. This progress is attributable to the combined efforts of public and private interests. For continued gains we look further to the National Heart and Lung Institute, as the chief Federal Partner, and the American Heart Association, as the principal voluntary ally."

President Nixon invited the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to issue similar proclamations.