

Vietnam Veterans

Q. Mr. President, you mentioned people who had been to Vietnam, had served; you did not. Did this have any role in your decision, and did it make it more difficult for you to reach this decision?

The President. No. I do think, however, everybody my age, whether they were in Vietnam or not, knew someone who died there, knew someone who was wounded there. And I think people in our generation are perhaps more insistent on trying to get a full accounting, more obsessed with it than perhaps people who are younger and people who are older, except those who had children there. I think that was the only thing.

I have spent an enormous amount of time on this issue. I got a personal briefing when I was in Hawaii last summer. I have talked to some of the young people who were there digging in the jungles for the remains. I have really thought about this, and I have tried to listen hard to—when Senator Kerry and Senator McCain and their delegation came back, we had a long meeting here about it. I think the people, all the people my age just want to know we've done everything we can. And I think this is consistent with doing that.

Immigration

Q. Mr. President, on another subject, what do you hope to achieve with the immigration crackdown that was announced today? And do you have any concerns that people's rights will be violated?

The President. Well, we're going to do our best not to violate anybody's rights. What we hope to achieve is a continued environment in which America will be open for legal immigration. We are a nation of immigrants—which we can do our best to protect our borders.

Health Care Plan

Q. You've had, sir, two influential business groups say that they prefer other plans than yours to health care. Does that hurt you?

The President. One was the Chamber of Commerce.

Q. Does their stand, saying that other directions are the way to go, particularly the Business Roundtable, does that hurt you in negotiations as you move forward?

The President. I don't want to make too much of it, because the people who came in here to see me said it was a negotiating strategy. And I said, well, if all of you are providing health care coverage to your employees, I don't think you want to come out for a position against providing guaranteed health insurance to all American workers. So I don't know what to make of it, but I wouldn't read too much into it. This is the beginning of what will be a protracted legislative discussion.

Former President Ronald Reagan

Q. Tonight, sir, Ronald Reagan is apparently going to take issue with some of your criticisms of him. Do you feel that you have been unfairly savaging his record in the 1980's?

The President. Gee, I don't think I've been very critical of him at all. You know, I disagreed with the economic policy, I said so. I think if you go back over the rhetoric of this last year, it's been fairly free of obsession with the past, I'm not much into that. I'm looking toward tomorrow.

Q. You hired Gergen, after all. [Laughter]

The President. What greater compliment could I pay President Reagan?

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:06 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Executive Order 12896—Amending the Civil Service Rules Concerning Political Activity

February 3, 1994

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 3301 and 3302 of title 5, United States Code, and as a result of the enactment of Public Law 103-94, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Civil Service Rule IV (5 CFR Part 4) is amended by revoking section 4.1.

Sec. 2. This order is effective on February 3, 1994.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 3, 1994.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 4:40 p.m., February 3, 1994]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 7.

**Executive Order 12897—
Garnishment of Federal Employees’
Pay**

February 3, 1994

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 5520a(j)(1)(A) of title 5, United States Code, as added by section 9 of Public Law 103–94, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. The Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Attorney General, is designated to promulgate regulations for the implementation of section 5520a of title 5, United States Code, with respect to civilian employees and agencies in the executive branch, except as provided in section 2 of this order.

Sec. 2. The Postmaster General is designated to promulgate regulations for the implementation of section 5520a of title 5, United States Code, with respect to employees of the United States Postal Service.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 3, 1994.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 4:41 p.m., February 3, 1994]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 7.

**Proclamation 6648—American Heart
Month, 1994**

February 3, 1994

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

The heart is one of nature’s most efficient and durable machines. During an average lifetime, the heart contracts an amazing 2.5 billion times. Although we now realize that

it functions as a life-giving pump, the human heart was thought of by ancient man as the very soul of one’s being. Certain words, such as “courage” and “cordial,” are derived from the Latin word for heart, symbolizing its prominence and significance.

Heart disease was not recognized until about 1500 A.D., for the heart was considered so delicate and sensitive that death was believed to be inevitable if the heart were injured in any way. Although most causes of heart disease observed early in the 20th century are still present today, the treatment and cures of the disease are now dramatically altered.

Today, heart disease is one health threat that Americans can conquer. Extraordinary scientific advances, together with increased public awareness, have forged one of this century’s greatest medical achievements, saving untold lives through improved prevention and treatment. However, as long as cardiovascular diseases and stroke threaten the lives of Americans, we must continue in our diligent efforts to fight these diseases.

Today, many Americans are joining in this fight by taking steps to reduce their chances of developing a cardiovascular disease. They have learned to avoid the major risk factors by controlling blood pressure and blood cholesterol, by avoiding tobacco products, and by becoming more physically active.

At the same time, scientists are developing better ways to detect and treat cardiovascular diseases and stroke. Revolutionary advances are reducing the physical suffering exacted by heart disease and are making diagnosis and treatment more successful.

The Federal Government has contributed to these achievements by supporting research and public education through its National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. The American Heart Association, through its research and education programs and its vital network of dedicated volunteers, has played a crucial role in bringing about these remarkable accomplishments.

The results of the many scientific and public education achievements are dramatic. From 1972 through 1990, the death rate from heart disease dropped 39 percent and the death rate from strokes fell 57.4 percent.