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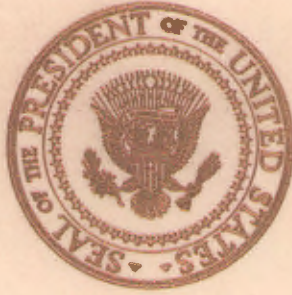
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National Alzheimer's Disease Month, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Alzheimer's disease ranks among the most severe of afflictions, because it strips people of their memory and judgment and robs them of the essence of their personalities. As the brain progressively deteriorates, tasks familiar for a lifetime, such as tying a shoelace or making a bed, become bewildering. Spouses and children become strangers. Slowly, victims of the disease enter profound dementia.

Today, Alzheimer's disease affects nearly 2½ million Americans. Half of all those admitted to nursing homes have this diagnosis. Among older individuals, Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of severe intellectual impairment and contributes to the major causes of death.

Alzheimer's disease is precisely that, a disease of the brain. It is not a normal consequence of aging. Scientific studies of families with an abnormally high incidence of Alzheimer's disease have revealed a possible genetic connection in some patients to chromosome 21. Encouragingly, new knowledge about the brain's neurotransmitters—chemicals that ferry messages between nerve cells—is enabling scientists to develop experimental drugs to try to slow or halt the relentless progress of the disease.

Within the Federal Government, research into the cause, diagnosis, treatment, and ultimately the prevention of Alzheimer's disease is led by the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke, the National Institute on Aging, and the National Institute of Mental Health. Federal research efforts are augmented in the private sector by the work of voluntary health organizations committed to the conquest of dementing disorders. Through forceful leadership, these groups aid distressed families, inform the public, and attract young investigators to the challenge of Alzheimer's disease research.

To enhance public awareness of Alzheimer's disease, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 261, has designated November 1988 as "National Alzheimer's Disease Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim November 1988 as National Alzheimer's Disease Month, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirteenth.

Ronald Reagan