

Labor Department's web site on the Internet: www.dol.gov. That's www.dol.gov.

By expanding family leave to cover children's doctor visits and parent-teacher conferences and by helping more Americans to learn about the opportunity of family leave, we can enable millions of more of our fellow citizens to meet their responsibilities both at home and at work. That's how we must prepare our people for a new century full of new promise and possibility.

As parents, teachers, and business people, as members of the work force and members of our communities, we all share a stake in the strength of our families. Our society can never be stronger than the children we raise or the families in which we raise them. That's why family leave is more than just a single issue or accomplishment. It is at the heart of our approach to preparing America for the 21st century by ensuring that we can all meet our obligations and make the most of our God-given gifts.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Death of Herb Caen

February 1, 1997

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the passing of Herb Caen, the San Francisco Chronicle's legendary columnist, and we extend our condolences to his family, friends, and most of all, the city he loved. Maybe it's not right to call an "institution" someone who deflated many overstuffed institutions with a brisk three dots, but surely no one knew better the vibrancy and eccentricities of the city, his city, San Francisco, than did Herb Caen. If we listen carefully on those cool mornings when the fog has boiled through the Golden Gate, out beyond the clattering of cables underfoot and the low moan of the horn at Alcatraz, maybe we will still hear Herb Caen's wonderful, witty, irrepressible voice. Herb Caen . . . he will be missed . . . a lot.

Proclamation 6971—American Heart Month, 1997

February 1, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

More than 700,000 men and women die each year of heart disease, making it the leading cause of death in our country. Annually, about 1.5 million Americans suffer heart attacks, one-third of which are fatal. Collectively, diseases of the heart and blood vessels claim about 960,000 American lives annually. These statistics only hint at the individual and collective tragedy brought on by heart disease and stroke and underscore the need for us to do everything possible to combat cardiovascular diseases.

Research has brought dramatic improvements to our knowledge of heart disease and how to combat it. We have learned much in recent years and now know that the processes leading to heart disease typically begin early in life and worsen over the years; symptoms often do not appear for decades. We also better understand the effects of genetics, gender, and lifestyle. High blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, and obesity increase the risk of developing heart disease; physical activity can reduce the risk of suffering from cardiovascular disease, including stroke.

Additionally, research has brought improved diagnostic methods and treatments for those afflicted with heart disease. Noninvasive imaging devices can now show the heart at work inside the body, giving doctors more precise information about their patient's condition. And new tests and therapies allow us to detect and treat a heart attack more effectively and minimize damage to the heart muscle.

These striking developments in biomedical techniques and increased public awareness and education have helped reduce the death rate from heart disease by nearly 60 percent in the past 30 years, and deaths from stroke by about 65 percent.

The Federal Government has contributed to these advances by supporting research and public education programs of the National