

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 25, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

February 25, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

I have just issued a proclamation which designates March as Red Cross Month.

Our Bicentennial Year is a fitting time to reflect upon the vital role the American Red Cross and its volunteers play in our society to alleviate suffering and to meet a vast spectrum of human needs. Early in the nation's history, observers from abroad commented upon our flair for effective voluntary associations. This willingness to be of help to one another epitomizes the American spirit -- and the Red Cross perpetuates this heritage.

Through the Red Cross and its Blood Program, we secure an adequate supply of safe blood, voluntarily given; we arm ourselves and others with the knowledge and skills to save lives by enrolling in health, nursing, first aid, water safety and small craft training courses; we assist the thousands of our fellow citizens who have been victimized by natural disasters; and we continue to help over one million servicemen, veterans and their families each year cope with emergency situations.

Within the Federal government, the Red Cross is a part of the Combined Federal Campaign, but more than half of its 3,100 chapters raise all their funds in March. All chapters use that month to inform the public of Red Cross services available to citizens and to recruit new blood donors and volunteers.

As President of the United States and Honorary Chairman of the American Red Cross, I urge all civilian employees of the Federal Government and members of the Armed Forces to support this vital voluntary effort to the best of their ability.

GERALD R. FORD

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