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Wright Brothers Day, 1983

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1983 marks the eightieth anniversary of the Wright Brothers' historic flight aboard a self-propelled, winged aero-vehicle. That flight, lasting but 12 seconds and spanning only 120 yards, followed 120 years of unsuccessful attempts to accomplish such a feat. Although short when measured against today's trans-meridian flights, its significance was great because it established the foundation for future successes in aviation which continue to enrich the quality of our lives today.

This year we also celebrate the bicentennial of man's first flight. Two hundred years ago, on August 27, 1783, the Montgolfier Brothers of France first launched a manned hot air balloon into the atmosphere. Shortly thereafter, in a balloon constructed by an American lawyer, Peter Carnes, Esq., the first American ventured aloft in a tethered balloon in Baltimore.

This year also marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958. This legislation created the Federal Aviation Administration, which has played a central role in making civil air carriage ten times safer than it was in 1958, thus helping to advance the progress of civil aviation and to fulfill the Wright Brothers' dreams of the future role aviation would have in our world.

To commemorate the historic achievement of the Wright Brothers, the Congress, by joint resolution of December 17, 1963 (77 Stat. 402; 36 U.S.C. 169), designated the seventeenth day of December of each year as Wright Brothers Day and requested the President to issue a proclamation annually inviting the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby call upon the people of this Nation and their local and national governmental officials to observe Wright Brothers Day, December 17, 1983, with appropriate ceremonies and activities, both to recall the accomplishments and to stimulate the development of aviation in this country and throughout the world.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 17th day of Oct., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighth.

Ronald Reagan