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## Bicentennial of Air and Space Flight

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

On November 21, 1783, a French balloonist named Etienne de Montgolfier made the first manned flight in history when he soared aloft in a hot air balloon at LaMulette, France. The balloon sailed over Paris for 25 minutes and traveled five and one-half miles.

This epochal flight fulfilled mankind's desire, as old as the myth of Icarus, to become airborne. But it was also something more than the fulfillment of a dream. Montgolfier's achievement was a concrete demonstration of the power of technological know-how when coupled with the yearnings of the human spirit. For the first time, man had freed not only his imagination but his physical self from the forces of gravity. With every advance, our imagination and knowledge have leaped forward—from Montgolfier to the Wright brothers, through the moon walks and the space shuttle.

In the 200 years since that first flight, man's quest to understand the unknown has resulted in our ability to fly higher, faster, safer and farther. We race the sun as we move from continent to continent in a matter of hours. We have vastly multiplied commerce and communication among far-flung peoples. We have flown 250 thousand miles to explore the surface of the moon, and, with this unprecedented triumph of spirit and technology, changed forever our view of the Earth. She is a delicate blue jewel in the darkness of space.

In recognition of 200 years of progress around the globe in manned flight, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 270, has designated the year 1983 as the Bicentennial of Air and Space Flight. I am proud to have been named Honorary Chairman of the United States Organizing Committee, which will plan our participation in activities at home and abroad to commemorate the Bicentennial. I view the celebration as an opportunity to increase public awareness of our Nation's achievements in aviation and space flight and to rededicate ourselves to the spirit of excellence which has brought us so far so fast.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the year beginning January 1, 1983, as the Bicentennial of Air and Space Flight. I call upon all government agencies and the American people to observe this year with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 3rd day of Jan., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and 83, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

*Ronald Reagan*