

bicycle shop. Thomas Edison was a newsboy. Eli Whitney and Henry Ford worked as farm hands. George Washington Carver was born a slave. There is something in the American character that always looks for a better way and is unimpressed when others say it cannot be done. Those traits still define our Nation. We still rely on men and women who overcome the odds and take the big chance with no advantage but their own ingenuity and the opportunities of a free country.

A great American journey that began at Kitty Hawk continues in ways unimaginable to the Wright brothers. One small piece of their Flyer traveled far beyond this field. It was carried by another flying machine, on *Apollo 11*, all the way to the Sea of Tranquility on the Moon. These past 100 years have brought supersonic flights, frequent space travel, the exploration of Mars, and the *Voyager One* spacecraft, which right now is moving at 39,000 miles per hour toward the outer edge of our solar

system. By our skill and daring, America has excelled in every area of aviation and space travel. And our national commitment remains firm: By our skill and daring, we will continue to lead the world in flight.

This day, however, is one for recalling an heroic event in the history of our Nation and in the story of mankind. Here at the Wright Brothers National Memorial, we remember one small machine, and we honor the giants who flew it.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:37 a.m. at the Wright Brothers National Memorial. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of the Interior Gale A. Norton; Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta; Gov. Michael F. Easley of North Carolina; and actor John Travolta, who served as master of ceremonies. The Wright Brothers Day proclamation of December 17 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Executive Order on Appointments During National Emergency *December 17, 2003*

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

Consistent with section 301 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1631), I hereby report that I have taken additional steps with respect to the national emergency I declared in Proclamation 7463 of September 14, 2001, by invoking and making available to the Secretary of Defense the emergency appointments authority of section 603 of title 10 of the United States Code, consistent with the terms of that statute and of Executive Order 12396 of December 9, 1982.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued, which is effective immediately.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. The Executive order of December 17 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.