

STATEMENT ON
"IMPORTANCE OF AVIATION AND SPACE IN OUR WORLD TODAY"
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I have long held the opinion that science and technology, particularly that concerned with aeronautics and space science and exploration, may well hold the key to our future existence -- to the very survival of freedom in the world of tomorrow.

Perhaps my acute awareness of the importance of these activities stems from the fact that I am privileged to be the ranking Republican member of two Senate Committees and the second ranking Republican of a third Committee, each having a degree of cognizance over the United States' efforts in aeronautics and space. I am referring, respectively, to the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee and the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense.

A review of the significant developments in aeronautics and space in the past decade parades many wondrous and thrilling achievements.

I believe the present status and future potential of aviation is a testimonial to the value of aeronautical research and development. The most distant lands are now merely hours away; Americans accumulate a collective one trillion miles in intercity travel; and the aviation industry, which ranks seventh among the Nation's leading industries, is considered by economists as a key factor in our sustained national economic growth.

Our space science and exploration efforts, which are still in their infant stage when compared with the age of aviation, nevertheless also have produced many notable achievements. The United States space efforts have resulted in the development of effective meteorological weather forecasting and global communication satellite systems; brought about an acceleration of industrial technology in other fields through the development of new exotic metals and other materials; and demonstrated that complex computer systems can be used to solve a variety of social and economic problems. Moreover, from a military standpoint, our space efforts to date have shown that a strong national program to explore and use outer space may well be essential to our security and to our position of world leadership.

In my mind, however, the most significant achievement directly attributable to space exploration is that it has, in so short a time, challenged and stimulated our youth at all educational levels in the quest for scientific knowledge. This new attitude should produce a much needed increase in both the quantity and quality of our future manpower resources,

Despite the achievements made to date, I firmly believe we are only at the brink of the new discoveries and developments which will evolve from space science and exploration and which will be of significant benefit to all mankind. The final determination of whether our continued efforts in space will produce the dividends many of us perceive probably will not be made for several decades.

However, I was recently buoyed and encouraged in the belief that our present course is the correct one, when I learned that the following comment was made by a New York newspaper concerning Samuel Langley's experiments with airplanes just one week before the successful flight of the KITTY HAWK by the Wright brothers:

We hope that Professor Langley will not put his substantial greatness as a scientist in further peril by continuing to waste his time, and the money involved, in further airship experiments. Life is short, and he is capable of services to humanity incomparably greater than can be expected to result from trying to fly... For students and investigators of the Langley type there are more useful employments.