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**CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--
July 22, 1969

Statement by Rep. Gerald R. Ford, R-Mich., Minority Leader, U.S. House of Reps.
placed in the body of the Congressional Record of Tuesday, July 22, 1969.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was in Grand Rapids, Mich., and was unable to join my colleagues in the House in expressing the jubilation we all felt over America's mighty achievement -- manned exploration of the moon.

In the exhilaration we all experienced during the lunar landing and moon walk, many Americans perhaps forgot that the Apollo Project cost far more than the estimated \$24 billion expended on sending a man to the moon. It also took the lives of three fine Americans -- Roger Chaffee, Ed White and Gus Grissom -- in a flash fire that swept through their Apollo spacecraft Jan. 27, 1967, while it sat on a Cape Kennedy launch pad. Roger Chaffee was from my home town of Grand Rapids. We went to the same high school.

Mr. Speaker, the flight of Apollo 11 was such a scintillating success that it almost seemed easy.

I would venture to guess that one reason the flight was so flawless was because the National Aeronautics and Space Administration ordered a full-scale rebuilding of the Apollo spacecraft after the tragic fire in 1967. Safety precautions were tightened up, over-all.

Mr. Speaker, let us all salute Neil Armstrong, Ed Aldrin and Mike Collins and pray for a safe splashdown in the Pacific on Thursday. But let us also say a prayer for Roger Chaffee, Gus Grissom and Ed White and pay tribute to them for the heroic contribution they made so that Eagle might land on the moon and return to planet earth.

Mr. Speaker, with the successful flight of Apollo 11 the United States has opened up the universe for all the peoples of the earth.

I believe our moon journey has kindled a new feeling of pride in country in all our citizens -- a new and much-needed patriotism, if you will.

This welling up of national pride is most natural. I am sure the other peoples of the world flash an understanding smile as we throw out our chests and crow just a little.

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