WALTER CRONKITE – IMAGE #2

On October 4, 1957, the Soviets launched the first satellite, called *sputnik*, an acronym for the Russian phrase "fellow traveler of earth." Sputnik I weighed 194 pounds. Less than a month later the Soviets launched a capsule of 1,120 pounds, and it carried a dog wired up for monitoring. Americans, until then complacent about their technological primacy, suddenly discovered an apparent "missile gap." If the Russians were so advanced in rocketry, then perhaps they could hit American cities. All along President Dwight Eisenhower knew that the "gap" was more illusory than real. But he could not reveal that high-altitude American U-2 spy planes were gathering this information. Even so, American missile development was in a state of disarray, with a tangle of agencies and committees engaged in waste and duplication. The launching of Explorer I, the first American satellite, on January 31, 1958, did not quiet the outcry. Russian success with Sputnik led to efforts in the United States to enlarge defense spending, to offer NATO allies intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) pending development of long-range intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), to set up a new agency to coordinate space efforts, and to establish a crash program in science education. The "sputnik syndrome," compounded by a sharp recession through the winter of 1957-1958, loosened the purse strings of economy-minded congressmen, who added to the new budget more than Eisenhower wanted for both defense and domestic programs. During 1958, Britain, Italy, and Turkey accepted American missiles on their territory. In July 1958, at the behest of President Eisenhower, Congress created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to coordinate research and development in the field. Before the end of the year NASA had a program to put a manned craft in orbit. But the first manned flight, by Commander Alan B. Shepherd, Jr., did not take place until May 5, 1961. Finally, in 1958 Congress enacted the National Defense Education Act, which authorized federal grants especially for training in mathematics, science, and modern languages, as well as for student loans and fellowships.

[I adlibbed a transitional statement here – something like "Several years later...."] A massive three-stage *Saturn V* booster rocket launched *Apollo 11* on its lunar mission on July 16, 1969. After orbiting the earth for several hours, the third stage of the *Saturn* rocket was fired, sending *Apollo 11* toward the moon. The spacecraft, which now consisted of a command and service module (CSM) and a lunar module (LM), orbited the moon for one day before the lunar module, with Commander Neil Armstrong and Air Force Colonel Edwin (Buzz) Aldrin on board, was separated from the command module and began its descent to the moon. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Michael Collins, the pilot of the command module, remained in lunar orbit. The LM, dubbed *Eagle*, touched down on the moon's surface on July 20. About six hours later Armstrong and Aldrin donned their spacesuits and exited the lunar module. After practicing walking on the moon, the astronauts deployed various equipment for scientific experiments. The astronauts collected about 50 pounds of lunar rocks and soil. Television cameras, which the astronauts had mounted on the moon's surface broadcast live images of their activities to viewers around the world. Following their 2½ hour moonwalk, Armstrong and Aldrin blasted off from the

moon on July 21, leaving behind a U.S. flag and a plaque bearing the inscription: "Here men from the planet Earth first set foot upon the moon. July 1969 A.D. We came in peace for all mankind." In a lunar orbit rendezvous, Armstrong and Aldrin joined Collins in the command module and set the lunar module adrift in space. The *Apollo 11* crew safely splashed down in the Pacific Ocean on July 24. American astronauts returned to the moon's surface five more times through December 1972.