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Transcription of Dr. Wernher von Braun
Following Apollo XI mission
at Madison County Courthouse, 1969

In the name of peace shared by the United States in genuine brotherhood with all nations and with all mankind. It has created names and dates that will be recorded in history for thousands of years. And that has expanded mans' mind and caused a new wave of thought to sweep across the earth. For the first time, life has left its planetary cradle and the ultimate destiny of man is no longer confined to the earth. I hope now that these brave Apollo eleven astronauts can be assured that their trip was not in vain, that our reach into space will be continued and that from their brief journey of exploration there will be a brighter future for mankind. (applause)

As President Nixon said, "I think that we all can stand taller now". We are truly facing the prospects of a bright new age. On our car coming in, I overheard a local radio announcer say "I hope Dr. von Braun will sock it to them." That this outpouring of public support that we are witnessing here today, we have been witnessing for weeks now, and ever since the launching in particular, over the entire country. Yes, over the entire world. The world is with us. [NOISE] underway these days, where even people on both sides of the Iron Curtain seem to be able to see eye to eye, it is the idea that manned spaceflight must continue. But the moon is still commuter traffic as far as the universe is concerned, going from here to the moon is like commuting from the suburbs to the city. There are many other challenging objectives further out. Of course, there is the planet Mars. [CUT]

...5th of August. These unmanned spacecraft are equipped with photographic gear and television gear that will give us real high resolution information of some of the surface feature of Mars, about a hundred times better. [CUT]

[VON BRAUN intros key people on courthouse steps behind him]

...the passage of the three returning heroes from the helicopter into the decontamination trailer that was located there on the hangar deck. I think at this very moment our three Apollo astronauts, Apollo eleven astronauts...[CUT]

...the beginning to the end. The lunar landing, the successful flight, of Apollo eleven, was a product of virtually the entire American people. At the peak of our employment level, we had about 300,000 people working on this program. About 150,000 of them worked in the launch vehicle area, that is the development of the Saturn 5. [CUT]

I am sure you have read in the paper yesterday, that one major hard decision has already been made, namely to replace what we use our interim Wet Workshop by a Dry Workshop. Now that may not mean very much to you, but it means to all intents and purposes, that what used to be a concept of a jury-rigged space station where we could

convert a hydrazine tank of a rocket stage into an interim space station in earth orbit after it has pushed itself up there with its' own power, we will now fly a ground-equipped space station on top of a Saturn 5 into orbit. And needless to say this would be a far more desirable, far more perfect space station that had originally been planned. Why could we make this switch? We could make this switch because we did not nearly use as many launch vehicles as we had originally planned, where the Apollo program was concerned. You see shortly after President Kennedy said "let's put a man on the moon in this decade", we at NASA, particularly we here in Huntsville, were asked, now how many rockets and how many spacecraft do we need to do that? Now at that time it had taken something like 50 ATLAS vehicles before we ever put a man on an ATLAS, and an equal number of TITAN 2 before ever put a man on the Gemini spacecraft. [CUT]

...thousand feet lunar surface. So it was not with Saturn 5 number 14, that we could finally attempt the first lunar landing, but it was the Saturn 5 number 5. (applause) Correction, arithmetic is not my strong point, it was number 6, number 6. [CUT]

[The following audio is not good quality]

...provide us with an ability to drill on the moon to get core samples, and study the stratification of the lunar soil, and bring probes up the surface from maybe 50 or 100 feet down. And provide us with other additional equipment that gives us more insight on the nature of the moon. More sophisticated science equipment than was carried down with Apollo eleven. Such equipment is under active development today. Now finally, all this additional gear, of course, requires that we carry more weight to the lunar surface and so the lunar module, the LEM, had to be enlarged, its tanks had to be enlarged, so we can carry that additional payload and that Lunar Jeep to the lunar surface. Such a vehicle has been studied and designed by the LEM contractor, Grumman, on Long Island, and they say it can be built. Now as usual after all this has been said, the real monkey is of course again, has been passed to the launch vehicle developers, because we here at Marshall are now told. All this of course means that you have to fly a much larger and heavier payload to the moon. So can the Saturn 5 flex its muscle a little more to carry all that additional equipment to the Moon? And here our old, but some people call conservative, approach at Marshall stood us in good stead. We just smiled and said yes, we can stretch our muscle a little and carry a little more payload to the Moon.

It is on this basis that we are quite confident that the administration, after this wonderful success of Apollo eleven, will now give us the go-ahead to fly many more flights to the Moon, under the groundrules recommended by the science academy.

Right now, at this very moment, 2 American unmanned probes are on their way to the planet Mars, and will start playing aback information on the 29th of July, just a few days from today.

[END]