

There once was a fine White House day –
 'Sixty-one, when the great JFK
 Said, "By decade's end
 To the Moon we shall send
 Our Boys: the American Way".

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Sputnik had made an impression;
 Gagarin then brought on depression.
 So NASA got smart –
 As the Cold War's new heart
 And the American Spirit's expression.

Reel on to Apollo
 And what was to follow –
 Neil Armstrong's small steps in the dust;
 The flag that was planted –
 To Nixon's advantage;
 Rock fragments brought back from the crust.

Conspiracy strictures,
 Buzz Aldrin's great pictures;
 "The Eagle has landed" we learned.
 The world was astounded –
 The Soviets confounded;
 And NASA's big budget was earned!

The image of Earthrise became so iconic –
 Our blue home, our Gaia, to save.
 Mike Collins revolving;
 Green concepts evolving –
 Ideals on the crest of a wave.

But in a short time
 What had seemed so sublime
 Soon looked like a terrible waste.
 The public was bored
 And the Shuttle was flawed –
 Deadly errors were made in its haste.

So, forty years on;
 And where have we gone?
 In effect we've achieved a great deal.
 If not to the stars,
 Then manned flights to Mars
 Are beginning to have some appeal.

But in the meantime
 Planet Earth's in decline –
 GHGs and our carbon emissions.
 So apply those great brains
 While some time still remains –
 Climate change doesn't deal in remissions.