Apollo 1

On January 27, 1967, the United States became the first nation to lose astronauts inside a spacecraft. At approximately 6:30pm as the crew was rehearsing for their mission which was to begin on February 21, a fire swept through the pure oxygen environment of the command module. All three crew members died of asphyxia (suffocation), smoke inhalation, and intense heat within 18 seconds.

Regarding the loss of the Apollo 1 crew, President Lyndon B. Johnson said, "Three valiant young men have given their lives in the nation's service. We mourn this great loss and our hearts go out to their families."