

CAPE KENNEDY

Mon. Mar. 3-'69 ✓

At Cape Kennedy, up up and away - the U.S. Apollo Nine Moonship - as you know - blasting skyward today, another perfect launch. Once aloft - it was "all vanilla" - to use the crews own words.

As planned - the Apollo Nine Command Module - the so-called "Gumdrop" easing free of its third stage Saturn Rocket. With Rookie Astronaut Rusty Schweikart at the controls - the "Gumdrop" turning about for a docking maneuver with its new lunar-lander; the so-called "spider" which at the time was still attached to the third stage rocket. Once joined - the "Gumdrop: and the "Spider" becoming as one. Separating again from the third stage rocket - which was hurtled on - sent on deep into space. A beautiful sight - said the astronauts. Now begins the real job. At seventeen-thousand-five hundred miles an hour - more than a hundred miles above the earth - now comes the acid test for America's first complete Moon landing machine.

WHITE HOUSE

Shall we return to Earth? If so
lets drop in at ~~Getting back to earth~~ the White House where

Richard Nixon was ~~again~~ at his desk bright and early

today - despite his late night return from Europe.

The President ~~quickly~~ ^{there} announcing plans ^{radio-} for a televised

report to the nation tomorrow night at nine. This to

serve as a prelude to his first night-time news

conference ~~although~~ ^{where} questions will be limited - strictly

to international affairs..

WEST BERLIN

Meanwhile^{over} in West Berlin - one of the

President's main stops last week - the pressure begins

to mount. ^{The} ~~With~~ Communist war games in East Germany

- delaying western traffic to the Divided City for a

third straight day. ^{Also} ~~At the same time~~ Communist

jet fighters were sent aloft - riding herd on a British

airliner as it neared Berlin. ^{Soviet} Underscoring the latest

Soviet threat to tie up air traffic as well.

VATICAN

In the wake of President Nixon's visit to the Pope a sharp editorial today in the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore. Asserting that a number of protesters during the Nixon appearance - were "two-faced individuals" of "warped mentality conditioned by tendentious propaganda."

Also, at the Vatican, Pope Paul was presented with a print of Every Man's Dream, a recent dramatic film of the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo's masterpiece, filmed with the aid of the Vatican of course. The print presented by three Americans: New Orleans Archbishop Philip Hannan - Catholic lay-leader Warren Schwed of New York - and Chairman Tom Murphy of Capital Cities Broadcasting. Cap Cities made this most unusual film - directed and editor by my colleague Milton Fruchtman.

~~Washington again~~ ^{As for} former President Eisenhower
~~continues the battle for his life~~ ^{the} Doctors at Walter Reed
~~reporting today that~~ his progress ^{- here are their words: -} "one week after
surgery, indeed, gratifying." Adding: "His strength
is gradually returning - his vital signs remain stable -
his pneumonia continues to clear - he continues to
improve steadily."

In short, all signs - pointing ~~ing~~ to another
remarkable come-back with the General's son John
heard to remark: "If he beats this ~~wrap~~ - (meaning
the pneumonia) - "he'll have it made."

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VIETNAM

War news from Vietnam - tells today of
a mountain-top battle near the D M Z with U S
Marine defenders - turning back a guerrilla charge
killing twenty-two of the enemy - as against thirteen
American dea^hd.

Earlier U S headquarters at Saigon reported
some thirty enemy rockets and mortar attacks - over
the past twenty-four hours; including a barrage that
landed in the capital's down-town area - killing at least
twelve, wounding more than twenty.

STATE FOLLOW VIETNAM

Reaction here at home - from Secretary of State William Rogers; who said that continued enemy shelling of cities and towns - raises a serious question as to whether or not Vietnam really wants peace.

Rogers adding that these "indiscriminate" attacks - will not bring about any U S concessions ~~to~~ at Paris. But they could result in grave consequences - "both political and military," said he.

MOSCOW PEKING

Half a world away - Russian and Red China were ~~also~~ at logger-heads. ~~Today~~, in the wake of ~~the~~ that ~~bloody~~ border clash - where Chinese Manchuria meets Soviet Siberia. Peking blaming the Soviets - for intruding into Chinese territory. The Kremlin, in turn, charging China with a "gangster raid" ^{and} threatening swift retaliation. ~~As~~ ^{As} already tattered Sino-Soviet relations ~~were~~ slipping to a new low.

LONDON

All men - are not born equal. So says Dr.

Francis Crick - in the text of a London address made public today. Dr. Crick, you will recall, a recent Nobel Prize winner - for his work in cracking the Genetic Code. Then he went on to say that men are actually born - "very unequal", a condition that in the future could well lead to human "quality control" - this under the pressures of over-population.

According to Dr. Crick, some day there may be a system whereby a baby would have to pass "an acceptance test before being declared legally born. Also at the other extreme maybe a cut-off on expensive medical treatment - at, say, age eighty-five. Warren, said one observer regarding Dr. Francis Crick - he "sounds like he needs a heart transplant!"

SEABROOK

At Seabrook, Texas - three astronaut wives were watching and waiting today. Mrs. Pat McDivitt - Mrs. Lurton Scott - Mrs. Clare Schweikart all praying for a successful launch.

After the launch the reaction set in - Mrs. McDivitt calling herself "stunned", Mrs. Scott calling it - "unreal", Mrs. Schweikart was lifting a glass of champagne - as her husband Rookie Astronaut Rusty Schweikart had asked her to do. According to Mrs. Schweikart: "Rusty said we should celebrate - at every stage."