

FRI. DEC. 27, 1968

APOLLO

Tonight, the world is acclaiming our trio of American space heroes who have opened a door to the universe. As you know by now, riding their Apollo spacecraft, Frank Borman - James Lovell - and William Anders - splashed down to a homecoming in the Pacific Ocean today at 10:51 A.M., Eastern time; - with the carrier Yorktown waiting three miles away. The Apollo was charred and smoking as orange and white parachutes dropped it into the sea, after its fiery, roller-coaster ride through the earth's atmosphere at twenty-five thousand miles an hour. When all this happened today out there in mid-Pacific it was just before dawn; still dark in that part of the world - some five hundred miles from Christmas Island. The Astronauts, the only men who've ever seen the far side of the moon - had to stay inside the spacecraft and float about in the rolling sea for more than an hour before they were lifted on board the Yorktown.

Then, the smiling astronauts rode an elevator down into the depths of the carrier for a breakfast of steaks and eggs; - and, a medical check-up. After a preliminary look the doctors said all three are "completely alert and very happy, - not even as tired as astronauts have been on previous flights". And that, in itself, is some kind of an accomplishment, after flying five hundred thousand miles through space and orbiting the moon ten times.

The Apollo space ship was hoisted on board the carrier, looking thoroughly scorched from its high speed re-entry into the atmosphere which turned it into a redball of fire, trailing a white streamer, one observer estimated to be one hundred miles in length.

Like tens of millions of Americans, President Johnson tensely watched the Apollo splashdown on TV. Then, in a telephone call shortly after they arrived on board the Yorktown, he told the astronauts that the "hot line",

between the White House and the Kremlin, had been used to keep the Russians informed of all major developments throughout the moon flight. Then he told the trio - "we know that you men were supported by an elaborate technical apparatus, by many brilliant and devoted men and women, here on the ground. We salute all of them, as we salute you. Well done!"

In Moscow, Soviet leaders hailed the flight as one that "opens a new stage in space research." Moscow television showed the astronauts emerging from the helicopter on the flight deck of the Yorktown; and, their safe return generated much excitement in the Soviet capital.

Queen Elizabeth sent her quote "warmest congratulations on the safe and brilliant completion of the Apollo's enterprise!" Spanish chief of state, Generalissimo Franco, said the "United States had just written a superb page in history". Swedish scientist Gunnar Hambreaus called it an historic exploit that may spread more light on the origin of

life. And in Rome, the Italians perhaps had the best word for it: - "fantastico!!" The acting head of the Space Agency - Thomas Paine - says the United States may attempt two landings on the moon next year and two more before the end of 1970. The next mission - Apollo 9 - is scheduled for February 28th - an orbit of the earth to test the Apollo's four legged moon-landing vehicle. The flight plan for this includes a space-walk between the lunar landing vehicle and the command craft, in orbit.

The next mission after that - Apollo 10 - is scheduled to send the entire landing machine to the moon in May - and two astronauts will then take the landing craft down to within ten miles of the moon's surface. Then, next July or August, the plan is for Apollo 11 to carry out the actual moon landing. All this of course, subject to change pending developments.

BOMB

The Atomic Energy Commission says it detected an atmospheric nuclear test today above Red China, in Central Asia, near Lob-Nor. This eighth Chinese test. Yesterday was Mao Tse-Tung's 75th birthday and diplomatic circles had speculated that Red China might set off a nuclear test as a tribute to Mao.

PUEBLO

We are now told that eleven of the Pueblo crew - including the skipper - were wounded when it was captured by the North Koreans nearly a year ago. Previously, the Navy had listed only four wounded, including Seaman Duane Hodges, who died of his wounds.

VIET NAM

South Viet Nam's delegates to the Peace Talks in Paris, still taking a tough attitude toward the Communists, today was demanding that they, in effect, surrender before peace discussions begin. But in Washington, President Johnson said the delegation's should "cut out all this dilly-dallying and open substantive talks soon." Still, under the circumstances there seems little hope that the deadlocked talks can be quickly resumed.

Meantime, the war goes on. South Vietnamese troops have captured eighty-nine communist guerillas - including one entire Viet Cong platoon - in two swift attacks following the Christmas truce.

LEFT HANDED

Do you have anything in common with such notables as Benjamin Franklin Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo, Charlemagne, Alexander the Great, and Babe Ruth? Each of these eminent men was left-handed - in a right-handed world. Lefthandedness has been misunderstood since earliest times. The devil was popularly depicted as being left-handed and the Romans had a word for it - sinister. At any rate we now hear that ten per cent of the world's population is left-handed. Why? Maybe because of heredity and, or, environmental factors. Today some banks even provide left-handed check books with the stubs on the right-hand side. As we all know, manufacturers now turn out all sorts of left-handed things - from golf clubs to left-handed egg beaters. Here's your left-handed microphone, Warren.

ENDING

NIXON By the way Hugh O'Brien is sitting here with me tonight. He's here to become King of Winter. The Snow Birds of the Lake Placid Club - one of the oldest Winter Sports groups in America, ran up their Snow Bird Flag today as a tribute to the Astronauts who have just returned from flying around the moon. And tonight, everywhere, men - and women - will be toasting Frank Borman, Jim Lovell and Bill Anders. Let's join them - and so until Monday.