

Thurs. July 24, 1969  
Washington D.C.

USS HORNET

Final word on the flight of Apollo-Eleven - perfect - just perfect - as you surely must have heard by now. The U.S. moonship - streaking to a successful splashdown today in mid-Pacific. As they say in the space program - "right on the money." Astronauts Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Mike Collins - air lifted aboard the waiting carrier Hornet a short time later. Their amazing moon landing mission - already stamped indelibly on the pages of history as man's greatest voyage of exploration; - unquestionably a major milestone, perhaps even a turning point, in the course of human history - human civilization.

President Nixon, for one, - convinced of all that and more. When the astronauts were safely in quarantine - he was right there telling them thru their trailer window; "This is the greatest week in the history of the world - since the creation; because as a result of what happened this week - the

world is bigger infinitely;" "closer together" - than ever before. The President then went on to say: "I only hope that all of us in government - all of us in America - as a result of what you have done - we can do our job a little better;" - and even "reach for the stars - just as you have reached for the moon."

## REACTION

A large part of the world rejoices tonight.

Here at home - the bells of St. Patricks Cathedral in New York - were ringing out at splashdown. Only the third time in history they have tolled in tribute to man. The other two times - mournfully at the death of Pope Paul and at the death of John Kennedy. Making this, indeed, the first time ever for a tribute of joy rather than sorrow from those Cathedral bells on Fifth Avenue next door to my office.

However, the greatest joy of all! - At Houston; where Mrs. Janet Armstrong - served as spokesman for the three astronauts wives and families. Telling newsmen; "I'd like to say to the President - to all the people of NASA - to all the contractors - to all the people of the world - we thank you for your prayers, your thoughts, for everything."

## OVERSEAS FOLLOW REACTION

Overseas - do you believe it - the Kremlin was leading the applause; voicing a tribute to the men of Apollo-Eleven immediately after splash down. This in the form of a "flash" - one of the rare times they've used the word - via Radio Moscow. Announcing that "Astronauts Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins - are again on our planet." The Kremlin adding: "We congratulate you on your return to earth, courageous astronauts!"

Moments later - on TV - the Soviets breaking precedent once more. For the first time - carrying a live telecast from the west; covering the recovery of the three moon men until they were safely on board the Hornet.



## MINNEAPOLIS

Turning from space - Eugene McCarthy called it quits - that is, as a Senator.- At Minneapolis he announced today that he will not run for re-election this year - in Minnesota or any other state. Adding that he was making it official now as he put it "so that potential candidates may declare what they want to do in the next few months." Said "potential candidates" including presumably - former Vice President Hubert Humphrey. As for his own plans - McCarthy saying: There may be politics in the future for me.- I am just taking care of the short range situation now."

## MIDDLE EAST

Today in the Middle East - the flight Apollo-Eleven not withstanding - a day pretty much like any other day. Including a number of artillery duels, jet dog fights and terrorist actions - across, over and around that so called cease fire line. Coupled with a warning from Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan - that Egypt may be getting read to launch a strike against Tel Aviv itself.

UNITED NATIONS FOLLOW MIDDLE EAST

The United Nations in New York; There U.S. Assistant Secretary Joseph Sisco was reporting to U Thant on the results of his just completed Mideast peace mission. According to U.S. officials - Cisco telling Thant: "It is erroneous to draw a conclusion that the area is on the brink of a major explosion; but, the situation is serious" - he was further quoted as saying - "and we want to do everything we can to calm it down."

VIETNAM

Meanwhile - how about the war in Viet Nam? Battlefield reports were telling today - of scattered, small scale actions. While back in Saigon - casualty figures for the past week were setting American losses at one-hundred-eighty-four; an increase of thirty-four over the previous week - Warren, but still way down.



PAINÉ

Looking ahead - Americas top space official was predicting today - a Russian manned landing on the moon. One that will come - according to Dr. Thomas Paine - "much sooner than most people think." Probably "sometime in the next eighteen months."

As to "what next" in the U.S. space program - Dr. Paine expressed a hope that America will not "turn inward;" that it will not sacrifice its space program or its position of world leadership in order to devote exclusive energy to domestic problems - such as poverty, race relations and so on.

To do that said he - "would be the end of the United States as we know it." - said he. Adding: "The sheer exploration of space is enough reason to go ahead - for this is really America at its best."