World Stands Still

MOON SHOT UNITES U.S. FOR INSTANT
FOR ONE INSTANT... Apollo Unites Nation

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First Man On The Moon!

A shadow-shrouded Neil Armstrong, first man to walk on the moon, begins to deploy equipment a few minutes after taking the first momentous and historic step at Tranquility Base, the Moon. (UPI Telephoto)
FOR ONE INSTANT...

Apollo Unites Nation

The first non-racist moment in American history came at 3:17 p.m. Sunday, when two Americans — nestled snugly in their lunar craft — became the first men to land on the moon.

At this moment, people of every race, nationality, age and condition were united in praise for an achievement symbolic of the American genius.

The astronauts themselves, in earlier interviews, said that their adventure in space was made possible by the cooperation and contributions of untold thousands of Americans.

This, Sunday, was the unexpressed sentiments of millions of black Americans.

The landing by Neil A. Armstrong and Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr. in a spaceship named Eagle capped a millenium of dreams and a $24-billion American project that opened the worlds of the universe to mankind.

For several long minutes the world seemed to stand still. The cool space fliers called out their final altitude figures as they dropped toward the lunar surface.

At 220 feet: "Coming down nicely!"
At 75 feet: "Looking good."
At 30 feet: "Picking up some dust."
Then finally at 3:17.42 P.M.: "Contact light on. Engine off. Eagle has landed."

At the time of the landing the moon was about 238,548 miles from Earth. Michael Collins, the third astronaut of the Apollo 11 team kept the command ship Columbia orbiting the moon at an altitude of 69 miles while Armstrong and Aldrin eased their way down.

Collins was poised to swoop in and rescue his colleagues, had anything gone wrong. But now that they are on the lunar surface, they are beyond his reach.