

FRONT PAGES FROM HISTORY

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As part of the US push for technological supremacy, President Kennedy had promised American people to send a man to the moon and –very important—to return him safely back to earth. This became especially urgent after the news that the Russians had sent Yuri Gagarin around the earth in a spacecraft on April 1961. Now the race for conquest of space was on, and in the summer of 1969, one of the biggest adventures of the century finally became a stunning reality. Three men, Neil Armstrong, Edwin Aldrin and Michael Collins landed on the moon and two of them walked on its desolated rocky surface for more than two hours. It was a techno-

logical wonder and it happened in the full view of millions of people around the globe, glued to their television sets for hours. And the famous words of Armstrong -feeble, metallic- were heard: "That's one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind." From then on, the moon would never be as distant, mysterious and out of reach as it had been before, but its romantic lure would not diminish, only increase.

The New York Times, a newspaper of renown, never famous for sensationalist headlines, deemed fit this time to print a huge banner headline. And the first sentence of the lead story on the front page told it all: "Men have landed and walked on the moon".



In his lengthy editorial, and after celebrating the previously unimagined achievement, the paper said: "For all his resplendent glory as he steps forth on another planet, man is still a pathetic creature, able to master outer space and yet unable to control his inner self; able to conquer new worlds yet unable to live in peace on this one, able to create miracles of science and yet unable properly to house and clothe and feed all his fellow men, able eventually to colonize an alien and hostile environment and yet increasingly unable to come to terms with the nurturing environment that is his home".

A dreadful reality that has not changed since 1969.