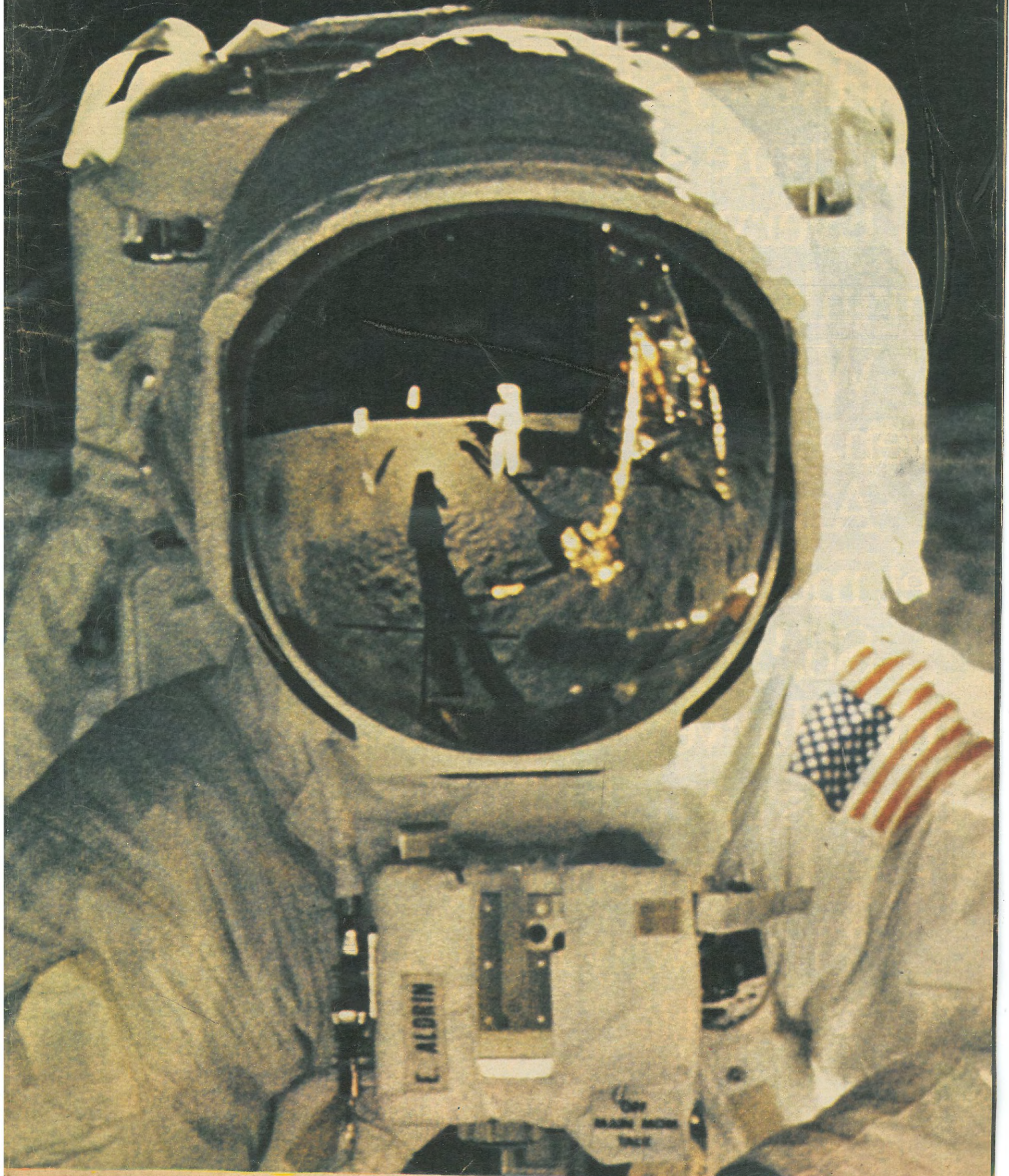
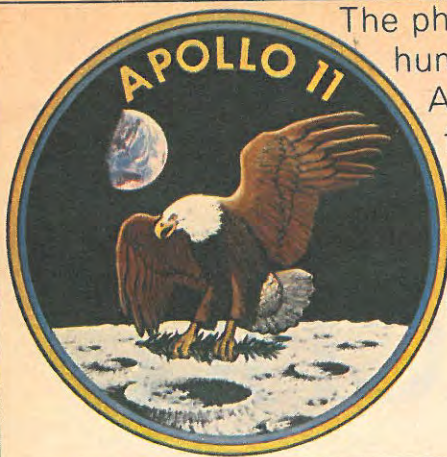


# THE SUNDAY TIMES *Magazine*

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## From blast-off to splashdown





The photographs which follow on these pages will continue to be published as long as human history is recorded. They are the finest of all the pictures taken by Aldrin and Armstrong during the course of man's first day on the Moon, and we therefore give them pride of place in this issue. To put them in context, we also print a sequence of scenes from the momentous voyage. Although it is far too soon to see the American achievement in its true perspective, we suspect that it will be remembered eventually as a masterpiece of intricate, patient and detailed planning; in short

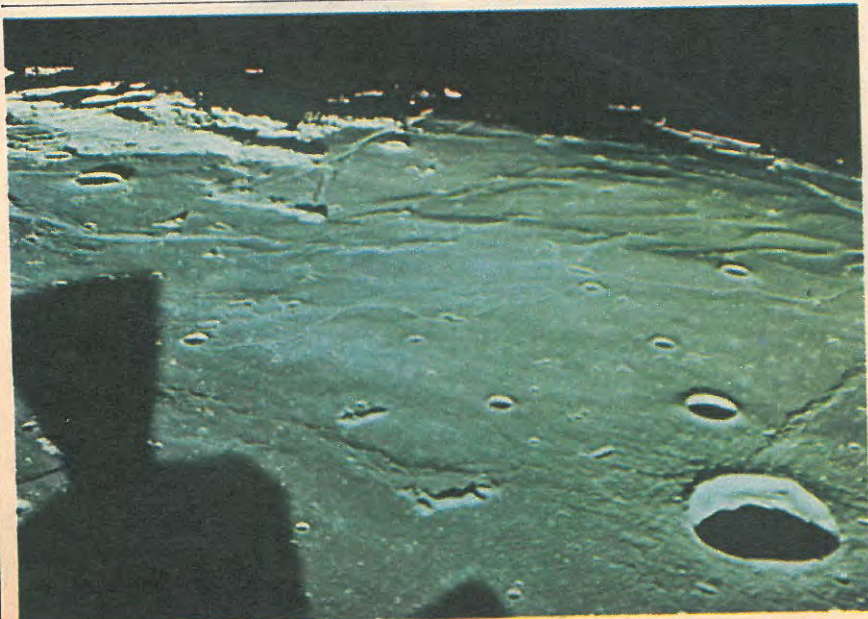
## A question of timing



**T minus 2 hours 40 minutes (T = moment of lift-off):** the crew enter the space craft – more than 300 feet above the ground, at the top of the three-stage Saturn rocket. Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and Buzz Aldrin have been awake for more than two and a half hours. They were medically examined soon after four o'clock in the morning, local time, and then ate the traditional astronaut's breakfast of steak and eggs, the last normal food they would have before their return. They put on their elaborate protective space suits and were then carried in a van to the base of the tower. By then, all the three stages were fuelled, the first with paraffin and liquid oxygen, the rest with liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen

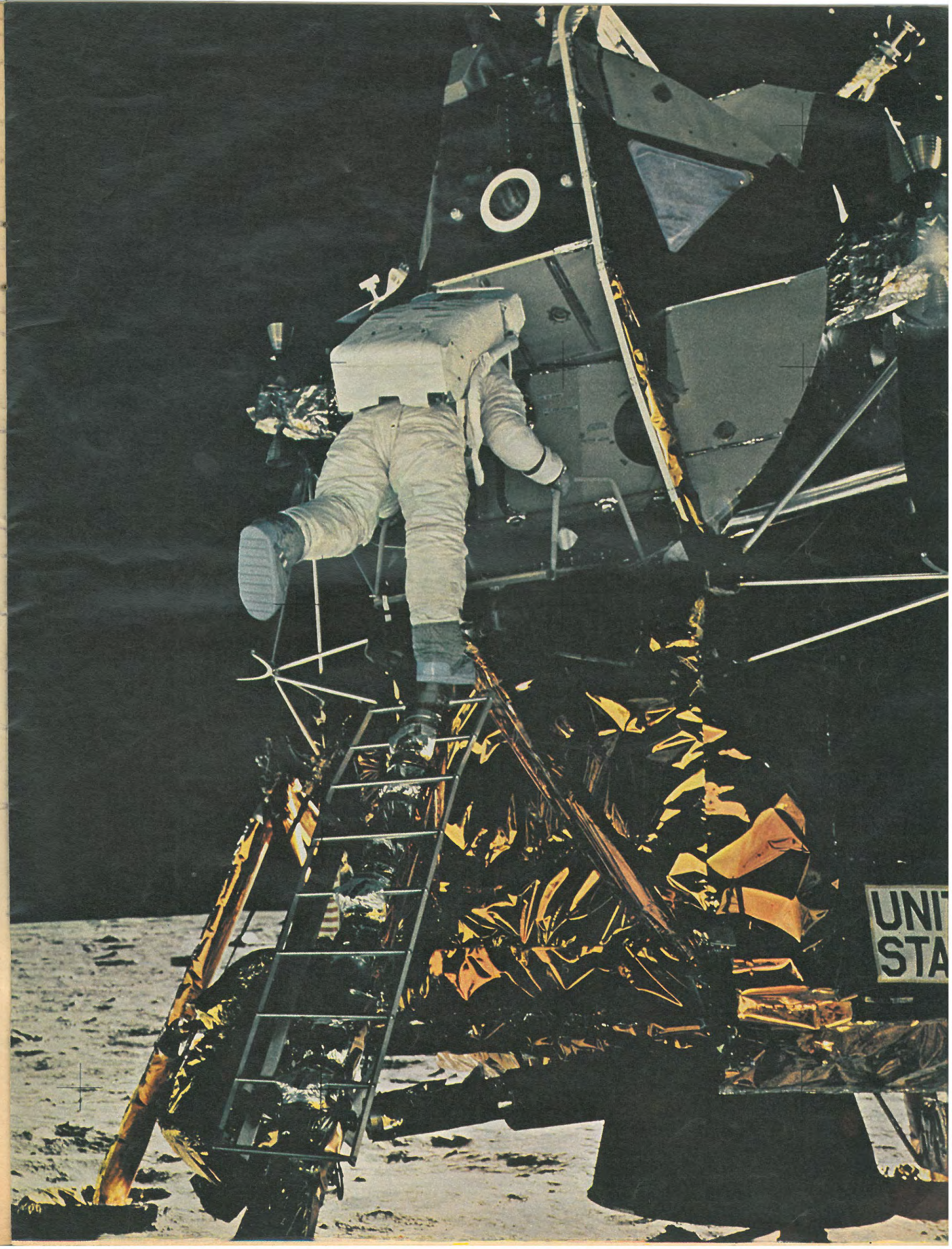


**T plus 2 minutes 43 seconds:** the first and second stages separate. All the engines of the first stage were running at T minus 2 seconds – two seconds before lift off – and produced their maximum acceleration by the end of the first minute and a half. By T plus 2 minutes 15, the first stage had nearly finished its task of lifting the massive rocket clear of densest part of the atmosphere. By now it was 29 miles up and travelling at more than four thousand miles an hour. The second stage burns for six minutes and takes the spacecraft to a height of 122 miles, almost to the parking orbit from which it sets off on its quarter of a million mile journey to the Moon. At T plus 2 hours 50 minutes, the third stage rocket was fired to drive the spacecraft to the Moon. It was fired again for a mid-course correction, and the vicinity of the Moon was reached at T plus 75 hours. The third stage motor was fired again at 75 hours 54 minutes; the command module and the lunar module then went into orbit together around the Moon

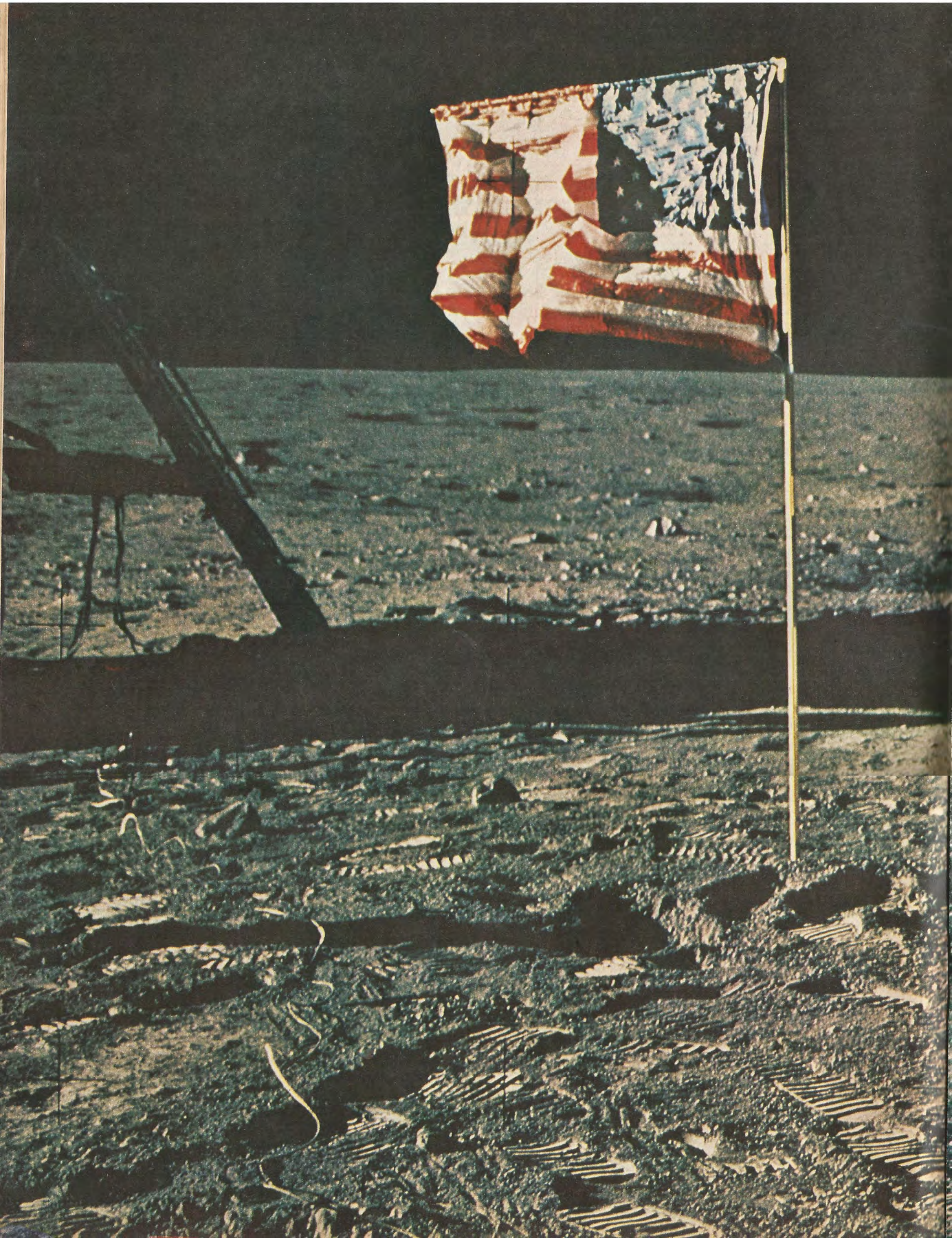


**T plus 102 hours 45 minutes:** two minutes from the Moon. The lunar module separated from the command module about two hours before this, and Collins continued to circle the Moon. Armstrong and Aldrin manoeuvred the lunar module into its descent orbit at T plus 101 hours 38 minutes, and at 102 hours 35 minutes, while behind the Moon, they started to descend. Their flight was controlled by computers until the last few minutes, when Armstrong took over manually to avoid a crater

**T plus 109 hours 51 minutes:** Aldrin steps out. The first man on the Moon stepped cautiously, unsure of how the surface would feel. He set up the TV camera and then prepared to photograph his companion as he left the lunar module. Aldrin moved slowly down the ladder, and then bounded euphorically about the lunar surface



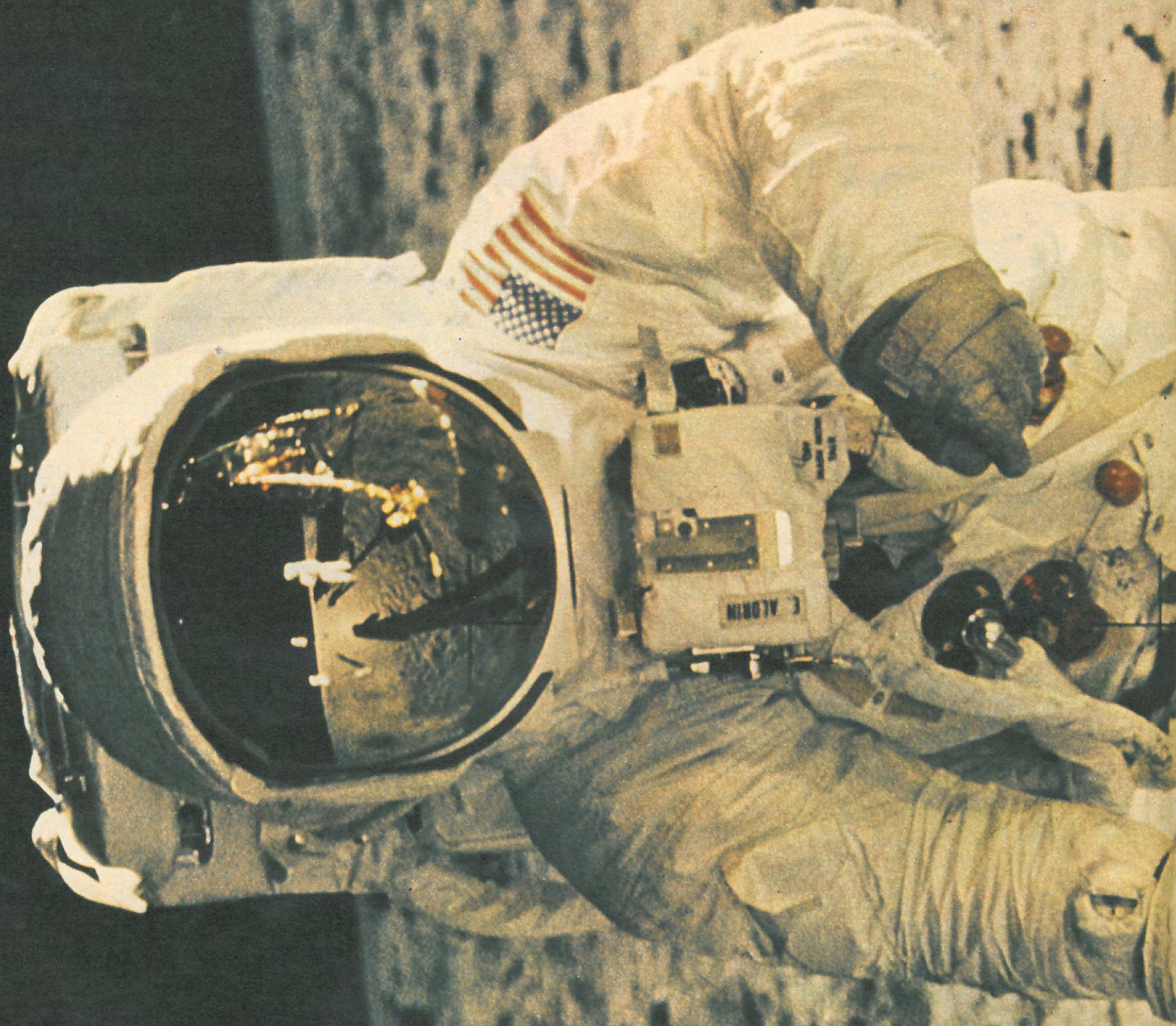
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**T plus 110 hours 8 minutes:**  
to Aldrin, though it is daylight, the sky is an intense black; there is no atmosphere to carry the dust which produces the blue of our sky. The shadows, for the same reason, are razor-sharp. The flag is stiffened with wire; otherwise it would hang eternally limp on the airless Moon

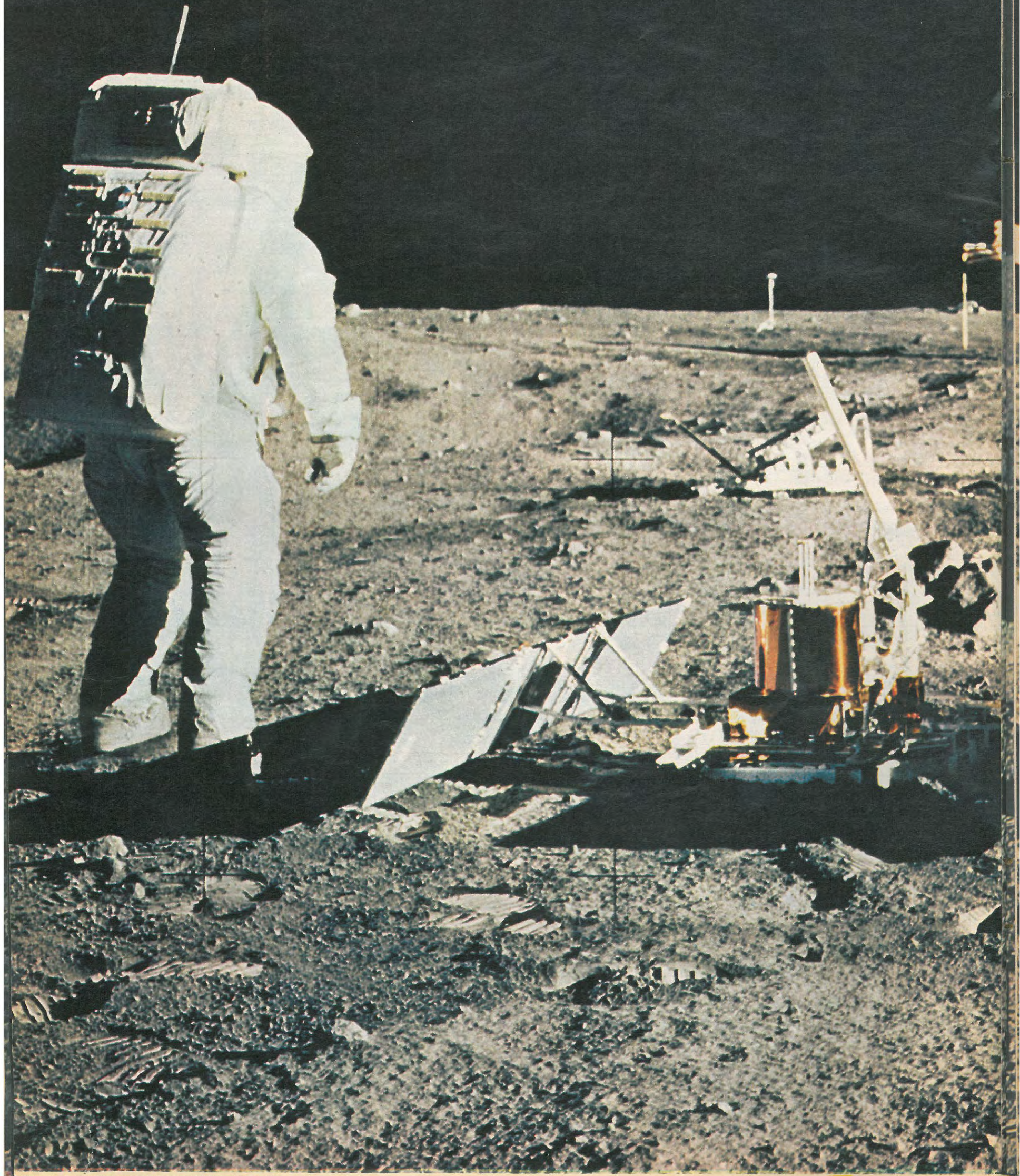


**T plus 110 hours 43 minutes:** the box on Aldrin's chest has the controls that keep him alive. In the pack are oxygen and cooling water. Emergency oxygen comes over his shoulder in a thin tube. The suit and load together weigh 183 lb., and would be intolerable on Earth; on the Moon they weigh 2 stone

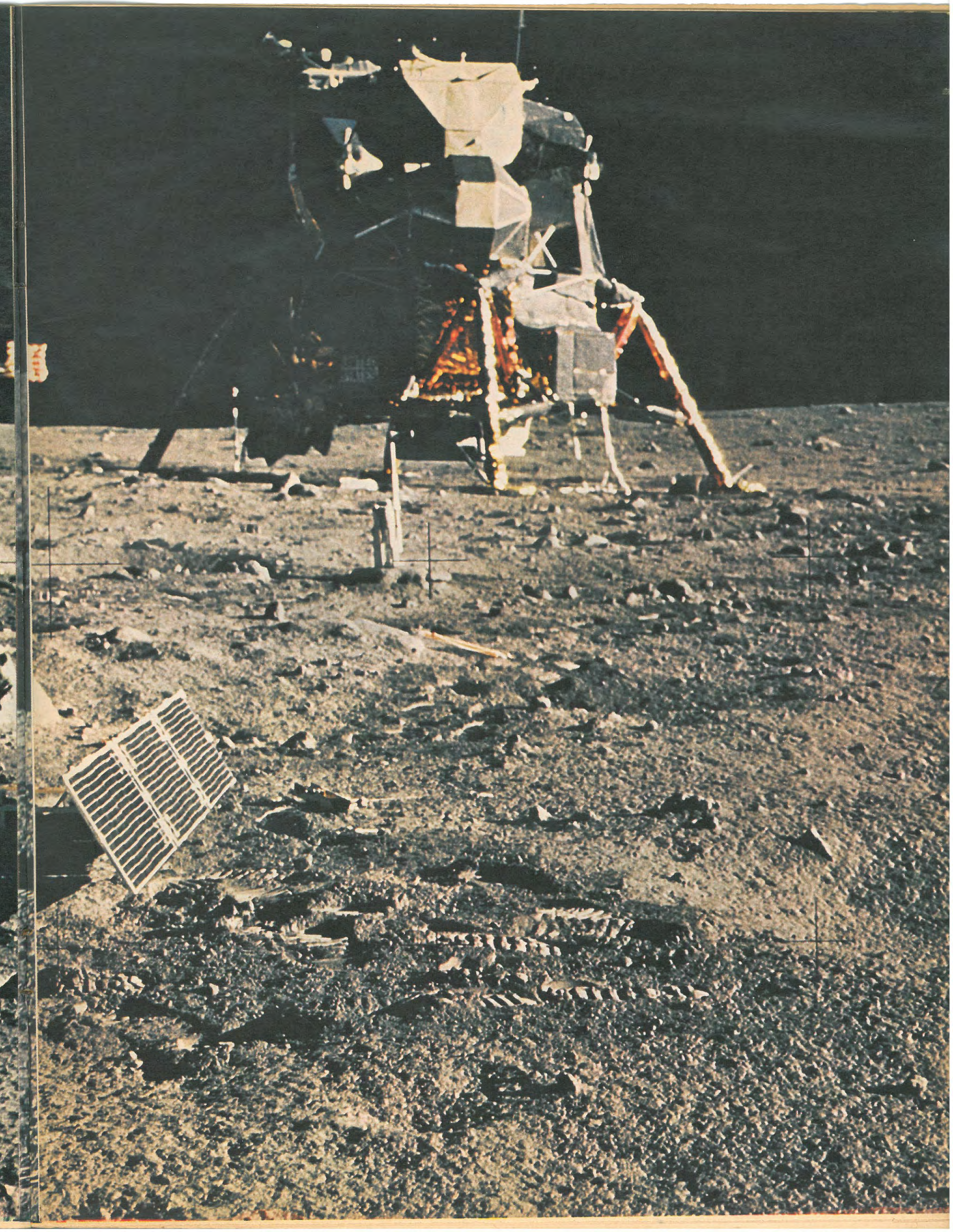


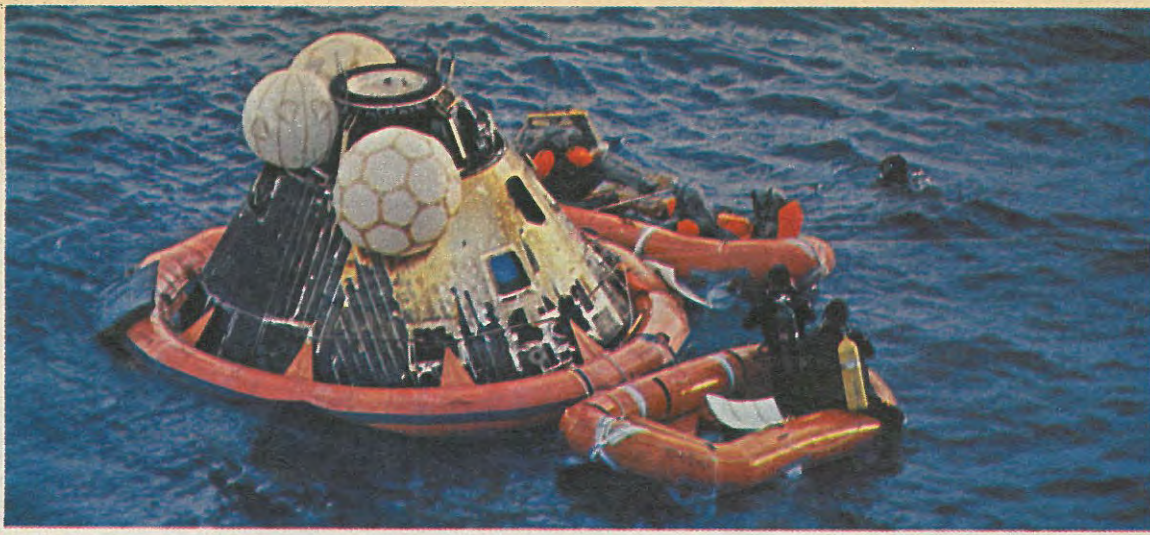


**T plus 111 hours 20 minutes:** the astronauts prepare to leave. In the 22 hours from touchdown to blast-off they have radically altered their piece of moonscape with hardware like the seismometer (foreground), with its slotted solar cells, and the far-off TV camera. The distances look vast, a trick played by the lunar horizon, which is a maximum mile-and-a-half away









**T plus 171 hours 35 minutes** (right): "We're coming home." This remarkable photograph of the Earth was taken from the command module on its final lap. It shows almost the whole of the Mediterranean and North Africa in bright sunshine: Spain, Italy and Sicily, Greece, the Black Sea, Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf, as well as a long stretch of the East African coast, are all clearly visible – it is even possible to pick out the Suez Canal

**T plus 195 hours 19 minutes** (top): the command module splashed down into the Pacific just ten seconds late after its journey of more than half a million miles. It landed upside down, some 13 miles from the recovery ship, but righted itself after eight minutes when the flotation balloons were inflated. There was one extra complication for the Apollo 11 mission: the astronauts had to wait for their special Biological Isolation Garments to be handed through the hatch. When they left the craft a naval frogman sprayed it with germ-killing fluid; he also scrubbed down the astronauts

**T plus 198 hours 25 minutes** (above): they knew they were coming so they baked a cake. Arrival aboard the USS Hornet was part pomp, part pantomime: military bands played patriotic music as the astronauts were handled, as it were, at arm's length with sterilised tongs. Their helicopter was winched to a lower deck and dragged to its parking space by tractor; the astronauts were hustled into the Mobile Quarantine Facility and the doors were clanged behind them. Hornet proudly hailed the addition of three new members to the ship's company, the President passed the time of day with them and then left for Manila. They then surrendered to 18 days of isolation and medical scrutiny, occasionally photographed and interviewed like fish in a tank. The return to normality was conducted with scrupulous, and necessary, care. It could hardly help being an anti-climax

