

THE SUN SAYS

A real life fairy tale

IT will be hard for fairy tales to compete this Christmas. Fact is so much more incredible.

Beyond imagination really—to sit at home, turn a knob and see men almost on the moon. Three men in buoyant mood, you might say, chatting to us unconcernedly. Even though, like us, they are subject to flu.

1968 is reaching its close with the most spectacular show of all time—a show to lift the spirit with astonishment that men can accomplish such a feat.

Americans can be very proud. They are still the pioneers. Not a bad moment for President Johnson to be saying goodbye.

BITTERNESS

“A beautiful, beautiful view” of the earth, said spaceship commander Frank Borman. From down here, without distance to give enchantment, the world does not always look so good.

Some of the close-up pictures in 1968 have been dark and evil and all too familiar.

Men have shown they can reach to the moon. They still cannot organise themselves to live on earth in peace and decency.

Biafra. Vietnam. Czechoslovakia. The torture rooms of Greece. Racial bitterness. Hunger and disease and needless death. Poverty in countries that are poor. And in countries that are rich.

But even on earth there are some hopeful signs. There is some kind of a truce for Christmas in Biafra. Conceivably the first step to a settlement.

OPTIMISM

The Vietnam peace talks creak along, but with a faint note of hope now. There are the possibilities of an agreement between Arabs and Israelis.

The path to freedom for the men of the Pueblo has been a brutal one. At least they are free and without a war.

Optimism ought to break through at Christmas.

So a salute to the three American moon men. The best of luck and a happy landing.

And as for us in Britain, and just thinking of our own comfort for a moment, let's hope the forecast is right and that it won't be a white Christmas. Even if snow is pretty to look at.