



*Shortly after planting the flag on the moon, Armstrong and Aldrin spoke with president Richard Nixon through a telephone-radio transmission.*

what he saw as “magnificent desolation.”

The LM had landed on the southern edge of the Sea of Tranquility, a large plain dotted with craters and boulders. Although the surface had looked forbidding when viewed from lunar orbit, up close it was much less intimidating, its color ranging from light tan to gray, depending on the angle of the sun. Although the sun’s glare made it impossible to see stars in the blackness of outer space, the men could clearly see the blue dot of Earth—looking smaller than a golf ball—in the distance. For just over two hours, Armstrong and Aldrin bounced across the moon’s surface, enjoying the feeling of weighing only one-sixth as much as they did on Earth. During that time, they took photographs,

## EXPEDITION JOURNAL

MICHAEL COLLINS

July 23, 1969 (television transmission from Columbia)

*This trip of ours to the moon may have looked, to you, simple or easy. I’d like to say that it has not been a game.... We have always had confidence that all this equipment will work, and work properly, and we continue to have confidence that it will do so for the remainder of the flight. All this is possible only through the blood, sweat, and tears of a number of people. First, the American workmen who put these pieces of machinery together in the factory. Second, the painstaking work done by the various test teams.... And finally, the people at the Manned Spacecraft Center, both in management, in mission planning, in flight control, and last, but not least, in crew training. This operation is somewhat like the periscope of a submarine. All you see is the three of us, but beneath the surface are thousands and thousands of others, and to all those, I would like to say, thank you very much.*