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THE STAFF

CAPT J.C. PETROSKY.....Ship's Master
COLONEL HART.....Troop Commander
LCDR R.D. BROWN, USN.....COMILDEPT
CHAPLAIN H.L. SCHNICK.....Advisor
LIEUTENANT M. FLAHERTY.....Editor
SSG S. PAYNE.....Assistant Editor
SP5 APPLEWHITE PFC SHEA PFC SOWARDS PFC HAMMER

SAIGON.....Communist Troops stepped up the tempo of fighting in South Viet Nam Saturday, staging attacks against American and Viet-Nameese Forces. Hundreds of casualties were reported on both sides. At least 24 Americans were wounded and 4 killed in the fighting. A fifth American Soldier was killed in a highway accident. Three of the American dead and 14 of the wounded were U.S. Marines guarding a jet airstrip under construction at Chu Lai, 330 miles north of Saigon. Five other Marines were wounded in action around the Da Nang Airbase Friday. In other action, a U.S. Army Officer was killed and three U.S. Advisers and two helicopter crewmen wounded. U.S. Ambassador Maxwell Taylor, meanwhile, postponed his scheduled departure for Washington for the second consecutive day because of a political crisis in Saigon. Taylor had been due in Washington for a round of high level talks beginning Monday, following a stopover in Honolulu.

CAPE KENNEDY.....The United States, bidding to end a four year Soviet monopoly in manned space flight, Saturday put astronauts James McDivitt and Edward White through a final check in preparation for mans most daring venture in the skies. The Astronauts and their back up crew ran through simulated tests, the success of which would determine the start of final preparation for the actual launch, Officials said. Still ahead are long hours of studying the flight plan, a document that had been so drastically rewritten in the past week that it now reads like a chapter in a Buck Rogers story. During the flight, McDivitt and White will try at least twice to move within feet of the Titan 2 second stage rocket that put them in orbit. Starting over Hawaii on the second orbit, White hopes to leap outside the Gemini 4 Capsule and propel himself toward the Titan 2, close enough to take a spectacular series of pictures and possibly even to shove, or perhaps kick, the hovering rocket.

CAPE KENNEDY.....The United States orbited a "Physics Lab" rocket Saturday and, after hours of doubt, reported that all was well with the craft. It zoomed on a course that takes it halfway to the moon and back.

DARBY PENNSYLVANIA.....Mrs Kathryn Oxhay Granahan, Treasurer of the United States, was reported in serious condition Friday following brain surgery at Firtzgerald Mercy Hospital here. Physicians said the 60 year old Federal Official had a blood clot removed from her brain.

CALCUTTA INDIA.....Thick columns of smoke and flames Saturday delayed rescue operations for hundreds of coal miners feared trapped or killed by an underground explosion, so powerful, some mistook it for an earthquake.