

News Summary and Index

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1974

The Major Events of the Day

International

Britain's coal miners union decided yesterday to go ahead with a national strike Sunday, rebuffing an appeal by Prime Minister Heath to postpone it until after the Feb. 28 election. The decision means that the election campaign will be fought amid labor strife and continued emergency measures, such as a three-day work week ordered by the Government for most industries. Some Conservative leaders said privately that the strike should help their party, but Labor party leaders withheld public comment on the miners' decision. [Page 1, Column 5-6.]

Sweden's Trade Minister, Kjell-Olof Feldt, tore up his gasoline ration card in a gesture symbolizing Europe's improving energy picture. Sweden ended rationing after 22 days, and in many other European countries, too, the despair of early winter has given way to relief and optimism as the weather remains unseasonably warm and the public cooperates to save energy. Gasoline prices are up sharply everywhere, but shortages were less severe than expected. [10:3-5.]

Al Ahram, the authoritative Cairo newspaper, reported that President Anwar el-Sadat had shelved plans to revise his Cabinet and would stay on as his own Premier until "every inch" of Israeli-occupied Egyptian territory had been recovered. The paper also said that preparations were being started for partial demobilization. [1:1.]

Five Palestinian guerrillas who seized the Japanese Embassy in Kuwait released their diplomatic hostages and flew to Southern Yemen on a Japanese airliner. The plane had carried four other extremists from Singapore, where they had tried to blow up an oil refinery. [8:7-8.]

National

Most of the striking independent truckers apparently remained off the country's highways, despite Administration statements that road freight traffic would soon be back to normal. Indications are that a trickle of owner-drivers resumed their hauls, but there seemed to be confusion among the rest on what to do following the tentative agreement reached in Washington. [1:5-6.]

A gasoline rationing plan, similar to the one requested in New York and the one imposed in New Jersey, has been in effect in Oregon for three weeks with noticeable and

for gasoline retailers noted that the system did not alleviate shortages but had "levelled the chaotic situation," prevailing there in December and January. [1:4.]

A Federal judge in Washington dismissed a suit by the Senate Watergate Committee to obtain five White House tapes out of fear that the charged atmosphere of the committee hearings might prejudice the rights of potential defendants, including President Nixon. Judge Gerhard A. Gesell rejected the President's blanket claim of confidentiality but held that the possibly prejudicial effect of pretrial publicity was the overriding issue in the case. [1:1-2.]

Three Skylab astronauts returned to earth after 84 days in orbit, the longest manned space flight to date. Except for a planned link-up of American and Soviet spacecraft next year, it was the last scheduled flight for American astronauts until the two-stage shuttle rocket now being developed begins operations in 1979 or later. [1:1-2.]

Metropolitan

New York State's index of business activity reached a new record in 1973, despite the impact of energy shortages. The State Department of Commerce said the index, a measure of New York's economic health, showed a marked improvement in five key sectors, including employment. [1:8.]

Governor Byrne announced a mandatory gasoline-rationing program for New Jersey, effective Monday. The order imposes an alternate-day system based on license-plate numbers. Calling the state's gasoline crisis "the worst in the nation," the Governor said the program would also require filling stations to refuse gasoline to motorists whose tanks were more than half full. [1:3.]

New York City declared its first snow emergency in five years as the heaviest snowstorm of the winter blustered across the metropolitan area, causing huge traffic jams and many fender-bending accidents. Some highways were closed to traffic and others turned into treacherous skidways. Motorists were urged not to use their cars, and parking or standing was prohibited on the city's designated snow-emergency streets. The storm also tied up Washington, where President Nixon set out by car for his delayed medical check-up but was forced to turn around and once again postpone the anniversary. [1:8.]

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ALAN TRUSCOTT

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