

News Summary

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NYTimes

International

On the eve of preliminary talks at the Geneva conference on Rhodesia, the danger of an early impasse increased. Speaking with reporters, spokesmen for the white minority Government and the black nationalists took deeply conflicting positions on transitional arrangements for eventual black majority rule. [Page 1, Columns 1-2.]

A rally of a million Chinese in Peking celebrated Hua Kuo-feng's succession of the late Mao Tse-tung as chairman of the Chinese Communist Party. The vast gathering, televised throughout China, also acclaimed the downfall of the nation's four leading leftists, including Mao's widow. Chairman Hua, wearing the green uniform of the People's Liberation Army, looked confident and relaxed and waved enthusiastically to the throng. [1:3.]

Lebanon's border with Israel came under control of Lebanese right-wing Christian militia forces for most of its length. Armed vehicles advanced 10 miles and maintained pressure on the one town where Palestinian and Lebanese leftist forces are still present in force. Completion of control by the right-wing forces would establish a security belt against guerrillas that Israel is believed to seek. [7:1.]

National

A buoyant President Ford, campaigning in California, invited a rally of more than 25,000 backers to be his guests at the Jan. 20 inaugural ceremony. With barely a week before the Nov. 2 election, Mr. Ford emphasized positive themes, ebullient optimism and virtually ignored the campaign challenge of Jimmy Carter. [1:3.]

Voter apathy in the Presidential campaign has been attributed to cynicism about politics after Watergate, the lack of burning issues and the view that neither President Ford nor Jimmy Carter

has the charisma to stir passions. But a major factor this year is the new Federal financing laws, which have stripped the customary glitter of campaigning to a no-frills, remote and even shoe-string approach. [1:1-3.]

Animals may be capable of planning, making choices and awareness of themselves and their environment, according to a biologist at Rockefeller University. The specialist is Dr. Donald R. Griffin, widely noted for research on bat orientation and bird navigation. [16:3-5.]

Metropolitan

A blaze swept through a Bronx social club, killing 25 young persons and injuring 24 who jumped from a second-floor window, their only means of escape. The fire had allegedly been set in the building's only stairwell by an angry patron. The 2:30 A.M. blaze occurred in the Puerto Rican Social Club at 1003 Morris Avenue in the Morrisania section. The survivors had been forced to jump, officials said, because a fire escape was blocked by a rolling steel door, apparently installed to deter burglars. [1:6.]

In slow, hesitant streams, relatives despairingly entered the office of the Chief Medical Examiner to identify the victims of the fire. The pregnant mother of a 16-year-old girl wailed in Spanish, she "was a saint to me. Don't tell me that you have taken her away." [1:4-5.]

The injured were taken to five hospitals in the Bronx and Manhattan and to the Nassau County Medical Center in East Meadow. They suffered burns and several had broken limbs and internal injuries, hospital officials said. Scores of medical personnel worked without a break for up to seven hours. [35:1-2.]

One survivor, Luis Alberto Delgado, grimly related that he had been singing a sad, slow bolero when the disaster

struck. "It was as if someone threw a ball of fire into the room," the young musician said, adding "Suddenly there was screaming and panic." [34:3-5.]

An initial check found no New York City Buildings or Fire Department violations pending against the building where the 25 persons were killed. But a more detailed inquiry will be made today when city offices open. [35:1-2.]

The death toll of 16 women and 9 men was the highest in a city building fire since 1958, when 27 persons were killed following a blaze at a textile factory at 623 Broadway. [34:5.]

Most New York State voters, according to a New York Times survey, are still liberal on major domestic issues, despite a nationwide and statewide shift rightward. Most voters, the poll found, favor federalization of welfare, national health insurance, Federal job programs and aid to New York City. [1:1-2.]

Business/Finance

Jarred by currency imbalances, divisions between rich and poor member countries and rising waves of protectionism, the European Common Market is in trouble. Some analysts say that the 20-year-old union is also threatened by reviving nationalism and they wonder whether the community can survive as a significant force of European and Atlantic unity. The mood at the Brussels headquarters of the Common Market is gloomy. [45:4.]

Foreign oil prices will rise this winter, according to analysts, and the major question is by how much. Various options being discussed are increases ranging from 10 to 20 percent, and a European diplomat predicted it would probably be 10 percent. Ministers of the Middle East oil-exporting countries are to meet in mid-December, and there are signs of wide disagreement on the size of the increase. [45:1-3.]

The outlook on the credit markets is unclear, and several dealers and analysts are waiting until after the Nov. 2 election before they make any predictions. The bond market last week suffered its worst reverse since May in a sweeping move that depressed prices for fixed-income securities and sharply raised interest rates. [45:6.]

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Quotation of the Day

"Everybody started acting crazy. The only way out was the window and we took turns. I had to wait for two people before I could jump. If I stayed one minute longer I'm dead."—Jose Echeverria, one of those injured in the Puerto Rican Social Club fire. [34:1.]

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U.S. Observes Veterans Day

The Federal Government observes Veterans Day today, and all Federal offices and post offices will be closed. City and state offices will operate as usual because New York State continues to observe Veterans Day on Nov. 11.

Banks, stock exchanges, commodity markets and schools will be open in New York. Banks and schools will also be open in Connecticut, while Federal offices will be closed. In New Jersey, most banks will be closed, but most schools will be open.

In New York City, all parking regulations and regular mass-transit schedules will be in effect.