

News Summary

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Blackout

A power blackout virtually paralyzed New York City and widespread looting added to the sweltering city's troubles. Consolidated Edison restored power to parts of the city and Westchester County. By late afternoon, 18 hours after the power failure, half of the utility's 2.8 million customers were still without electricity. [Page 1, Col. 6.]

Separate investigations into the cause of the power failure were ordered by President Carter, Governor Carey and Mayor Beame. The Federal Power Commission will conduct the President's inquiry; the State Public Service Commission, the Governor's, while Mayor Beame appointed a special committee. Charles F. Luce, the Consolidated Edison chairman, said the company would hire "the best consultant" to determine the cause of the blackout and to find ways to prevent a recurrence. [A1:1.]

The blackout gave hundreds of thousands of office workers in the city an unexpected holiday, but many large corporations were able to keep their worldwide operations running smoothly by using emergency procedures. The impact of New York's business shutdown was also felt in other parts of the country. Several stock and commodity exchanges in the Middle West and on the West Coast reported sluggish business because of late openings or the absence of market leadership from New York. [A1:2.]

More than 2,700 people were arrested for plundering and vandalism during and after the blackout. Widespread looting continued into the daylight hours and took place in all the boroughs except Staten Island. Hundreds of stores were stripped of merchandise and streets were littered with broken window glass and debris. The heaviest-hit areas were black and Hispanic neighborhoods. [A1:1-2.]

International

President Carter said that the United States Army helicopter that was shot down, apparently by North Koreans, had strayed into North Korean airspace by mistake, and that the United States was seeking to prevent the incident from developing into a confrontation. Three crewmen were killed and a fourth was captured. [A1:5.]

A former Soviet navy captain, Nicholas Schadrin, who defected to the United States in 1959, disappeared 18 months ago while on a spy mission in Vienna, according to reports in Washington. He is believed to be in a Soviet military prison and official and private efforts are reported to have been made to arrange his release through a spy trade. "We want him back," a State Department spokesman said. "He's an American citizen whose welfare concerns us." [A18:5-6.]

A new Western initiative to break the stalemate in the East-West talks on troop reductions in Central Europe will be considered by President Carter and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany. [A18:6.]

National

A cutback in welfare allotments to families that also receive Federal housing subsidies is being considered by the Carter Administration. President Carter, however, was said to be highly unlikely to accept a much broader proposal that would eliminate almost the entire \$5-billion-a-year Federal housing subsidy program to transfer the money to welfare reform. [B2:1.]

All states would be required to enact no-fault auto insurance laws under legislation that the Carter Administration is planning to endorse. The state laws would conform to federally set minimum standards under the legislation, now pending in Congress. [A20:1-2.]

Patrick Kearney, one of the two men suspected of at least 28 murders, was indicted by a grand jury in Riverside, Calif., on three counts of murder. David Hill, Mr. Kearney's roommate, was set free. The jury decided there was insufficient evidence linking him to the murders. [A20:1-2.]

Metropolitan

The New York State Assembly's Democratic leadership decided to pass the Senate Republicans' version of a bill that would phase out the effects of New York City's stock transfer tax, thus ending the remaining partisan stalemate of the closing legislative session. The bill was urgently sought by Mayor Beame on the ground that the tax was driving the securities business from the city. [A1:3-4.]

Stanley Steingut, Speaker of the New York State Assembly and his son, Robert, a Brooklyn Councilman-at-large may not be tried in Brooklyn on felony charges that they had violated the state election law, the State Court of Appeals said. The vote, 4 to 3, upheld the Appellate Division of State Supreme Court in Brooklyn. It is possible that District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau of Manhattan can submit the case to a Manhattan grand jury. [B3:3.]

Business/Finance

A challenge by some of its members who favor decontrol of natural gas prices was turned down by the House Commerce Committee. Its defeat was aided by carefully planned parliamentary maneuvering. The issue of whether to continue Federal controls over gas prices will now go before a special House energy committee, which is to begin meeting today. Regardless of the committee's decision, the issue is certain to be raised again on the House floor and later in the Senate. [D1:6.]

The power failure halted trading on New York's two stock exchanges as well as in Philadelphia and Boston and hurt trading on the Pacific and Midwest exchanges. On Chicago's Midwest Stock Exchange trading volume totaled 410,000 shares, compared with a turnover of 1.4 million shares the day before. The stock of Consolidated Edison fell $\frac{3}{4}$ to $24\frac{1}{4}$ on a modest volume of 7,400 shares. [D1:3.]

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Quotation of the Day

"We cannot tolerate, in this age of modern technology, a power system that can shut down the nation's largest city. I believe the people of this city must be assured that this will never happen again. Con Edison at best has shown gross negligence, and at worst something far more serious."—Mayor Beame, announcing that he will establish a board of inquiry to investigate the power failure. [A1:6.]

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