

At a glance

A brief look at our world

State

Deep freeze impairs electricity restoration

(AP) - Frigid temperatures complicated efforts yesterday to restore power to the last of what had been more than a million people left in the dark in eastern Pennsylvania over the weekend.

In York County, temperatures were so cold that icy roads thawed by the sun refroze immediately, said Chris Leiphart, assistant York County manager of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

Crews were forced to spread anti-skid, a combination of dust and crushed stone, which is prone to rolling and blowing off roads, Leiphart said.

PECO Energy Co. crews yesterday restored power to another 10,000 of a total 590,000 customers who lost power because of last week's ice storm, said spokesman Michael Wood.

By yesterday evening, roughly 3,000 customers; 200 in Montgomery County; 150 in Bucks County; fewer than 1,000 Delaware County, and fewer than 2,000 in Chester County remained without power, Wood said.

Auditor General Hafer won't run for governor

HARRISBURG (AP) — The crowded field in the Republican gubernatorial primary grew less so yesterday when Auditor General Barbara Hafer announced she will not run for either the Republican nomination for governor or U.S. Senate this year.

Hafer was strongly interested in trying again for the office she lost by a landslide in 1990 to incumbent Democrat Robert P. Casey. But party leaders wanted her to run for the U.S. Senate.

Either race would have required intense fund raising. U.S. Rep. Tom Ridge of Erie is leading on the Republican side with roughly \$2 million raised in 1993 for the gubernatorial primary. Incumbent U.S. Sen. Harris Wofford, a Democrat, is well on his way to raising \$7 million for his re-election this year.

"Fund raising is tough any time," Hafer said yesterday. Her campaign had raised about \$400,000, and about a quarter went to retiring past campaign debt.

Nation

Jury selection begins for Branch Davidian trial

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Jury selection began yesterday for 11 surviving Branch Davidian members, 11 months after the shootout outside the sect's compound that killed four federal agents and started a seven-week standoff.

U.S. District Judge Walter Smith questioned a panel of 80 prospective jurors yesterday after shedding his black judicial robe to keep from "intimidating" them.

The defendants — 10 men and one woman — sat attentively as the judge asked questions. Each stood and smiled, or nodded briefly, as their attorneys introduced them.

Testimony is expected to begin mid-week and last for two months.

Twelve jurors and six alternates are needed to hear testimony on the charges that the 11 followers of doomsday prophet David Koresh conspired to murder federal agents during a raid on the religious group's compound near Waco on Feb. 28.

The case pits the prosecution's evidence of tape recordings, law enforcement testimony and the group's stockpile of weapons against defense claims of excessive government force.

World

Rain assists in battle with Australian bushfires

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — Hot, gusty winds abated and a light rain fell, giving firefighters the break they needed yesterday against 136 bushfires raging across southeastern Australia.

By nightfall, all but two major fires were in check.

During the previous three days, the winds had whipped up huge firestorms and the 10,000 firefighters had no chance of putting out the flames. Instead, they could only try to save lives and property.

More than 20,000 people fled their homes ahead of the fast moving fires, which came within 5 miles of downtown Sydney, and most have returned to undamaged houses.

Others in the suburbs of Sydney, Australia's largest city, returned to sift through the ashes of their homes and watched tearfully yesterday as bulldozers demolished the blackened ruins.

Parliament polarizing

Yeltsin allies aim to prosecute ultranationalists

By DEBORAH SEWARD
Associated Press Writer

MOSCOW — With President Clinton's visit only two days away, Russia's first post-Soviet Parliament was emerging as a bitter battleground of supporters and foes of Boris Yeltsin.

On the eve of today's opening session of the parliament, the Russian president's supporters threatened to prosecute ultranationalists and blamed Communists for the deaths of millions of people.

The statements had all the markings of a pre-emptive strike. Yeltsin's allies are outnumbered by his foes in the new legislature, and the president's opponents are expected to waste no time in attacking his pro-Western reforms.

Clinton arrives tomorrow in a display of support for Yeltsin and his reform program. The U.S. president also is expected to meet with other political leaders.

But he has no plans to visit Parliament or meet with Yeltsin's

most vociferous critics, including Vladimir Zhirinovzky, who has called Clinton "a coward" who should stay out of Russia.

Yeltsin gained some political ground at home yesterday with Clinton's announcement in Brussels of a pact that will rid the Ukraine of its 1,800 nuclear warheads.

Yeltsin's opponents had accused him of being too soft on former Soviet republics — including the Ukraine — that they see as threats to Russian security and national interests.

The new parliament, which is intended to mark a new chapter in Russia's young democracy, is already deeply divided, with extreme nationalists and Communists determined to undo Yeltsin's reforms. Yeltsin dismissed the previous parliament, setting off a violent backlash by conservatives.

Russia's Choice, the main bloc supporting Yeltsin, said it would try to make parliament members face criminal responsibility for

statements that incite hatred or violence.

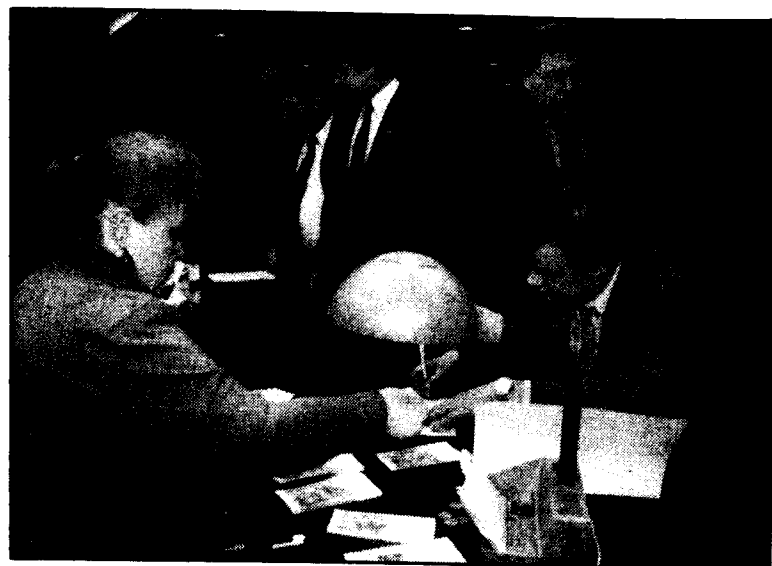
The threat was aimed at Zhirinovzky, whose Liberal Democratic Party won 23 percent of the vote in last month's election by promising to expand Russia's borders and expel dark-skinned traders from southern former Soviet republics.

Yegor Gaidar, economics minister and Russia's Choice chairman, said some of Zhirinovzky's statements could be punishable by up to eight years in jail for sowing the seeds of war.

Zhirinovzky fired back, telling his party's 64 parliament members that his party would not accept a strong president and a weak legislature.

Yeltsin's new constitution, which was adopted by referendum Dec. 12 reduced parliament's powers and strengthened the president's. But the president does not have the right to dissolve parliament for at least a year.

Russia's Choice will have the



Deputies in the new Russian parliament's upper house, the Federation Council, get money for expenses as they register in Moscow's House of Press. The members registered yesterday in preparation for today's opening session.

largest faction in the 450-member lower house with 94 seats. Zhirinovzky's faction will be second and the Communists a close third with 50 seats.

With no faction controlling a majority, it is unclear whether the new parliament will be as obstructionist as the previous one and prompt a new power struggle.

But Yeltsin's top aides seemed nervous ahead of the parliament session.

Perhaps to avoid his most venomous opponents, Yeltsin has chosen to address the opening session of the Federation Council, the upper house of parliament.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin will speak to the more powerful Duma, the lower House.



Lorena Bobbitt talks to her attorney, John Lowe, at the beginning of her trial. Radio disc jockeys outside the courthouse during yesterday's proceedings gave away free Slice soda and wieners.

Bobbitt tried for 'malicious wounding'

By ANNE GEARAN
Associated Press Writer

MANASSAS, Va. — For John Bobbitt, it was the same courthouse, the same excruciating tale. But this time, he told it for the other side.

In a circuslike atmosphere captured on live television, Bobbitt described to a jury of seven women and five men yesterday how his wife, Lorena, cut off his penis.

He gave virtually the same testimony in November, when he was tried and acquitted for marital sexual assault. But the second trial drew nearly four times as many reporters as the first.

Vendors hawked T-shirts saying "Revenge — How Sweet It Is" and "Cut Me a Break," while two disc jockeys from Norfolk, Va. — about 200 miles away — gave out Slice soda and wieners to the crowd.

The first witness to take the stand, John Bobbitt testified he "felt a couple of jerks" before the attack. He said he felt dizzy, then sought help. With his

hands pressing against his groin, he said he woke up a house guest for help.

"I didn't know how to explain it to him," John Bobbitt said. "It was kind of embarrassing."

Lorena Bobbitt is charged with malicious wounding for cutting off Bobbitt's penis after he came home from a night of drinking June 23. If convicted, she could be sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Lorena Bobbitt's lawyers have argued she was driven to the act by an "irresistible impulse" caused by years of abuse, including forced sex the night of the mutilation.

In her opening statement, defense attorney Lisa Kemler said John Bobbitt "took away any control his wife had over herself" after he raped her that night.

Kemler, who described the Bobbitts' relationship as a "reign of terror," said sexual, physical and verbal abuse had begun in the first month of their four-year marriage.

John Bobbitt, who is seeking a divorce, contends his wife

attacked him because she was angry over his plans to leave her.

In November, he was acquitted in the same courthouse in Prince William County on a charge of marital sexual assault.

The jury hearing the case against Lorena Bobbitt was empaneled before Judge Herman A. Whisenant Jr. after three hours of questions from Commonwealth's Attorney Paul E. Ebert and defense lawyer Blair Howard.

Ebert asked whether the prospective jurors would be able to put aside the jokes they may have heard about the highly publicized case.

"We've all heard those, I guess, but putting that aside do you recognize that this is a serious criminal matter?" Ebert said. All said they did.

The trial was expected to last three days.

While John Bobbitt's trial drew about 50 reporters, Lorena Bobbitt's trial attracted several hundred reporters and technicians.

Congress term limit challenged in court

By PEGGY ANDERSEN
Associated Press Writer

SEATTLE — Initiatives limiting the number of terms members of Congress may serve, so far approved in 15 states, get their first federal court test today in a case challenging the Washington measure.

U.S. District Judge William Dwyer has set aside three hours for arguments. He is expected to issue a ruling in about five weeks.

"It will be an action-packed three hours," said Margaret Colony, spokeswoman of the state League of Women Voters, which opposes term limits.

At least eight attorneys will take part, including two former Carter administration officials: one-time Attorney General Griffin Bell, representing organizers of Initiative 573, and former White House counsel Lloyd Cutler, arguing against the measure.

Colorado was the first state to pass a term-limits initiative in 1990. Fourteen others followed in

1992, including Washington.

The term-limits movement bills itself as the antidote to fat-cat career politicians who are out of touch with their constituents.

Term limits are supported by 22 million voters and represent the will of the people, said Sherry Bockwinkel, spokeswoman for the LIMIT organization that led the Washington state campaign for the initiative.

Opponents argue that term limits can be imposed only through an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. A brief filed by Cutler's firm called the limits an attempt "to trump the judgment of the Founders that only age, citizenship and state residency — and not other qualifications such as non-incumbency — should be qualifications for service in Congress."

Washington's law limits U.S. House members to three two-year terms over 12 years and Senate members to two six-year terms over 18 years. It also limits terms for state officials, but those provisions are not at issue.

Radiation documents displayed for public

By DUNCAN MANSFIELD
Associated Press Writer

OAK RIDGE, Tenn. — A public reading room for documents on once-secret radiation experiments opened quietly yesterday in this city that helped create the atomic bomb.

Twenty documents were placed on file in a building that formerly housed a museum to the Atomic Energy Commission, which oversaw many of the studies.

The city of Oak Ridge began as a Manhattan Project complex that supplied enriched uranium for the Hiroshima bomb and plutonium-processing research for the Nagasaki bomb. For years, the government refused to acknowledge that the complex even existed.

"What we have done is gone ahead and put the readily available documents (on display) and created a new facility for that purpose," said Steve Wyatt, a spokesman for the Energy Department's Oak Ridge complex. "We never really gave the impression that was new."

"... about 695 persons were exposed to radiation ..."

— Congressional report

Four of the 20 documents now available involve a single case — a boy who died from leukemia while under experimental radiation therapy from 1965 to 1968 at an Oak Ridge cancer research hospital owned by the AEC.

Also on file in the reading room is a 1986 congressional committee report called "American Nuclear Guinea Pigs: Three Decades of Radiation Experiments on U.S. Citizens."

The 36-page report details 31 government experiments from the 1940s to the 1970s in which "about 695 persons were exposed to radiation which provided little or no medical benefit to the subjects."

Poorer schools to 'plug in' with free computers from Bell Atlantic, TCI

The two corporations are funding access to information networks for schools that might otherwise be bypassed.

By JAMES H. RUBIN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Prodded by a key congressman, two telecommunications companies said yesterday they will help one-fourth of the nation's schools plug in — free of charge — to computer and video information networks.

Bell Atlantic Corp. and Telecommunications Inc., which agreed last October to merge, said they are starting the largest corporate program ever linking class-

rooms to the "information superhighway" now under construction.

Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass., had urged the telecommunications industry last month to do more to assure access to high-tech information networks for schoolchildren in poorer areas.

Markey, chairman of the House subcommittee on telecommunications and finance, praised the two companies yesterday. He is sponsoring legislation to oversee competition for local phone service and between cable TV companies.

"America cannot leave the bottom 20 to 30 percent of this population out of the knowledge-based economy and still hope to retain its economic standing," Markey said. The Bell Atlantic-TCI plan is a first step in making multimedia education accessible to schoolchildren, Markey said. Bell Atlantic and TCI held simultaneous

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— Rep. Edward Markey
D-Mass.

news conferences in Washington and Los Angeles to announce their plans, with reporters in each city able to question company officials in the other via a TV hookup.

Company officials said they hope eventually to provide free access to computer and cable networks for 26,000 elementary and secondary school in areas served by the two companies.

"This commitment to education means

that student and teachers will have at their fingertips homework hot lines, parent-teacher discussions, video materials and a world of electronically stored data," said Raymond Smith, chairman and chief executive officer of Bell Atlantic.

The companies provided a glimpse of how the system works with TV hookups to Christopher Columbus School in Union City, N.J., and the Carrolton, Ga., school system.