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The News-Sentinel



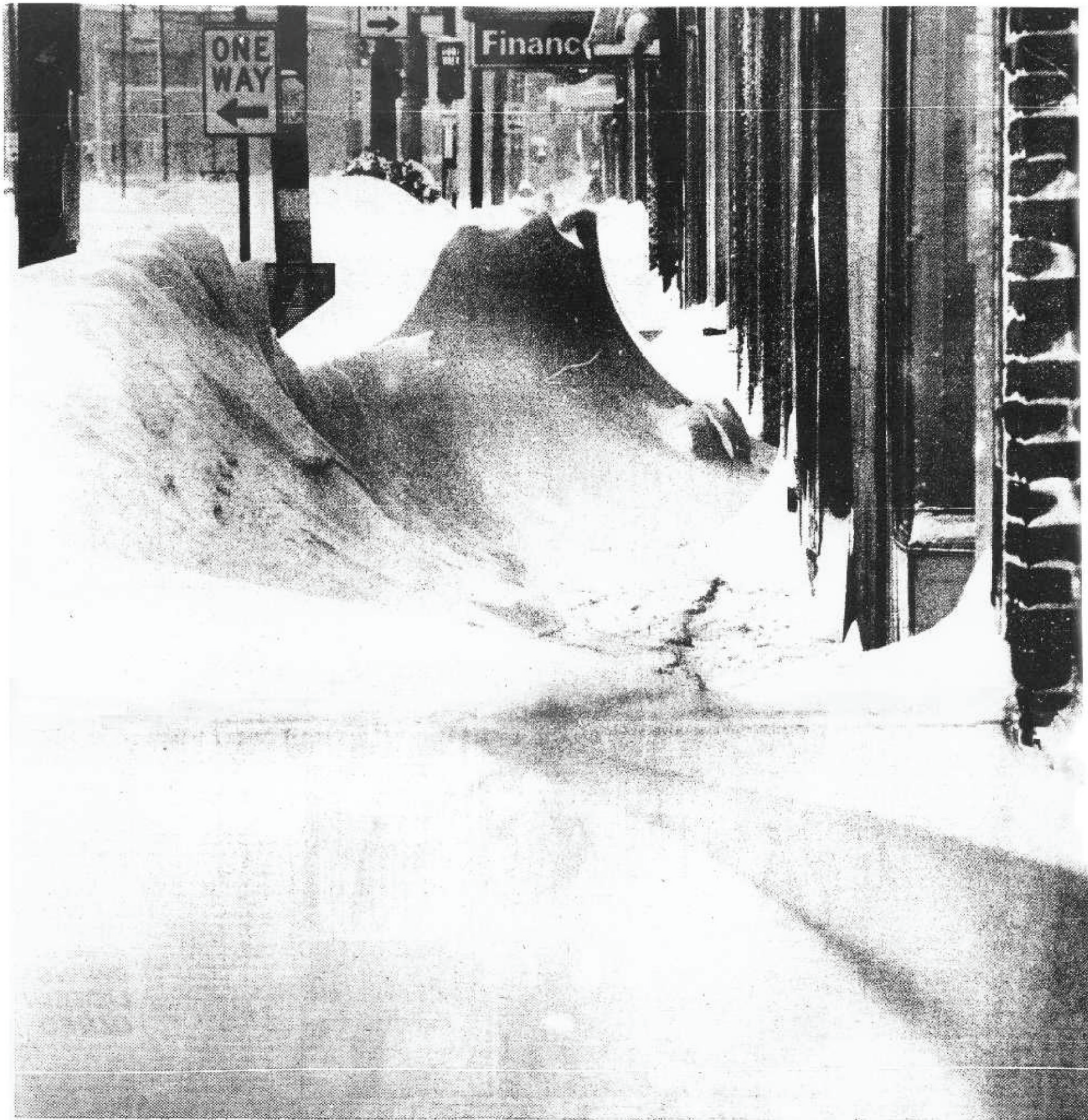
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Staff Photo by John Stearns

Carter Declares Emergency

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story is a compilation of reports by News-Sentinel staff writers Mark Helms, Dick Isenhour, Rick Antons, and Dan Stryock.

President Carter today declared Indiana in a federal state of emergency, clearing the way for the drop of Army equipment and personnel in Fort Wayne and to help Hoosiers dig out.

The state of emergency order from the president became effective at noon today as the city continued to be paralyzed in what could be the worst snow storm in the history of northeastern Indiana.

All industries, businesses, schools and governmental offices were closed for the second day in a row as most people stayed at home buried behind drifts as high as 20 feet.

Those who ventured out streamed from their homes on foot to nearby grocery stores. So many people were struggling down Rudisill Boulevard, a partly cleared emergency route, that firemen expressed concern that pedestrians were blocking the road.

Hundreds of travelers are stranded at local motels, the National Guard Armory and the American Red Cross.

City police clanged down an 11:30 p.m. curfew Thursday and have received numerous reports of burglaries and "lootings" at closed businesses. City police detectives arrested seven adults and seven juveniles in eight separate bur-

glaries Thursday and report many more burglaries they have not been able to investigate.

John F. Gray, city public affairs officer, reported it will at least be another 48 hours before the city is "even remotely open again."

Only a handful of city streets have been cleaned and Gray said it will be another day before all major arteries are open. Many residential and side streets, clogged with abandoned cars and deep drifts, will not be plowed for several days, Gray said. "We're not even talking about the residential streets yet," he explained.

The city is using all available public and private plows and to keep streets clear for emergency operations.

All the National Guard manpower mobilized by Governor Bowen Thursday is being used by the state, although four of the guard's heavy trucks are reported to be stuck on Interstate 69.

While it will take several days to clear streets in the city it will take almost a week or more to open many of the country roads in the county, county officials reported. State road department officials have been hampered by high drifts into their maintenance yards.

Although there have been five related snow deaths in the state, hospitals officials report no one has died in the city because of exposure to the cold or snow,

although there has been several deaths as a result of heart attacks and strokes.

As the blizzard continued through Thursday, four-wheel-drive vehicles were all also getting stuck in drifts, and police and emergency personnel used borrowed snow mobiles.

Snowmobiles were used to help deliver pregnant women to the hospital, although several snow children were born at their homes. One expectant woman who is a nurse volunteered her services at a local hospital so she would be there just in case. A grandfather had dug a path through high drifts so his pregnant daughter could get to the hospital a block away just in case.

About 80 employees of Food Marketing Corp., 4615 Executive Blvd., escaped injury Thursday when a section of a warehouse roof collapsed under the weight of drifted snow.

City fire department officials have been thankful no major fires have been reported in the city because it would be virtually impossible to enter any residential streets. Many rescue operations had to be conducted on foot.

Two semi-trailer trailers jackknifed in the middle of Jefferson Street downtown. Several traffic signals were also reported to have broken off their supports in the high winds.

Several grocery stores opened today to help resupply the larders of families

stuck in the homes. Most people have taken the storm in stride, volunteering to help neighbors. Several neighbors of Lutheran Hospital and St. Joseph Hospital have been helping out in the kitchens. Several TV stations remained on all last night showing old movies to those in need of entertainment.

All motels are full. Many people have been doubling up in bedrooms and some are reported to be sleeping in lobbies. Many are helping out with maid and restaurant work.

Other city residents, however, have not been as helpful during the storm. Police, busy with numerous reports of burglaries, arrested 14 persons Thursday. "We've been busy during the night," Sgt. Charles Wolfe said. "Apparently a lot of people have taken advantage of the situation by looting on foot. Wolfe said people have heard the police are not investigating and think they can get away with it."

Police, however, investigated eight burglaries when burglar alarms sounded. At 3 p.m. Thursday, police arrested Patrick W. Armour, 18, 3005 S. Clinton St., Clancy McCoy, 18, 3020 E. Wildwood Ave., and a 17-year-old juvenile on charges of burglary at the G&M Tavern, 3130 St. S. Lafayette St.

The police responded to a burglary at Conrad's Coin Laundry, 1321 E. Pontiac St., at 10:40 a.m. and arrested Ruther

Lefroy Hawkins, 30, 916 Eliza St. Two hours later police arrested a 17-year-old boy for burglary at the same place.

Benson Furniture, 1628 S. Anthony Blvd., was burglarized at 10:30 p.m. and police arrested Jackie Roberson, 19, 1623 E. Washington St., and Stephen H. Smith, 18, of 2818 Bowser St. Two 14-year-old boys were arrested for a burglary at the Angle Inn, 2113 Wayne Trace.

George Larimore, 19, of 439 Buchanan St., was arrested in connection with a burglary at Leray's Liquors of 706 Buchanan St. at 2:10 a.m. today. Two 17-year-old boys and Jerome G. Wilhelm, 19, of Route 5, Fort Wayne, were arrested at 6:30 a.m. Thursday in connection with a burglary at Lindley School, 2201 Ardmore Ave.

All the adults are being held in the city-county lockup under \$2,000 bond. The juveniles were taken to Wood Youth Center.

Seven persons stranded at People's Trust Bank's data center, 900 S. Calhoun St., were immobilized for an additional six hours Thursday. When Epsie Elmdr, data operations officer and third-shift supervisor, and six co-workers came to work at midnight, they expected to be able to head home eight hours later. There was no chance of that.

Epsie, Mike Strader, Carl Peters, Connie Knight, Christine Essex, Nancy Rich-

mond and Tammy Zimmerman completed their work at about dawn to discover there was no place to go. During the next few hours they searched downtown for food and transportation. A bank janitor came about 9 a.m. and let them to the bank's cafeteria.

The bank was utilizing four four-wheel-drive vehicles, but Mike said all were stuck or unavailable by mid-morning.

Epsie and Mike headed into the storm again, this time to search for rooms. "We went to the Travelodge (Motel, 1201 S. Harrison St.) to see if we could get rooms, but there weren't any," he said.

"They trudged back to the bank through two parking lots. One snow drift forced them to walk over a buried car. "We went right over the hood," Epsie said. "It was the only way."

They remained in the cafeteria, phoning anyone to try to find a way home. Mike and Carl got tired of waiting and walked home.

Finally an available vehicle was located. Bruce Lord, 23, a snow lover and owner of a four-wheel vehicle, agreed to pick up the five. By 2 p.m. they were on their way home.

With the storm almost past, the big dig out is expected continue through the weekend. Snow shovels are "a" class a premium one man reported his was stolen.



Miami Indian Heritage Day

Saturday, August 2 • 1:00 to 4:00 PM

At Chief Richardville House, 5705 Bluffton Road, Fort Wayne

Join us for Miami Harvest, edible and usable plants and materials. Tour the historic 1827-built home of Miami Chief Jean Baptiste de Richardville, and celebrate the history and traditions of the earliest inhabitants of the Three Rivers area.

Admission: \$7 adults; \$5 seniors and students; free to History Center members & children under 5.

HISTORY CENTER
ALLEN COUNTY - FORT WAYNE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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