Few complaints:
Tour of incinerator
Local, 3A

Landmarks:
See any you know?
Living, 1B



Press Doubles:
Tourney information
Sports, 5C

FINAL EDITION

The Evening Press

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Fire, fumes shut government plaza

PCB cleanup is cautious task

By LOIS FECTEAU

Health and environmental officials are uncertain how to best clean up a toxic chemical released during a fire today in the basement of the New York State Office Building in downtown Binghamton.

"The immediate crisis is to make sure that the material has been contained. We will then have to make a long-term evaluation as to cleanup," said Daniel B. Halton, senior engineer of the regional office of the state Department of Environmental Conservation in [illegible].

Halton said about 1,100 gallons of transformer coolant contaminated by polychlorinated biphenyl — PCB — got loose in the basement because of the fire or because of the electrical failure that resulted in the fire. [illegible]

Officials have sealed off the area of the basement where the fire occurred and have collected all uniforms and equipment that may have been exposed to PCBs and swapped them in plastic, Halton said. The clothing will be tested for contamination, he said, [illegible]

Firefighters and others who may have been exposed to the substance also have been sent to area hospitals as a precaution, Halton said.

[illegible] CLEANING, 6A



Firemen, cop go to hospital

By STEVE JONES and GEORGE BASLER

Fire and a series of explosions in the basement of the New York State Office Building spewed toxic fumes and forced the closing of the government center and the nearby YMCA in downtown Binghamton today.

Twenty-two members of the city fire bureau and a city police captain were taken to Binghamton General Hospital for examination because of exposure to the toxic fumes, which contained chemicals suspected of causing cancer and other health problems.

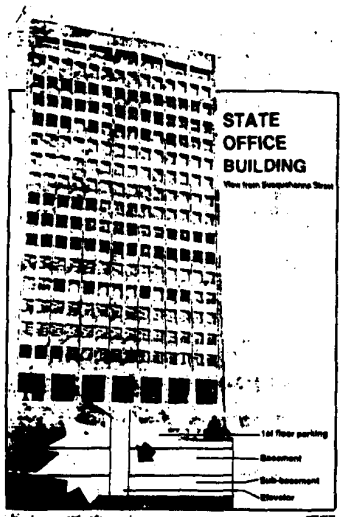
About 1,100 employees of city, county and state governments were ordered not to report to work at the center, which opened in 1973.

Officials said the state office building may be closed for several days for cleanup and decontamination. Binghamton City Hall and the Broome County Office Building, closed as a precaution, may also remain shut tomorrow. State, county and city officials were to decide whether to keep the buildings closed at a meeting this afternoon in the County Office Building.

The YMCA was closed, officials said, because the exhaust air ducts were closed to prevent fumes from reaching the building's interior. About 30 people who were exercising in the building were evacuated because their fresh air supply had been cut off, but the 76 residents of the dormitory were not evacuated.

[illegible]

MONS 010586





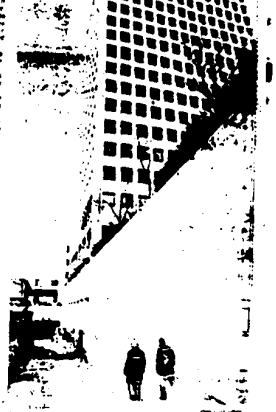
Flames leap in the fire in adjacent's garage causing firefighters' garments thought to have been contaminated

Fumes close government plaza—

Fumes from fire irritate skin of some exposed firefighters..

VYSEG, Columbia test for PCBs

Cleaning up—



Firefighters work at State Office Building after fire was out

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