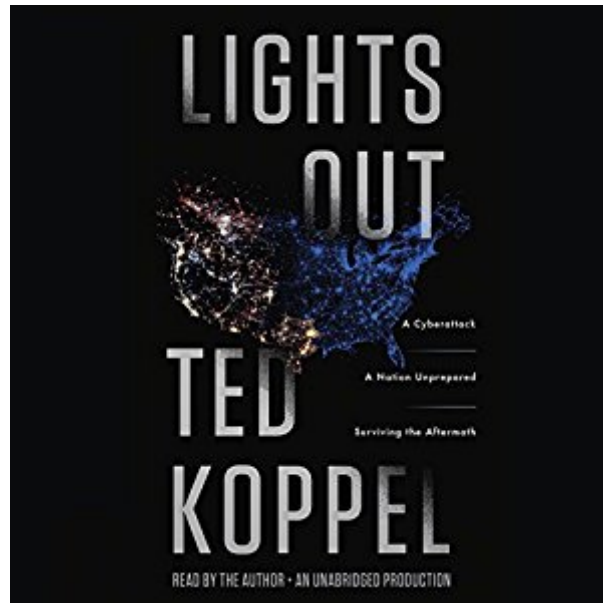The book was found

Lights Out: A Cyberattack, A Nation Unprepared, Surviving The Aftermath

Synopsis

In this tour de force of investigative reporting, Ted Koppel reveals that a major cyberattack on America's power grid is not only possible but likely, that it would be devastating, and that the United States is shockingly unprepared. Imagine a blackout lasting not days but weeks or months. Tens of millions of people over several states are affected. For those without access to generators, there is no running water, no sewage, no refrigeration or light. Food and medical supplies are dwindling. Devices we rely on have gone dark. Banks no longer function, looting is widespread, and law and order are being tested as never before. It isn't just a scenario. A well-designed attack on just one of the nation's three electric power grids could cripple much of our infrastructure - and in the age of cyberwarfare, a laptop has become the only necessary weapon. Several nations hostile to the United States could launch such an assault at any time. In fact, as a former chief scientist of the NSA reveals, China and Russia have already penetrated the grid. And a cybersecurity advisor to President Obama believes that independent actors - from "hacktivists" to terrorists - have the capability as well. "It's not a question of if," says Centcom Commander General Lloyd Austin, "it's a question of when." And yet, as Koppel makes clear, the federal government, while well prepared for natural disasters, has no plan for the aftermath of an attack on the power grid. The current secretary of homeland security suggests keeping a battery-powered radio. In the absence of a government plan, some individuals and communities have taken matters into their own hands. Among the nation's estimated three million "preppers", we meet one whose doomsday retreat includes a newly excavated three-acre lake stocked with fish and a Wyoming homesteader so self-sufficient that he crafted the thousands of adobe bricks in his house by hand. We also see the unrivaled disaster preparedness of the Mormon church, with its enormous storehouses, high-tech dairies, orchards, and proprietary trucking company - the fruits of a long tradition of anticipating the worst. But how, Koppel asks, will ordinary civilians survive? With urgency and authority, one of our most renowned journalists examines a threat unique to our time and evaluates potential ways to prepare for a catastrophe that is all but inevitable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

People have been warning of the potential catastrophe awaiting us if the electric grid should fail for a long time, but most of those warnings have fallen on deaf ears or considered the rantings of post-apocalyptic doomsayers. But when Ted Koppel--one of the nation's most trusted journalists--takes up the cause, each and every one of us needs to listen. In a relatively short and readable book, Koppel succinctly and unemotionally makes the case that (a) the electric grid of the U.S. is extremely vulnerable to collapse due to either cyberwarfare, EMP attack, or solar flare; (b) due to a variety of economic and political reasons, we have not implemented necessary steps to protect the grid; and (c) most frighteningly of all, we do not have emergency plans on either the state or federal level to deal with a widespread collapse of the grid.This is not a trivial threat. Imagine Katrina, only thousands-fold. Koppel notes that the report of the commission tasked with evaluating a potential EMP attack predicted that, in the case of such an attack that would destroy large parts of the grid, only 1 in 10 Americans would still be alive a year later. It is important to stress in light of the preceding sentence that Koppel's book is NOT a hysterical fear-mongering rant; instead, it is a careful analysis of the genuine risks and a convincing documentation of how completely unprepared we are, at all levels, to face this threat. As a chilling example, consider the quote Koppel provides by Jeh Johnson, secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, who when asked how the country would respond to a collapse of the grid, said "Oh, I'm sure FEMA has the capability to bring in backup transformers." As Koppel so compellingly describes, we not only don't have sufficient spare transformers lying around, we don't even have the infrastructure to deliver them in a timely manner.Koppel also offers a convincing argument that this threat is different from other seemingly similar threats, such as nuclear war. Simply put, with conventional or nuclear war, we know who is attacking or might attack us, and our ability to quickly administer an equal or greater response serves as a deterrent to any even slightly sane enemy. It is also the case that relatively few nations exist with the capability to mount a conventional or nuclear offense against us.

But as Koppel notes, this is the first time in the history of warfare where "small groups, even individuals, can undermine the critical infrastructure of a state."The book is divided into three major sections: The first, "A Cyberattack" is a careful if sometimes dry and technical argument demonstrating the vulnerability of the grid. My impression is that Koppel started the book this way to show that he isn't merely fear-mongering, but if you find your eyes glazing over the minutiae of the SCADA computer software used by electric companies, don't give up on the book entirely; skip to the second section, "A Nation Unprepared," which documents chillingly the lack of planning for a collapse of the grid by the very federal agencies that OUGHT to be planning for such an event, and the third section, "Surviving the Aftermath," where Koppel describes the mind-set and actions taken by the groups most likely to survive a grid collapse, such as preppers and the Mormons. While that section is perhaps the most "optimistic" part of the book, the optimism dims more than a bit when Koppel repeatedly raises but never satisfactorily answers the question of how these prepared individuals or communities will react when throngs of panicked citizens who HAVEN'T prepared come knocking on their doors and asking for help.I don't often encounter a book that I think literally everybody in the country should read, including and especially our nation's leaders. We can take steps to protect the grid. It won't be cheap or easy, but it can be done. My hope is that Koppel's book will attract enough attention that we will no longer ignore this very real vulnerability.

Because he¢Â Â™s Ted Koppel, he gets to interview cabinet secretaries and their senior staff, as well as senior civil servants, politicians and agency heads. To set up interviews across the country, he simply called US Senators. That quality alone makes Lights Out a higher level read. The other plus is the way Koppel has organized and written this book. It is broken out into bite-sized chapters, like television news items, keeping interest but delivering the salient points succinctly. And he leaves no stone unturned. Every time you think ¢Â ÂœYes, but¢Â Â|¢Â Â• he has the answer in the next paragraph, page or chapter. So Lights Out is both challenging and satisfying, fascinating and horrifying. And important.The core of the horror is our electrical grid. It is no secret that it old, old fashioned, creaky, decrepit and vulnerable to physical attack. Koppel adds that in addition, it is even more vulnerable to cyberattack. Hackers could, if they so desired, crash the whole electric grid, much as the United States and Israel ruined Iran¢Â Â™s uranium processing plants and as Iran turned 30,000 Saudi computers into useless doorstops. We have the technology; we have successfully deployed it ourselves. If similar efforts were made against the USA, it would mean weeks and months before power was restored. Water would stop flowing, gas would stop flowing, gas stations would close, hospitals would close, banking systems would cease. Debit and credit

cards would not operate. Replacements for Very Large Transformers run to over a year lead time. The US has hundreds, all custom made.And the government? Clueless. There are no plans to deal with this or prevent it. Cabinet Secretaries contradict agency heads on the existence of plans, administration Ã¢Â ÂœexpertsÃ¢Â Â• minimize the possibilities, first responders hope they can retire before they have to deal with it. That is the state of American preparedness. There is no policy, no oversight, no budget, no contingency, no planning at all. WeÃ¢Â Â™ll deal with it when it happens, like global warming. ItÃ¢Â Â™s just not real enough for Americans to worry about. The best advice from Washington? Ensure you have a portable radio and fresh batteries.Koppel is clearly worried about it, and all the really nonpolitical experts are unanimous in saying itÃ¢Â Â™s a matter of when and not if. Without a doubling of AmericaÃ¢Â Â™s capacity to feed and house itself somewhere where thereÃ¢Â Â™s electricity, there is no way to see everyone through such a period. And no one is even trying, except for handfuls of survivalists/preppers. They are individually preparing for a Mad Max sort of post-apocalypse era, where bullets matter as much as dried food.ItÃ¢Â Â™s a short, fast read, a slap up the side of the head, and a national scandal. We spend billions on 800 foreign bases and ensuring dangerous liquids like chocolate frosting donÃ¢Â Â™t make it into airplane cabins, but the national electrical grid limps to its almost inevitable fate, unattended.David Wineberg

In response to the age old question "Where were you when the lights went out?"Same place where I was, in the dark.This book reflects the authors capability to interview important people. However their responses are fairly uniform across the board.Yes, there might be a problem and we are doing very little to prepare.The book is short, I read it on a Sunday afternoon. It seems to have a good list of references but there are not a lot of details in the recommendations. Three chapters and about 27 pages are used to discuss the Mormons, which can be summed up as they are prepared.Based on a TV interview I expected more details, Such as a ranking of which geographic areas are most in danger. Are here areas of much older facilities likely to be difficult to repair? Actions to take if a problem occurs, rather than just "have a plan". Hard examples of major recent power outages and time it took to recover, instead of just a few examples.For instance if 1 major transformer is lost do we stay or do we go?If you know nothing about the grid and the potential for it failing, nothing about cyberwarfare and the possibilities, this might be a good introduction.It's a very easy read without a ton of details. And it shows what the government is not doing. If you remember the Northeast blackout of 2003 in which a software bug plunged 55 million in to the dark then you know the possibility of computer failure taking down the grid.

Lights Out: A Cyberattack, a Nation Unprepared, Surviving the Aftermath Lights Out: A Cyberattack, A Nation Unprepared, Surviving the Aftermath by Ted Koppel: Key Takeaways, Analysis & Review The Nation's Health (Nation's Health (PT of J&b Ser in Health Sci) Nation's Healt) Surviving the Future: Culture, Carnival and Capital in the Aftermath of the Market Economy Northern Lights Calendar - Aurora Borealis Calendar - Calendars 2016 - 2017 Wall Calendars - Photo Calendar - Northern Lights 16 Month Wall Calendar by Avonside The Executive Functioning Workbook for Teens: Help for Unprepared, Late, and Scattered Teens Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents' Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning Lights, Camera, Action!: Making Movies and TV from the Inside Out Surviving Madness: A Therapist's Own Story (Living Out: Gay and Lesbian Autobiographies) A Mother's Reckoning: Living in the Aftermath of Tragedy The Chickamauga Campaign_Barren Victory: The Retreat into Chattanooga, the Confederate Pursuit, and the Aftermath of the Battle, September 21 to October 20, 1863 Imperfect Union: A Father's Search for His Son in the Aftermath of the Battle of Gettysburg Chancellorsville: The Battle and Its Aftermath (Military Campaigns of the Civil War) The Knowledge: How to Rebuild Civilization in the Aftermath of a Cataclysm Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence--From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror A Rip in Heaven: A Memoir of Murder And Its Aftermath Once Upon a Secret: My Affair with President John F. Kennedy and Its Aftermath Aftermath: World Trade Center Archive Aftermath - 2011 Edition Barry Le Va: The Aesthetic Aftermath