WILSON ASSAILS ARAB OIL CUTOFF
By ANTHONY LEWIS Special to The New York Times
New York Times (1857-Current file); Jun 7, 1967; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2002)
pg. 20

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Calls the Move 'Blackmail' —Arms Embargo Studied

By ANTHONY LEWIS
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LONDON, June 6 — Prime Minister Wilson today denounced Arab moves to cut off oil supplies to Britain and the United States as "blackmail" that might hurt the Arab countries more than the West.

His strong statement drew cheers from both sides of the House of Commons. The oil bans announced by a number of Arab countries today and Egypt's closing of the Suez Canal had aroused deep concern.

About 75 per cent of Britain's oil supply comes from Arab lands or normally moves through the canal. But officials insisted today that Britain could get by now on alternative sources — and without grave strain on her delicate economy.

The Prime Minister also told the Commons that Britain had suspended all arms shipments to the Middle East for 24 hours. In that time, diplomats will see whether other countries -- notably the Soviet Union -- will agree to a general arms embargo.

Mr. Wilson disclosed that he had "exchanged a number of messages" with the Soviet Premier, Aleksei N. Kosygin, on "the broader issues" in the Middle East.

Bitter Words for Arabs

It was a day of heavy diplomatic activity here. It was also one of astonishingly bitter words directed at Arab statements that British and American planes had been active on Israel's side in the conflict.

Mr. Wilson said that the United Arab Republic had deliberately spread these "entirely false accusations." He termed them "monstrous" and "malicious" and "mischievous."

Cairo's assertion that British planes had helped to defend Israel was termed a "malicious fabrication" by the Foreign office. A Defense Ministry spokesman used the phrase "complete lie" for a report by the Damascus radio that British Vulcan bombers were in Israel and a report by the Cairo radio that Canberra bombers had participated in the Sinai fighting.

The only British aircraft carriers in the area, Mr. Wilson told the Commons, are the Victorious at Malta and the Hermes at Aden.

Call for Continuous Shipments

"In view of these incontrovertable facts," he said, "we are calling upon the Arab Governments not to disrupt commercial arrangements which are as much in their interest as ours on the basis of such false statements."

"This country would not be willing," Mr. Wilson said, "to put up twice in a decade with the position where this kind of threat or blackmail can be held out.

"There might be a number of people in this country thinking in terms of long-term contracts with other oil-supplying areas, which could only have the most profound and devastating effects, which we would all regret, on the Middle East."

Some analysts here felt that the announced oil closures were largely bargaining moves—to demonstrate support for President Gamal Abdel Nasser and, perhaps, to give the Arab side some negotiating leverage when a cease-fire finally does come.

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