

From the Press Office

SUMMARY OF ABC'S 12:30 pm NEWS

Unconfirmed reports say that the flow of oil from Iran has been shut down. A State Department official in Washington told Peter Barnett it appeared that only American tankers were affected by the shut down, the flow had been stopped to all vessels. There has been no official explanation from Iran or any indication how long the stoppage would last. Oil industry sources in New York reported that the crisis had been caused by workers going on strike in sympathy with the students in Tehran who have seized the American Embassy and demanded the return of the Shah from the United States.

The wholesale prices of petrol and domestic oil jumped sharply in New York on reports that Iran had cut off oil deliveries. Cargoes of gasoline were quoted at \$1.18 American a gallon, a rise of ten cents. Home heating oil jumped 6¢ a gallon to 94¢.

At the United Nations, the Secretary General is engaged in a diplomatic effort to free the American hostages in Tehran. Two statements were issued: one expressing extreme concern and second saying he had met the Iranian Charge d'Affaires.

As American officials continue their efforts to free the American hostages in the Tehran Embassy, President Carter held an unscheduled meeting of the National Security Council. The President called the Council together only hours after a meeting with his top foreign policy advisers.

The head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Yasir Arafat, is sending a delegation to Tehran. A PLO spokesman at the U.N. said the delegation would secure the safety of the hostages in the American Embassy. Mr. Arafat has instructed the PLO's office in Tehran to use all possible means to safeguard the lives of the hostages.

The Department of Foreign Affairs in Canberra says it is taking what it describes as normal security precautions at the Australian Embassy in Tehran.

President of Zambia says he will not give in to pressure from the Salisbury Government to stop raids by Zambian-based guerillas into Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. He was giving his first public reaction to the halting of maize deliveries through Zambia to Rhodesia.

The Peking High Court has rejected an appeal by dissident who was sentenced to 15 years gaol last month. The editor of a dissident magazine was convicted on charges of passing secrets to foreigners and of counter-revolutionary activities.

Chairman Guofeng has left Rome for Peking after his 23-day tour of Europe. In a departure statement he said the tour had been crowned with full success.

At a rally in Moscow to mark the 62nd anniversary of the October Revolution, a senior Politburo member appealed to the West to give a positive reply to Soviet disarmament proposals.

The head of the Australian Federal Police, Sir Colin Woods, does not want to talk about the new responsibilities he has been given to combat drugs just yet. In response to requests from newsmen for interviews this morning Sir Colin issued a short statement saying that the disbanding of the Federal Narcotics Bureau meant that the Federal Police Force had been given a job to do. It was getting on with it. Sir Colin Woods has said until such time as he had made a full evaluation of the resources he had to do that job, he was not in a position to talk to the media.

Australia's complaints about subsidised sugar exports by the Common Market have been upheld by the Council of the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade in Geneva. The Council has adopted a report which confirms Australia's submission that the EEC subsidy system has depressed world sugar prices in recent years. The report also concludes that the EEC subsidy system constitutes a permanent source of uncertainty in world sugar markets. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Resources, Mr. Anthony, said today that at a time when members of the International Sugar Agreement were subjecting themselves to stringent discipline in production and export cuts, the EEC was expanding exports. Mr. Anthony said this economic irresponsibility by the world's largest trading bloc was deplorable, and was the main reason why Australia had submitted its complaint to the GATT Council.

In Brisbane, more than 2,000 people have gathered to protest against Queensland's new Essential Services Legislation. In opening the rally, the President of the Queensland Trades and Labour Council described the gathering as a protest against an act of slavery.

The Natural Disasters Organisation has begun a three-day exercise involving simulated cyclones in Darwin and Gove and an earthquake in Adelaide. The exercise is being conducted at its headquarters in Canberra.

The authorities in Washington have revealed that an American Air Force F-15 almost collided with a French Concorde Airliner last week. The incident happened over the Atlantic.