

From the Press Office

SUMMARY OF 12.30 NEWS

The NSW petrol dispute has spread to Victoria where service stations are to close this afternoon and reopen with rationing tomorrow. The action follows a vote by tanker drivers in Melbourne this morning to go on strike for 48 hours in support of their colleagues in NSW. The men decided that aircraft refuellers in Melbourne would stay on the job. In Canberra talks aimed at ending the dispute have been continuing but there's been no word of any progress. There was another brief session before Sir John Moore before the parties broke for private talks. Duncan Fairweather reports on this morning's developments. As happened last night the special conference before Sir John Moore lasted barely half an hour. Sir John had to sit on another case. Oil company and union representatives then shifted to a conference room in the Canberra Workers Club where they spent the morning trying to thrash out a solution. Again both sides are refusing to comment on what proposals are before them. The parties are expected to report back to Sir John Moore after 1 pm but delegates to the conference expect that negotiations may continue on into the afternoon.

In South Australia the State Government has introduced a motor fuel rationing bill at a special parliamentary sitting today. The bill provides fines of up to \$10,000 for people failing to comply with regulations for the supply or distribution of rationed motor fuel. Gaol fines are also provided for profiteering in rationed fuel. Mr. Tonkin said the bill had been introduced because there was a possibility of motor fuel being disrupted by an industrial dispute. It could be late this afternoon before any decision is made on extending the NSW petrol dispute in Queensland. A spokesman for the State Branch of the TWU said the union was waiting to hear the results of the conference in Canberra.

The National Farmers Federation says it is prepared to operate outside the law if necessary to honour Australia's wool export commitments. At the same time the Federation has condemned the Federal Government for what it calls its spineless and timid attitude to the wave of industrial disputes sweeping Australia. Mr. Eckersley said the Labor Opposition was just as weak and its excuses for trade union actions, conducted under the guise of unsatisfactory industrial legislation were despicable. He said wool growers did not want physical confrontation with union but they would not stand by and see their industry destroyed. He said every effort would be made to operate within the law but if the Government could not give the necessary backing then consideration would have to be given to operating outside the law - something which was constantly being done by the trade unions.

The head of a leading Italian fashion house says world demand for Australian wool will decline if supplies are disrupted by industrial action such as the present Storemen and Packers dispute. The Italian manufacturer said Australia was in danger of losing some of its overseas markets because of the continuing shortages of supply.

In the Queensland Mr. Tom Burns has announced he'll accept the position of President of the Interim Administrative Committee being set up by the National Executive of the Labor Party. Mr. Burns has indicated that the State Opposition leader Mr. Casey

will also accept a position on the committee. Mr. Burns said today his decision had been made after discussions with Queensland Caucus members. He had earlier refused the job. Mr. Burns said everyone had to accept that federal intervention had happened.

Papua New Guinea's interim cabinet is having its first meeting in Port Moresby today. The full cabinet of 20 or so ministers will be sworn in tomorrow. Sean Dorney reports from Port Moresby.

Mr. Peacock said today he did not expect the change of government in Port Moresby to affect Australia. Mr. Peacock said Mr. Somare and Sir Julius Chan had similar views on the special relationship between Australia and Papua New Guinea. ABC reporter Kevin Balkan asked Mr. Peacock if he expected to see any significant change in Papua New Guinea's foreign relations and the administration of Sir Julius Chan.

Mr. Peacock

I know because I've heard already that he believes the relationship with Australia is so important there will be no change in the immediate sense at all and that's what I would expect.

Question

Where do you think these changes will take place?

Mr. Peacock

Well now that will be for Sir Julius to determine. It's not for us to impose our views on him early in the peace. Papua New Guinea is independent in the real sense of the word and Sir Julius Chan will be giving leadership as he sees it.

Mr. Peacock said he did not think the change of government would effect Australian investment in Papua New Guinea.

The deposed Shah of Iran is said to be seriously ill again. A New York physician who examined him in Panama last week said he was suffering from an inflamed spleen and required what he described as a hazardous operation to have it removed. He was also suffering from anaemia and other blood problems. A statement released by the Shah's spokesman in New York said arrangements were being made for the operation but he declined to say where it would take place. American newspapers have reported that the Carter administration officials have been informed of the Shah's condition but would not permit him to come back to the US for the operation.

Following the withdrawal of the UN Commission from Iran, Mr. Vance is to meet Mr. Waldheim in New York to discuss what should be done next to try to free the hostages. Geoff McMullen reports from Washington.

The people of Queensland have been assured that gold mining in the streets can be prevented. The Minister for Mines has power under the Mining Act to ban projects in the public interests.

Reports of an attempted coup in Pakistan last week have been denied by the Government of President Zia.