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UPI Wired  
on the BB & Presidential  
Interview

5/23/75

UP-060

*Central Files*

(FORD)

(ADV FOR 1 PM EDT)

(BY HELEN THOMAS)

WASHINGTON (UPI)-- ~~PRESIDENT~~ FORD SAID TODAY HE WILL DECIDE WITHIN THE NEXT 48 HOURS WHETHER TO INCREASE THE TARIFF ON IMPORTED OIL TO \$2 PER BARREL IN THE ABSENCE OF ACTION BY CONGRESS ON HIS ENERGY BILL.

IN AN INTERVIEW WITH FOUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, FORD ALSO DISCLOSED THAT THE SHAH OF IRAN HAD INDICATED IN HIS TALKS IN WASHINGTON LAST WEEK THAT THERE MIGHT BE AN INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF OIL FROM THE MIDDLE EAST. BUT FORD ADDED "I WOULD HOPE THERE WOULD BE A DELAYING ACTION" ON THAT.

FORD MADE IT PLAIN THAT HE INTENDS TO INCREASE THE FOREIGN OIL IMPORT TARIFFS WHICH HE DELAYED FOR TWO MONTHS HOPING CONGRESS WOULD ACT ON HIS ENERGY PROGRAM.

"I'M VERY DISTURBED ABOUT CONGRESS' LACK OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION," HE SAID. "PERHAPS THE IMPOSITION OF ANOTHER DOLLAR (PER BARREL ON IMPORTS) WILL SPUR CONGRESS TO ACT."

"CONGRESS HAS DONE NOTHING" ON HIS ENERGY PROGRAM, HE SAID. "IF THE PRICE OF OIL IS INCREASED AND WE HAVE NO DEFENSE AGAINST IT, IT PROVES THE NEED AND NECESSITY OF THE PROGRAM I PROPOSED."

UPI 05-23 12:06 PED

UP-062

ADD 2 FOREIGN POLICY, WASHINGTON

(ADV FOR 1 PM EDT)

FORD QUOTED HOUSE DEMOCRATIC LEADER THOMAS O'NEILL AS SAYING "THIS IS NOT THE TIME OR PLACE TO PULL OUT OF EUROPE."

"WE MAY BE ENTERING A NEW ERA WHICH WILL BE VERY VISIBLE IN SHOWING AMERICA HAS THE WILL IN THE SHORT PERIOD AS WELL AS THE LONG RUN TO STAND BY ITS ALLIES," FORD SAID.

THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT HAS GIVEN SUCH AN INTERVIEW TO A GROUP OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS.

"I'M CONFIDENT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL MEET ANY COMMITMENT WE HAVE," FORD SAID. "WE WILL RESPOND TO A CHALLENGE ... MEET ANY COMMITMENT WE HAVE."

FORD SAID THE UNITED STATES FOLLOWING ITS WITHDRAWAL FROM INDOCHINA WOULD BE WILLING TO ENGAGE ITSELF IN THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD.

"NOW THAT WE ARE FREE OF THIS PROBLEM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL FEEL BETTER ABOUT RELATIONS WITH THE WORLD," HE SAID. "WE WILL BE A PART OF AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD."

HE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN TO EUROPE ON MANY OCCASIONS BUT HE HAS NEVER MET POPE PAUL, WHO HE WILL MEET FOR THE FIRST TIME ON THIS TRIP.

FORD EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN WITH THE POLITICAL CHANGES AMONG NATO ALLIES SAYING "IT DOES CONCERN US" WHEN THE COMMUNISTS GAIN GROUND.

HE CITED PORTUGAL AS AN EXAMPLE BUT SAID THE UNITED STATES WAS ENCOURAGED THAT THE COMMUNISTS GOT ONLY 12 PER CENT OF THE VOTE IN THE RECENT ELECTION.

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UP-068

ADD 3 FOREIGN POLICY, WASHINGTON

(ADV FOR 1 PM EDT)

FORD WAS INTERVIEWED BY HENRY BRANDON OF THE LONDON SUNDAY TIMES; ADALBERT DE SEGONZAC, FRANCE SOIR; JAN REIFENBERG, FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG; MARINO DE MEDICI, IL TEMPO. THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CO. WAS REPRESENTED BY ROBIN MACNEIL.

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