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Nixon Rules Out
Rationing, Ends
Sunday Gas Ban

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Hits Congress For Inaction On Energy

From News Dispatches

HOUSTON, March 19 — President Nixon said tonight the lifting of the Arab oil embargo means there will be no compulsory gasoline rationing in the United States.

Mr. Nixon, speaking at the start of a nationally televised question-and-answer session with the National Association of Broadcasters, also announced gasoline stations across the country would no longer be asked to close on Sundays.

He said Sunday opening of service stations would be approved, starting next weekend.

But Mr. Nixon said the oil shortage is not yet over, and that other voluntary programs of car pooling and lowered speed limits will have to continue.

He also said the "pressure on prices" will continue because imported oil costs about

twice as much as domestic oil.

The President also said oil allocations to industry and agriculture will be increased, and additional gasoline allocations will be made available to eliminate waiting lines at service stations.

One again, he appealed to Congress to pass his energy measures, particularly bills to deregulate natural gas, develop new sources and to relax environmental restrictions.

"The greatest shortage of energy is the lack of energy on the part of the Congress of the United States in getting to work and passing the legislation needed to increase the supply of energy," Mr. Nixon said.

While Mr. Nixon said he was rescinding the Sunday closing order, the gasoline station closings actually have been on a voluntary basis at his request.

Mr. Nixon brought his crusade for confidence to Texas as a prominent conservative Republican senator, James Buckley of New York, suggested that he resign.

The President firmly rejected that proposal tonight, saying it takes "courage to stand and fight for what you think is right, and that's what I intend to do."

While Mr. Nixon said he respects the senator's viewpoint, he repeated that his resignation could cripple the institution of the presidency.

His statement, essentially a restatement of his position on resignation, drew a round of applause.

Furthermore, Mr. Nixon said, for any President to resign "because of charges made against him which he knew were false and because he had fallen in the polls . . . might be good politics but it would be bad statesmanship."

He said it would permanently undermine the presidency and change the American system of government.

He said Buckley's suggestion "does not cause me to reassess my position."

On the Middle East, Mr. Nixon said the United States seeks a permanent peace, "whatever happens to the oil embargo" when Arab oil ministers review its lifting in June.

He said he is confident that
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Nixon Rules Out Rationing, Hits Hill Inaction on Energy

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progress toward a Middle East peace will help insure that no embargo is imposed again.

The President said the United States would keep working with the Soviet Union in the Middle East even though the two powers' interests are not always the same.

"There cannot be permanent peace in the Middle East if the Soviet Union is against it," he said.

Earlier in the day as Mr. Nixon reached his hotel he was greeted by a crowd of several thousand, chanting "Nixon, Nixon, Yah, Yah, Yah."

The President spent 10 minutes shaking hands, signing autographs and responding to shouts of support.

Mr. Nixon was not confronted with signs of dissent as he has been during other recent public appearances. Instead, the placards hoisted by the greeters proclaimed "Nixon All The Way," "Get Off His Back" and "Hang In There."

Another huge banner draped in the hotel lobby read: "A Great President You Are, A Yo-Yoer You're Not"—a reference to Mr. Nixon's unsuccessful effort to work the Yo-Yo of Grand Ole Opry star Roy Acuff last Saturday night.

However, about an hour before the news conference was to begin, a crowd of about 500 anti-Nixon demonstrators gathered outside the hall where the President was to appear. They carried signs calling for Mr. Nixon's impeachment and resignation. The crowd, held back by

about 100 policemen, was orderly.

Five young persons were arrested at the entrance to the hall. Police Sgt. G.R. Goodnight said they were charged with violating a city ordinance forbidding use of a false identification badge to gain admittance to a public event.

When Mr. Nixon stepped from his plane earlier in the afternoon at nearby Ellington Air Force Base, he was greeted by a crowd of several hundred and he moved through them, campaign-style, shaking hands.

"We still believe in you, sir," said one airman in the crowd. "I believe in you, too," Mr. Nixon responded.

Aboard the presidential jet en route to Texas, two of Mr. Nixon's advisers mildly rebuked Buckley's plea that Mr. Nixon step down.

The President "has already stated his feeling on that matter," said press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler, referring to Mr. Nixon's repeated vows not to resign because of the Watergate scandal.