

News Summary and Index

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The Major Events of the Day

International

Whether Britain should withdraw from the Common Market will be decided by a nationwide vote by the end of June, Prime Minister Wilson announced yesterday in a long-awaited statement in the House of Commons. Mr. Wilson said his Government would make a recommendation to the people on how to vote. The referendum will mark a historic departure from British traditions. Mr. Wilson once opposed a referendum as a breach of constitutional custom. The referendum proposal, however, fulfills a major plank in the Labor party's platform. [Page 1, Column 1.]

Secretary of State Kissinger reportedly told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that when the latest round of Israeli-Egyptian negotiations have been concluded, the Soviet Union will probably have to be included in the next phase of Middle East peace efforts. [1:2.]

Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger made several major statements regarding the Middle East to reporters after his address to the Economic Club of New York Wednesday. He said that he was confident the United States "can provide the resources" to sustain Israeli forces if there is another Middle East war and that he did not think a new conflict would last more than three weeks. He reaffirmed the "military feasibility" of military intervention in Middle East oil areas to prevent national strangulation. He said flatly that such action was "within the power" of the United States and this was "a statement of fact." [1:3.]

National

President Ford signed a proclamation increasing the import fee on petroleum. Meanwhile, Democratic members of Congress declared that his action constituted "an abuse of Presidential power, like Watergate," and major moves were made in the House and Senate even before Mr. Ford signed the proclamation to prevent the increased fees from ever taking effect. [1:8.]

The general board of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., in an emergency meeting to discuss President Ford's energy economic proposals, demanded a boycott of oil from the Arab nations that took part in the 1973-74 embargo and called for rationing at home. It also rejected Mr. Ford's economic program, which the organization's president, George Meany,

described as "the weirdest one I have ever seen." He also rejected proposals by Democrats in Congress as "press statements" with no substance. [1:5.]

President Ford's plan for a \$12-billion rebate of 1974 income taxes was supported by three leading economists who had been senior officials in previous Administrations, but they differed on some details. They testified before the Congressional Joint Economic Committee. [1:4.]

The Chrysler Corporation reported that its rebate program had lifted sales of its compact cars, although over-all sales were still behind levels of a year ago. The first nationwide sales figures compiled since the program went into effect Jan. 13 show that Chrysler's compact sales were up 12 percent from a year ago. Just prior to the release, sales of those models had been running at half of the 1974 levels. [1:6-7.]

New statistics indicate that a man in his 40's or 50's is less likely to die of a heart attack than men of the same age a decade ago, possibly because of public-health campaigns. The drop in the coronary death rate, first noted last year in data from the nineteen-sixties, continued through 1972, indicating that "the downturn is real, not a statistical fluke," according to Dr. Jeremiah B. Stamler, a leading heart specialist. [1:6-8.]

Metropolitan

The New Jersey Supreme Court retreated from a deadline it had established earlier and gave the State Legislature in Trenton more time to comply with its mandate to establish a new system of financing public-school education in the state. The court denied an appeal from Governor Byrne that it order an immediate redistribution of \$640-million in state school aid, withdrawing funds from wealthy communities to divert them to poorer areas. The redistribution of funds, the court said, "would be inequitable and, indeed, chaotic . . . on such short notice." [1:2-3.]

Lawyers for Bernard Bergman confirmed that a Federal grand jury had subpoenaed bank records of Mr. Bergman's Towers Nursing Home. The jury's inquiry is focusing on tax questions arising from disclosures of a preliminary audit of the Towers's books by the State Welfare Inspector General's office, which reported, among other things, that millions of dollars of entries in the books could not be accounted for. [1:1.]

The Other News

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"We've diddled and dawdled long enough."—President Ford, after signing an order imposing a higher oil import tax during impromptu news conference. [10:1.]

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