

Nixon Chides Allies' Role In Mideast

Washington

President Nixon chastised America's European allies last night for a lack of cooperation in resolving the Mideast war, suggesting that Europe "would have frozen to death this winter unless there had been a settlement."

The underlying resentment within the administration over the failure of the allies to support the U.S. in its military resupply efforts for Israel burst into the open at the President's White House news conference and in earlier statements by officials at the Defense Department and the State Department.

Mr. Nixon noted with approval statements from the State Department that European allies had not been as

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cooperative as they might have been in attempting to help the U.S. work out a Middle East settlement.

The neutral stance assumed by many of the European allies was widely ascribed by U.S. officials to a concern among the European nations that they might be cut off from their oil supplies from the Arab nations.

"I can only say on that score that Europe, which gets 80 per cent of its oil from the Mideast, would have frozen to death this winter unless there had been a settlement," the President said. "And Japan, of course, is in that same position."

Mr. Nixon went on to point out that the U.S. gets only approximately 10 per cent of its oil from the Mideast.

COMMENT

Earlier in the day, Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger and State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey suggested in separate statements that nearly all of the West European allies had failed disappointedly to support U.S. actions in the Middle East conflict.

Both men singled out West Germany as one of the allies that had taken a line "separate" from that of the U.S.

They alluded to the statement issued Thursday by the West German Foreign Ministry calling on the U.S. to stop loading American weapons for Israel aboard Israeli freighters in Bremerhaven.

At a State Department briefing McCloskey said, in reply to a question, that "we were struck by a number of our allies going to some lengths to separate themselves publicly from us" on the Middle East.

At a Pentagon briefing, Schlesinger said: "The reac-

tion of the Foreign Ministry in Germany raises some questions about whether they view enhanced readiness in the same way that we view enhanced 'readiness.'"

The disappointment of the Nixon administration in the response of its allies began when the nine members of the European Economic Community issued what the administration regarded as a timid declaration during the first week of fighting, which erupted October 6.

NEUTRALITY

The annoyance grew when several NATO members issued "neutrality" declarations and advised the U.S. that it could not use their facilities or airspace for resupply of armaments to Israel.

U.S. forces were compelled to move aircraft to Israel by way of strategically placed aircraft carriers rather than by using U.S. bases in Greece or Turkey.

The McCloskey and Schlesinger remarks concerned not only the division of views on the degree of threat posed by the Middle East situation but also on the meaning and future of the 24-year-old Atlantica Alliance.

McCloskey said: "our view is that maintenance of the military balance and establishment of a durable peace in the Middle East — which in our view and in our actions is what the resupply of Israel is about — is just as much in the vital interest of West Germany and the other NATO allies as it is in our interest. We were and have been in a very critical period which affected in many ways all of us. We found ourselves in a period of tension and we would have appreciated some unified support."

New York Times