

EC - MIDDLE EAST: The EC foreign ministers apparently believed that the generally pro-Arab declarations they issued on 6 November would lead the Arab oil producers to ease the fuel shortage facing all EC members, particularly the Dutch.

During the discussion of the Arab embargo of oil to the Netherlands and reductions in supplies to other EC members, the British and the French reportedly pressed the Dutch--who had the support of the Danes, Belgians, and Luxembourgers--to abandon their call for community solidarity on oil supplies. Ac-

25X1

The pro-Arab cast of the EC declaration is evident in the call on both Israel and Egypt to return to positions they held on 22 October. This call implicitly supports Cairo's insistence that withdrawal is a prerequisite for movement on the prisoner of war issue. In addition, the reference to the "legitimate rights of the Palestinians" goes beyond the language of UN Security Council Resolution 242.

Initial public Arab reaction to the EC statement has been favorable. A leading Cairo newspaper has said the EC position will help to bring pressure on Israel. The Palestinian news agency described the statement as a step on the path to understanding the Palestinian cause. While echoing Arab satisfaction, an Egyptian official in Brussels asserted that the declaration would not save the Dutch from the embargo. Relaxing the boycott, he implied, would signify Arab weakness. Should this Arab attitude prevail, European press criticism that the Nine's policy is not only "appeasement" but also futile is likely to grow.

(continued)

8 Nov 73

*Central Intelligence Bulletin*

4

25X1

25X6

Approved For Release 2004/01/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A025600010001-6

Approved For Release 2004/01/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A025600010001-6