

PAIRING A PRIMARY & SECONDARY SOURCE

For use with "Oil Shock" on p. 18 of the magazine

'We Have an Energy Crisis'

On October 19, 1973, Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) announced that they would stop exporting oil to the United States. They imposed the embargo in retaliation for the U.S. supporting Israel in what became known as the "Yom Kippur War." The embargo created an energy crisis for the U.S., and on November 7, President Richard M. Nixon addressed the nation with his plans for how the nation would respond to the crisis. Use the excerpts from his speech below, along with the *Upfront* article, to answer the questions at the bottom of this page.

Excerpts From President Richard M. Nixon's Address to the Nation, November 7, 1973

Good evening:

I want to talk to you tonight about a serious national problem, a problem we must all face together in the months and years ahead.

[. . .]

By the end of this month, more than 2 million barrels a day of oil we expected to import into the United States will no longer be available. . . . As a nation, we must now set upon a new course.

In the short run, this course means that we must use less energy—that means less heat, less electricity, less gasoline. In the long run, it means that we must develop new sources of energy which will give us the capacity to meet our needs without relying on any foreign nation.

[. . .]

To help us carry out that responsibility, I am tonight announcing the following steps:

First, I am directing that industries and utilities which use coal—which is our most abundant resource—be prevented from converting from coal to oil. . . .

Second, we are allocating reduced quantities of fuel for aircraft. Now, this is going to lead to a cutback of more than



10 percent of the number of flights. . . .

Third, there will be reductions of approximately 15 percent in the supply of heating oil for homes and offices and other establishments. To be sure that there is enough oil to go around for the entire winter, all over the country, it will be essential for all of us to live and work in lower temperatures. . . .

Fourth, I am ordering additional reductions in the consumption of energy by the Federal Government. . . .

Fifth, I am asking the Atomic Energy Commission to speed up the licensing and construction of nuclear plants. . . .

Sixth, I am asking that Governors and mayors reinforce these actions by taking

appropriate steps at the State and local level. We have already learned, for example, from the State of Oregon, that considerable amounts of energy can be saved simply by curbing unnecessary lighting and slightly altering the school year. . . .

We have an energy crisis, but there is no crisis of the American spirit. Let us go forward, then, doing what needs to be done, proud of what we have accomplished together in the past and confident of what we can accomplish together in the future.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe the tone and purpose of these excerpts from Nixon's speech?
2. After he says "Good evening," what central ideas does Nixon immediately establish in his first paragraph?
3. Which of Nixon's plans were short-term measures? Which were meant for achieving energy independence?
4. How does Nixon use appeals to logic (logos) and to emotion (pathos) to try to persuade listeners to support his energy plans?
5. Based on the *Upfront* article and the excerpts from Nixon's speech, what fears do you think people had about the energy crisis? How might a speech like Nixon's calm those fears?