
IRAQ WARNS BRITAIN AND U.S.

- 02.06.2017

The Hindu (JUNE 02, 2017)

Iraq informed Britain to-day [June 1] that it would retaliate most energetically to any attack on the Egyptian coastal stronghold of Sharm El Sheikh, which controls the Tiran Strait into the Gulf of Aqaba, an Iraqi Embassy spokesman announced. The Iraqi Charge DAffaires told the Foreign Secretary, Mr. George Brown, to-day [June 1] that Baghdad would regard any attack on Sharm El Sheikh as an act of aggression against Iraq, the spokesman said. The diplomat told Mr. Brown that an Iraqi force comprising aircraft, tanks, artillery and infantry would take part in the defence of Sharm El Sheikh and the Strait with other other Arab forces, and that an extraordinary conference would group oil-producing Arab countries in Baghdad on Sunday to draft retaliatory plans for the eventuality of Israeli aggression. Iraq had already decided to stop oil delivery to any country which would support Israeli aggression, Mr. Brown was told. The spokesman said a similar message was being conveyed by the Iraqi Embassy in Washington. The U.K. Prime Minister, Mr. Wilson has meanwhile warned that fighting in West Asia might result in a tragic war whose consequences would engulf the whole world. Mr. Wilson, winding up a debate on the West Asian crisis in the House of Commons last night [May 31] said the confrontation between Israel and the Arab States had all the dangers and characteristics of a holy war that could spread further. Mr. Wilson said Britain should urge other maritime nations to declare that the Gulf of Aqaba and the Strait of Tiran were international waterways. The Foreign Secretary, Mr. George Brown said earlier in the debate that Britain will consider any unilateral closure of the Gulf of Aqaba as an act of belligerence and was consulting other maritime nations on maintaining free navigation in that waterway. The British Government was reported in urgent consultation with as many as 20 other maritime nations about a clear declaration on the Gulf of Aqaba. The Israeli Chief of Staff, Gen. Itzhak Rabin, yesterday [May 31] called on the Israeli population to remain permanently alerted because of the possibility of a sudden attack against Israel.

Kaynak/Source: