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OIL IN THE DESERT.

Beneath the Sahara Desert lie huge reserves of oil which France is planning to tap - and the Suez crisis has made those plans top priority. Arriving to inspect progress is M. Maurice Lemaire, French Minister for Industry and Commerce.

With him is M. Robert Lacoste, Minister-Resident in Algeria. They are visiting the big prospecting camp at Ouargla, where six wells are producing oil, and preparations for 150 more drillings are going forward as fast as the equipment can be brought up.

Nobody yet knows just how big the Sahara oilfields are - but as the research progresses, it becomes every more certain that they're big enough to make a great difference to France's supply problem. France is pushing ahead with a desert project which may, in time, free her economy from complete dependence on foreign oil - and thus play a great part in breaking the stranglehold of the Middle East on the lifelines of West European industry.