

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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ORAL QUESTION (0-117/79)

with debate pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

by Mr MÜLLER-HERMANN, Mrs WALZ, Mr HERMAN,  
Mr d'ORMESSON, Mr FUCHS, Mr SASSANO, Mr HOFFMANN,  
Mr SÄLZER, Mr RINSCHÉ and Mr CROUX

on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party  
(Christian Democratic Group)

to the Council of the European Communities

Subject: Adequate long-term energy supplies at  
reasonable cost

It is essential to secure adequate long-term energy supplies at reasonable cost if the European Community is to maintain and improve present living standards, safeguard its international competitiveness and restore full employment within an expanding economy. If unemployment is to be effectively tackled and social security extended, a solution must be found urgently for the energy problems.

In the long term the European Community has no significant oil and gas reserves and no new, easily accessible coal deposits. Furthermore, there is insufficient Continental shelf for oil prospecting and production.

Given the prospect of fierce international competition in the 1980s for diminishing supplies of oil and natural gas, coupled with the existence of a very grave threat to the political independence of major oil-producing countries and to the safety of sea routes used to transport energy, the Community must, as well as saving energy, as is being constantly reiterated, concentrate in the coming decades on the use of home-produced and imported coal - as far as possible using refining processes - and on the use of nuclear energy, and the development of new or alternative energy sources.

The Community must also take account of the Third World countries in its energy policy and, as a highly industrialized economic zone, ease the pressure on the world energy market by developing nuclear power and other new energy supply systems and by not depriving the developing countries unnecessarily of the more easily accessible forms of energy. This programme requires exceptionally high investment and is subject to exceptionally long lead times.

Convinced that these problems can be mastered only by a major concerted effort, we put the following questions to the Council:

1. What kind of comprehensive common energy policy does it intend to apply in order to meet the challenge presented by the problem of energy supplies? Which Commission proposals relating to the common energy policy has the Council adopted in the last two years, which has it not yet given final consideration, and which has it rejected?
2. Is it resolved and able, following the Tokyo decisions, to ensure that - in concert with the USA and Japan - dependence on OPEC oil is reduced by 1990 to a level that excludes the possibility of lasting disruptions of economic activity in the Community?
3. Can it confirm that the funds set aside for research and development in the energy sector have so far been entirely inadequate? Is it prepared to improve coordination of the large number of national programmes? What kind of safeguards does it think would be appropriate for high-risk private investment in the energy sector?
4. What are its views on the feasibility of comparable safety and environmental regulations governing the construction and in particular the siting of nuclear reactors, particularly in frontier regions, where there must not only be consultation but also an agreement supported by law? Has any consensus been reached on a Community reprocessing and disposal system available to the Member States?
5. What steps are to be taken, above and beyond the energy crisis plan, to guarantee all Member States - irrespective of their own resources - adequate energy sources in good time, where this is essential for their energy supplies?
6. Is it prepared to take measures to intensify the public relations activities and dialogue with the ordinary citizen required for energy policy in the Member States? How does it intend to counter the dangers arising from delays in taking the necessary political decisions?