

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1974-1975

9 December 1974

DOCUMENT 408 /74

ORAL QUESTION (0-71/74)

with debate pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

by Mr TERRENOIRE

on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats
to the Commission of the European Communities

Subject: Oil companies

We know from its answers to the numerous questions concerning oil companies put by Members of the European Parliament that the Commission conducted an enquiry into the recent behaviour of such companies.

As a result of that enquiry, we believe the Commission has notified certain undertakings of irregularities on their part and initiated the procedure provided for under Article 89 of the Treaty.

Furthermore, a parliamentary commission of enquiry in one of the Member States has just completed a report at national level on the commercial, financial and fiscal conditions under which oil companies operate.

The report reveals that the major oil companies operating within the EEC meet at regular intervals to apportion the various markets among themselves, agree on prices and work out joint strategy. If such activities, which stand condemned by the

jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Communities, are indeed taking place, they are in violation of Articles 85 and 86 of the Treaty of Rome, which stipulate in particular that all agreements between undertakings and concerted practices which may affect trade between Member States and which have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition shall be prohibited as incompatible with the common market.

In view of the above, the Commission is asked:

1. what progress it has made in its enquiry into the practices of the oil companies and what conclusions it has reached;
2. whether it might be possible to take into account the conclusions of the parliamentary commission of enquiry of the Member State referred to;
3. how it intends to ensure that the Treaty of Rome is respected in this matter.