

51

51

FIGHTING THE LAST WAR?

or

ENERGY AND/OR ECOLOGY IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Reflections on the form and content of European integration

by

Carl Lankowski

Washington Semester Program
School of International Service
American University-Tenley Campus
Washington DC 20016-8083

tel: (202) 895-4934

fax: (202) 895-4960

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I

introduction

European Community studies have been much more preoccupied with the process of regional integration than with its content, more with policy convergence than with politics. This is partly due to the widespread currency of a relatively unexamined premise which posits a national state-like entity as the expected terminus of the EC system. I believe that this implicit metatheoretical expectation has been powerfully reinforced by academic and policy-making constituencies supportive of the integrative enterprise. Unfortunately, and speaking as a supporter of European integration, this stance is increasingly problematic on both normative and analytical grounds. This paper attempts to make the case for redirecting the focus of EC studies to take account systematically of the role of politics, ideology and the content of integrative schemes.

At its inception the integrative project responded to the perceived occasion for European dictatorship and war: economic crisis in the context of national rivalries. Regional integration served several aims simultaneously. It marked an effort to relativize the power of the national governments. Particularly, it was designed to "contain" West Germany. This containment, in turn, permitted the economic and military revival which formed the basis of cold war

strategy, the containment of the Soviet Union. After plans for the European Defense Community collapsed in 1954 and West Germany had been absorbed into the WEU and NATO, that country was encouraged to trade national consciousness for prosperity in a multilateral setting. The liberal market design of the EEC emerged out of the *rélanche européenne*, inspired by an ideology of federalism and guided by Monnet's strategic neo-functionalism. In the sense that this design shaped the European political agenda by, in effect, directing attention to the size and distribution of the economic pie, it served as an analogue to a constitution for the political culture and mass psychology of Western Europe. That is to say, neo-functionalism deliberately sought to take politics and power out of the integrative project. In the interest European unity, neo-functional strategy creates a paradigmatic problem to be "solved" by the technocrats: how to achieve the benefits of scale. The content of community -- unity in prosperity -- assumed the status of a sacred totem for the European tribe. It was a given beyond problematization.

While it is true that in the context of the Soviet regional retrenchment and internal transformations and the EC's "1992" market integration program, German unification and the Gulf War have compelled European statesmen to consider major new adjustments to the European architecture, Monnet's program, if anything, has been reconfirmed and updated. Thus, despite the talk about "subsidiarity," events

seem to be pushing the EC in a federalist direction, as is already clear from the technocratic character of the current intergovernmental conference (IGC) on economic and monetary union (EMU). Moreover, discussion in and around the intergovernmental conference for political union has as one of its main foci the question of conferring state-like attributes upon the EC, especially in the areas of defense and foreign policy.

The question naturally arises: was Monnet's strategic vision adequate from the point of view of *community-*building, as opposed to *state-* or *system-*building? For reasons that were not as obvious in 1950 as they are today in the post-cold war era, norms of democratic participation suggest that one should entertain a significant measure of doubt as to the desirability of a federal state, a "United States of Europe." It may not only be desirable but also more possible than ever to continue the process of relativizing state power without reconstituting such power at the regional level. For some, such a vision, combined with devolution of power towards the regions, would provide a worthy agenda for community-building.

If the normative foundations of the EC demand reconsideration, so too does the analytical framework which has guided integration studies. There is good reason to suppose that the neo-functional paradigm has been undermined by mass rejection of one of its essential assumptions: the central governments of the member states

constituted the appropriate points of reference for understanding integration. However, such a narrow definition of the political sphere has been undermined by persistent and successful challenges to its boundaries. New social movements, particularly those grouped around a broadly defined environmentalist idiom, have constituted spheres of action which challenge neo-functionalistic expectations. The EC has been about "the last war"; the movements are about the present and the future.

But the present and future are shaped by the politics of the past, by the organizational choices of the 'fifties in this case. The main question informing this paper concerns the interaction between the new norm-bearers -- the level of politics (the "what" of integration) -- and the momentum of a strategy designed to solve the problems of a different age -- the level of policy-making (the "how" of integration). This interaction will determine the design and functioning of the "new European architecture." To what do we need to pay attention in order to evaluate the current debate over the new architecture? What are the aims of the political subjects contesting the outcome? What are the frequency and distribution of social forces representing an "alternative" Europe? How much room is there within the traditional idiom for accommodating the interests of such new political subjects? What form is such accommodation likely to take? These are not questions that can be definitively answered in this paper, but they are useful in

drawing attention to concepts which can bring us nearer to an illuminating interpretation of the present situation. Further insight can be had by examining a critical case-study of EC developmental dynamics. In a narrower sense, then, this paper is devoted to interpreting the energy pattern in EC-Europe from the point of view of the environmental movement.

II

redefining integration

Integration is a very slippery concept. In a neo-functional paradigm it refers to the reorganization of policy-making networks around a new center of decision-making and coordination. When the relationship between levels of action in a social formation is more or less stable, as was the case through the 1960s, integration can be fruitfully studied by close attention to management strategies of national governments and the corresponding bureaucratic behaviors. Instability with respect to societal/state relations deprives this approach of much of its efficacy, however.

The reasons for this state of affairs become clearer if we posit a distinction between primary and secondary integration. It is useful to begin with the obvious. Despite increasing levels of transnational economic interdependence and vulnerability, the state remains the

central instance for policy-making. This situation has both caused and has been caused by a dense network of political institutions comprising the state/society interface. Beyond its political functions, the European state must be conceived of as a cultural and social reality as well. The specific, historically conditioned configuration of societal spheres is highly self-referential, notwithstanding legacies of regional segmentation in some cases and partial sharing of authority in certain areas at the transnational level in other cases. A code of behavior not reducible to the effects of any list of independent variables, but attributable to their unique interaction, i.e., a "system effect."¹ This self-referentiality corresponds to a "way of life" which differs from country to country. The strategies of all actors -- e.g., politicians, business managers, citizens -- is constrained by the routines and codes making up these ways of life. "Doing business," or from a wider angle, economic development, proceeds in identifiably differing corporate and consumer cultures, involving variations in general education and work qualification, work and leisure norms, and the like. Primary integration refers to this phenomenon.

Secondary integration refers to attempts to coordinate the affairs of two or more primarily integrated units. Seen from this angle, some of the basic characteristics of EC politics can be clarified. Part of the genius of the

1. see Przeworski and Teune (1971).

Monnet/Schuman integration strategy consists in its economic design. A market, already transnational, was to become the fulcrum for creating a wider community. Driven by material wants presumably insatiable in the short run, the engineering of higher levels of transnational economic interdependence was expected to feed on itself, leading to ever greater political legitimation for the regional enterprise. Undoubtedly, this has occurred to some extent.

On the other hand, the overall pattern, while exhibiting high levels of collaboration in some areas, also shows great intractability in others. This appears to be truer, the further one gets from the economic sphere, narrowly defined. But even within the economic sphere, the more concrete the linkages to institutions defining the "way of life" of the country, the more difficult the process of secondary integration will be.

There is much empirical evidence to suggest that on the basis of received policy goals the policy-making agenda is often determined with a high degree of autonomy from the play of politics. Policy makers respond more frequently to system requirements which transcend instantaneous fluctuations of public opinion, even in cases where multiple solutions to policy "problems" can be identified. Thus, the theorem regarding linkage to primary networks entails an important corollary. In cases involving significant linkage to primary networks in which the normal adjustment to system imperatives disrupts patterns of primary integration,

legitimation problems can be expected to arise. Furthermore, by virtue of efforts of parties and politicians to gain an edge in the interminable political contest by creating opportunities for exhibiting the party's broader vision or specific profile, some networks become more highly symbolic than others. Therefore, one would expect that the greater the symbolic content of the policy area, the greater the potential for a gap between policy-making and politics to eventuate in legitimation problems.

This section began by asserting the untenability of the Monnet/Schuman strategy. The EC was designed to "leverage" community via economic liberalization. Armed with the experience of the economic depression of the 1930s, the project could only assume that the economic problem would continue to be central to all politics. Certainly, it would continue to be the key to the social problem. Since the end of the 1960s, however, a new political idiom has intruded into the political landscape, having the effect of de-centering the economic problem. This "new politics" has been described and analyzed *ad nauseum* by now, as to its structural foundations (the transformation of the economy and the corresponding rise of the new middle classes), organization (extra-party locally-based citizens' initiatives and post-industrial framework parties), major themes (the so-called "new social movements"), spatial location (urban), demographics (professional, university

educated), density and sectoral integration in cross national comparison.

For the purposes of this paper, however, perhaps the most remarkable characteristic of this new political idiom concerns its post-materialism or "quality of life" orientation. A lively politics which challenged the assumption that more was better, that economic growth was a value in itself, indeed, that technological innovation -- increasing putative control over nature -- was necessarily good, emerged and disrupted the traditional political idiom on which regional integration was based. The partial de-centering which resulted challenged the pantheon of progress, similar to Rousseau's critique of the Enlightenment on the grounds of virtue.² For example, technologies which epitomized the Promethean logic of economic growth could be viewed in vastly different light by different political constituencies. On the other hand, this form of cognitive dissonance could vary from country to country, depending on how the new politics idiom was synchronized with its unique configuration of institutions.

Serving as a kind of umbrella for the many concerns which are associated with this new political idiom is the notion of social ecology. From an ecological standpoint, a systemic critique of industrial society, in both its Soviet and Western variants, was possible. Perversely, the citizen had become functionalized by the imperatives of the economy.

2. See J.J. Rousseau, *Essay on the Arts and Sciences* (1751).

In this idiom the EC, over-identified with the Monnet/Schuman strategy to begin with, was programmed to suffer from increasing mass scepticism as its officials did their best to respond to the imperatives of sectoral integration. The main hypothesized result of this dilemma is action to respond to the crisis of general strategy in the Community. Several scenarios can be imagined.

A strategy of overriding and defeating the new idiom can be attempted. But as long as legitimation in Western political systems is founded on liberal democratic principles and their electoral laws promote relatively undiluted representation of different political *milieux*, this strategy is unlikely to be contemplated seriously.

A strategy of reconciling the two political idioms can be attempted. Three outcomes are conceivable here:

* the traditional economic growth strategy can be dominant to the degree that stimuli from the new idiom can be isolated and co-opted. A more or less coherent strategy of *environmental modernization* might result.

* the traditional economic growth strategy can be generally successful, but on the basis of compromises on specific, highly symbolic issues, accentuating the divergence between the national and supranational levels. In this scenario, certain policy sectors would continue to be politicized and exempted from direct, EC-wide legislation; the "system effect" of the member states would continue to

be quite strong and the EC area would be characterized by *political heterogeneity*.

* since the accommodating process must be open in principle, it is just possible that, over the course of time, the *social ecology idiom will achieve cultural hegemony* in enough EC member states to affect the overall design of the system. This might result in greater tolerance for regional autonomy ("Europe of the regions") as well as multiple associative agreements of an inter-regional and pan-European character (in defense, environmental matters, energy).

III

energy: system vs. *Lebenswelt*

The politics and policy-making of the energy sector is affected in a major way by the emergence of the "post-materialist", "new politics" idiom. Most generally, energy intensity, the ratio of energy consumed and gross domestic product, indicates the "metabolism" of society, how much society must "take" from nature in order to maintain its consumption pattern and institutional routines. Somewhat more specifically, energy consumption is the source of much, if not quite most, environmental pollution, especially but by no means exclusively atmospheric pollution. Some energy sources are less polluting than others. Others, though

benign from the point of view of hydrocarbon emissions, entail other risks, as is the case for nuclear safety and waste disposal issues. Of greater importance from the point of view of political discourse is the highly concrete connections between the way of life of the population and the sources of environmental degradation. The process of pollution is insinuated in lived, day to day experience (*Lebenswelt*) through the system of transportation, building and heating technologies, and electrical appliances. Dying forests and toxic smog have been immediately visible. Anticipation of global atmospheric warming has been perceived by many to be a credible extrapolation from those experiences and the recent discovery of the vanishing stratospheric ozone layer. In this context, the debate over the mix of energy technologies and the overall level of energy consumption can be interpreted as a kind of hieroglyph for the relative status of the "green project" in Europe. Energy choices are probably among the most reliable indicators of the scope and depth of responsiveness of the policy-making system to the "new politics."

This is particularly true insofar as geopolitical forces and the overall situation with respect to energy demand have combined over the past twenty years to increase the difficulty of every effort to honor ecological desiderata. For policy-makers, the optimization equation reconciling the various strands of energy policy has fewer solutions within something resembling a political

equilibrium. From the point of view of maintaining the system "as it is", ever more energy must be reliably produced from a dwindling number of readily available sources. For ecologists, the situation is of the "do or die" variety. The cumulative impact of energy consumption threatens not only the physical environment but the fabric of society taken as a whole. Somehow, the entire pattern must be transformed in a relatively short period of time. While both energy policy-makers and ecologists alike have been able to agree on the desirability of decreasing dependence on fossil fuels (the one emphasizing security of supply problems, the other the environmental impacts), and while there has been some agreement on the shape of an overall strategy to reduce that dependence (increase the market share of natural gas and solid fuels; reduce overall energy intensity through conservation and efficiency increases), controversy continues to remain high over the issues of sources of electricity (the nuclear question) and the relative effort which should go into energy savings and renewables technologies. These debates have been intense and intractable because they refer back to subcultures in conflict over the precarious balance between the logic of solving problems within a given way of life and the logic of transforming that way of life.

But if the advent of "new politics" as a significant parameter of energy policy has created controversy about *what* the integrative project should be about, the way

integration is to be achieved has been drawn into the limelight no less. An important characteristic of the energy situation is the high degree of differentiation in energy choices between EC member states. This has made a coherent energy policy at the EC level very difficult to achieve. Viewed from the angle of Monnet/Schuman priorities, this heterogeneity is something to be overcome in the interest of material progress, measured by national income accounting criteria. This difficult situation naturally raises general questions about how a transnational community should be organized. Specifically, it forces all players in the EC "game" to clarify the relationship between market and community. But if the "system effect" component of these differing energy choices (i.e., controlling for economic structure and local availability of energy resources) refers to different political equations in the member states, how should these differences be evaluated? Should the Community have the authority to override this state of affairs? If it should, should it exercise it to do so? As we shall see below, this issue has become especially compelling with the adoption of the Single European Act and the historically connected "1992 program" of internal market integration.

The intent here is not to provide even a convincing, let alone a definitive account of the energy patterns in the Community, though some documentation of these is necessary for the ensuing analysis. Rather, the purpose is to explore the policy debate in light of these patterns and to provide

an explanation of the status of that debate in light of the logic which has largely animated EC development to the present. In sum, energy policy is illustrative of the general problems of development in the EC.

This problematic is operationalized by following the energy debate at Community and Member-State levels over the last decade. The analysis focuses on the period between 1984-1988 and proceeds on two tracks: the story behind the adoption of the 1995 energy objectives by the Council of Ministers in September, 1986, and the story of the rise and diffusion of "green politics" from some Member States to the rest of the Community.³ The objectives and associated documents provide as clear a statement as can be found of the Community's aspirations in light of its limited powers. In this context the key questions concern the communication of political impulses between the EC and local and state levels, and the perceived impact of "horizontal goals" of energy policy on the energy mix.

IV

patterns

3. The main documents are: Commission, "New Community Energy Objectives" COM(85) 245 final (Brussels, 28 May 1985); Commission, "Review of Member States' Energy Policies" COM(84) 88 final (Brussels, 29 February 1984); Commission, "Progress in Structural Change: The Main Findings of the Commission's Review of Member States' Energy Policies" COM(84) 87 final (Brussels, 29 February 1984); Commission, "Nuclear Industries in the Community: Illustrative Nuclear Program under Article 40 of the EURATOM Treaty" COM(84) 633 final (also known as "PINC," the acronym for "Plan Indicatif Nucléaire pour la Communauté").

A comparison of the energy tableaux at the beginning and end of our period is remarkable for what it demonstrates did not occur. The "system effect" at the Member state level became, if anything, more pronounced. At the same time, a tapering off of consumption due largely to economic recession at the beginning of the decade was more than made up by rising consumption after 1983. And despite the institutionalization and diffusion of "green politics" in the Community, underlying trends in the intensity of consumption, the main indicator of energy efficiency (controlling for extraneous variables such as the sectoral composition of economic activity, the overall level of economic activity, and the transformation of some forms of primary energy into electricity, i.e., electricity penetration), failed to show much variation.⁴

Within this overall pattern, the main stories have been:

- * interfuel substitution in the electricity trade in favor of nuclear power peaking at nearly 70% of total electricity generation towards the end of the period in France while nuclear generation peaked out in Germany earlier and at a much lower level (39%);
- * stagnation of coal use in Germany;

4. On the latter point, see T. Marovic, et al., Energy Conservation Indicators II (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1989), a report by the Fraunhofer Institut für Systemtechnik und Innovationsforschung, prepared for the Directorate-General Science Research and Development and Directorate-General Energy, Commission of the European Communities.

- * increased use of natural gas for heating concentrated in Germany, Italy and Britain (of the more populous EC Member States);
- * diversification of sources of oil imports, somewhat limiting dependence on OPEC; and
- * energy savings concentrated in Denmark, The Netherlands, and Germany.

This pattern is largely explicable in terms of the policy-making machinery at the Member State level and the diffusion pattern of "green politics" in the Community.

THE 1995 ENERGY OBJECTIVES

The major factors affecting the fate of the energy objectives shifted dramatically over the course of the decade. At the beginning of the period, with the oil price shocks of 1979 still fresh, the Community was preoccupied with security of supply issues. The recession, North Sea production and interfuel substitution (natural gas) during the early part of the decade reduced overall demand for imported oil and is associated with declining crude prices.

The EC's 1990 Energy Objectives⁵ aimed at reducing (to 0.7 or less) the average ratio between growth in gross primary energy demand and the rate of growth of gross domestic product, reducing oil consumption to 40% of gross primary energy consumption, covering 70-75% of the primary electricity with solids and nuclear generation, encouraging

5. Council of Ministers decision of 9 June 1980.

the use of renewables sufficiently to increase their share of the overall energy budget, and working towards an energy pricing scheme which supported the other objectives. By 1983 apparent success towards fulfilling some of these objectives caused the Commission to launch a much more ambitious effort to affect energy patterns in the Community.

The "New Community Energy Objectives" of May, 1985 (see footnote 3) were based on major staff work which had been devoted to projecting energy market trends and reviewing policy preferences of the Member States. Despite the ambitious scope of the Objectives (seven "horizontal" objectives and six sectoral ones), the limitations of the exercise were defined in the document. The Commission conceived of the EC role in terms of supporting R, D & D efforts for new and alternative technologies, monitoring energy developments, and *coordinating* policy. The objectives were intended as a device to articulate a purported Community consensus around which Member States' policies could gravitate.⁶

The '95 objectives were grouped in two parts. Energy policy was treated as a vector of other Community policy areas. This was acknowledged in the "horizontal" objectives. These numbered seven and included external affairs (Mediterranean policy, Euro-Arab dialogue, etc.); internal market (especially regarding the "domestic" energy sources: coal, gas and electricity); security of supply; energy

6. "New Community Energy Objectives," op cit., para.14, p.10.

pricing; environment; regional development; and technological innovation. Notably, environmental policy was given no special status in this listing. On the other hand, the sectoral objectives called for major reductions in the energy ratio (achieving the goal of 0.7 by 1990) and energy intensity (a 25% reduction, broken down by consuming sector by 1995: buildings, transport, commerce and industry); reduction of foreign oil dependence to 30% of total energy consumption; increasing the market share of natural gas; increasing the share of solid fuels, even as the coal industry restructured itself; priority for solids and nuclear power in electricity generation (40% nuclear generation Community-wide); and a tripling of new and renewables use by AD 2000.

Even during the early part of the decade, discussion of the objectives revolved around the role nuclear power was to play. Indeed, the nuclear question became the crux of the debate between the Commission, a staunch defender of the role of nuclear power, and its critics. The first occasion on which the division was articulated had been set up by the accident at Three Mile Island. The first directly elected European Parliament, debating the Commission's updated energy strategy in June, 1982,⁷ was already deeply divided on this question, with the Socialist spokesperson, Mr.

7. See Communication from the Commission to the Council on an Energy Strategy for the Community: Nuclear Aspects (EP Doc. 1-1065/81) and Energy Committee Rapporteur Pintat's report on same (EP Doc. 1-303/82). The debate occurred on 18 June 1982. See Debates of the European Parliament No 1-286/273 infra.

Petersen (DK) rejecting the report as "bad", "biased", "uncritical" and even "propagandistic," though the Socialist group had been divided itself on the advisability of the nuclear option. The Council of Ministers agreed with the Commission's position, but only "...on the understanding that it is for each Member State to make its own decision on this matter at national level...the realization of nuclear energy programmes on the necessary industrial scale firstly requires states to make a clear political choice on the objectives and means to be used; the Community provides a framework within which these states can find useful references and a grouping whose solidarity can be an effective instrument."⁸ The Commission's response was to mandate the writing of the third in a series of illustrative nuclear programs (PINCs) under Article 40 of the EURATOM Treaty.⁹ Adopted in November, 1984 by the Commission and on May, 1985 by the Economic and Social Committee, PINC-3 recommended that at least 40% of EC electricity be provided by nuclear generation by 1995 and at least 50% by 2000. Moreover, the EC should promote fast breeder technology and advanced reactor types, continuing enrichment and reprocessing services, expediting transport of nuclear material in the EC through reductions in administrative barriers (e.g., at inter-state borders), and moving towards a definitive resolution of the waste issue, in part by

8. Council 8552/F/82(presse 109), released after the Council meeting of 13 July 1982.

9. Doc. COM(84) 653 final.

encouraging states to agree to welcome waste storage facilities on their own territory in principle. The PINC-3 objectives became the nuclear component of the 1995 integrated energy objectives.

The parliamentary response to the nuclear aspect of the 1995 objectives was determined by the activity of the energy (CERT) and the environmental committees, both of which entertained a draft resolution calling on the Community to abandon nuclear power.¹⁰ The environmental committee, reporting its opinion to CERT in October, 1985, while not endorsing the proposed ban on nuclear power, did insist on very stringent safety conditions (tantamount to a ban, perhaps) and insisted that nuclear technology was an issue that could not be decided at Community level; it had to be left to the Member States. In January, 1986, CERT initially turned against its own Rapporteur, a member from the Belgian Ecology Party, whose report supported the ban. The report had been rejected by the vote of 15 against:4 for:2 abstaining. Instead, the committee adopted the report of another rapporteur whose report called for a pro-nuclear position with modification of Part III of the EURATOM Treaty on health and safety procedures. A month later, CERT adopted the Commission's 1995 Energy Objectives with a series of amendments.¹¹ Although the nuclear program still constituted

10. See "Report on the future of nuclear energy" (CERT) and "Opinion from the Committee on the Environment," European Parliament, Session Documents, series A, Doc. A2-1/87 (19 March 1987).

11. See EC European Parliament Working Documents Doc A2-223/85 (4 March 1986) A Series, "Report on the communication

an essential element of the preferred strategy, the adopted resolution proposed granting priority to solids in electricity generation for the Community as a whole.

The second major factor to affect the formulation of EC energy objectives was the reform of the Community by way of the Single European Act (SEA). Two major effects should be distinguished. First, the EC's essential policy areas were extended to include environmental policy. Second, a matter which "kicked in" during 1987 was the program of internal market integration.

Generally speaking, the SEA altered the relative weight of the "environmental vector" in energy policy. Environment's standing in the list of "horizontal" 1995 measures would be enhanced. In the long run, this produced some ambivalence with respect to entrenched positions on nuclear power. In the short run, however, it probably magnified the sensational effect of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in April, 1986.

Chernobyl reopened the debate on nuclear power in the Community.

CERT reconsidered its position; polarized.

Public opinion polarized.

Commission's and Council's response: speed up tightening of nuclear safety standards; continue promoting nuclear power.

... from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a proposal for a Resolution concerning new Community energy policy objectives for 1995..."

Effect of '92 program: ease problems of nuclear over capacity in France by grid access proposals.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPERATIVE

Increasing integration of EC environmental policy.

Symptoms approach.

Example: global warming.

COM(89) 369 final (8 February 1990)

The nuclear question redux.

Recent proposals for carbon taxes.

V

discussion

Emergence and diffusion of green politics.

Special role of Germany.

The importance attached to the 1995 energy objectives debate prior to the ratification of the Single European Act suggests that thinking had been dominated by the notion of homogenizing the Community space by mandating a convergence of policy, i.e., by subordinating national policy, itself a complex vector of local forces, to an abstract community logic. The discussion was devoid of any political rationale for proceeding in this way. Thus, it could only be wishful thinking to pretend that the objectives could ever possess the character of an indicative plan, for such a plan would have required the mobilization of public support, a task for which there was no consensus in Council or the European Parliament.

Of course, this pattern had a lot to do with the general context of energy policy early and late in the decade. The 1995 objectives were first drawn up in the wake of the economic downturn which widely had been believed to be associated with the second oil shock in 1979. By the time the objectives had been adopted, however, OPEC had been broken as a cartel, for all intents and purposes, and the SEA had just been adopted. In short, the "issue cycle" removed energy from its role as one of the main point issues of the integration process. It had been replaced, meanwhile, by the 1992 program. Anyway, environmental issues had been intruding selectively into the energy systems of the member states, resulting in their elevation to "constitutional status" in the Community via the SEA provisions and a consequential further heterogenization of energy policy in the Member States.

The Community proceeded traditionally, by seeking to reconcile the irreconcilable in providing technical arguments to political objections. This is most clearly the case with the energy mix. Despite the political situation regarding nuclear power in Germany, that source of electricity was hailed as the "answer" to the problem of atmospheric pollution. Technical arguments to the contrary, coming from reputable "think tanks" which demonstrated the feasibility of discontinuing the use of nuclear power, were brushed aside. Meanwhile, the Commission went out of its way to aid the nuclear complex with statements of general

support as well as attacks on substitute power fuels (coal) and aid to capacity utilization for existing plants which were threatened by reductions in energy demand. This aid is being rendered by way of the Commission's program -- part of the 1992 program -- for opening up the energy market through grid sharing and more ambitious plans for common carriage.

Given this background, it is really no surprise that energy policy, in the sense of a politically grounded, publically justified, internally consistent and technically feasible response to the energy problem, had disappeared. The objectives, signalling a more or less direct attempt at engineering policy convergence, gave way to technical projections, *à la* the "major themes in energy" scenarios worked out by the D.G. for energy.¹²

VI

conclusions

There is reason to believe that the Commission, sensitive to the limits of political feasibility, is behaving in its traditional, pragmatic manner when it abandoned energy policy. There is nothing necessarily problematic about this state of affairs, so long as it

12. Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Energy, "Major Themes in Energy" special issue of Energy in Europe (Brussels, September 1989), and Commission, D.G. for Energy, "Energy for a New Century: The European Perspective" (special issue of Energy in Europe)(Brussels, July 1990).

corresponds to a decision in principle with respect to the level at which energy choices ought to be made.