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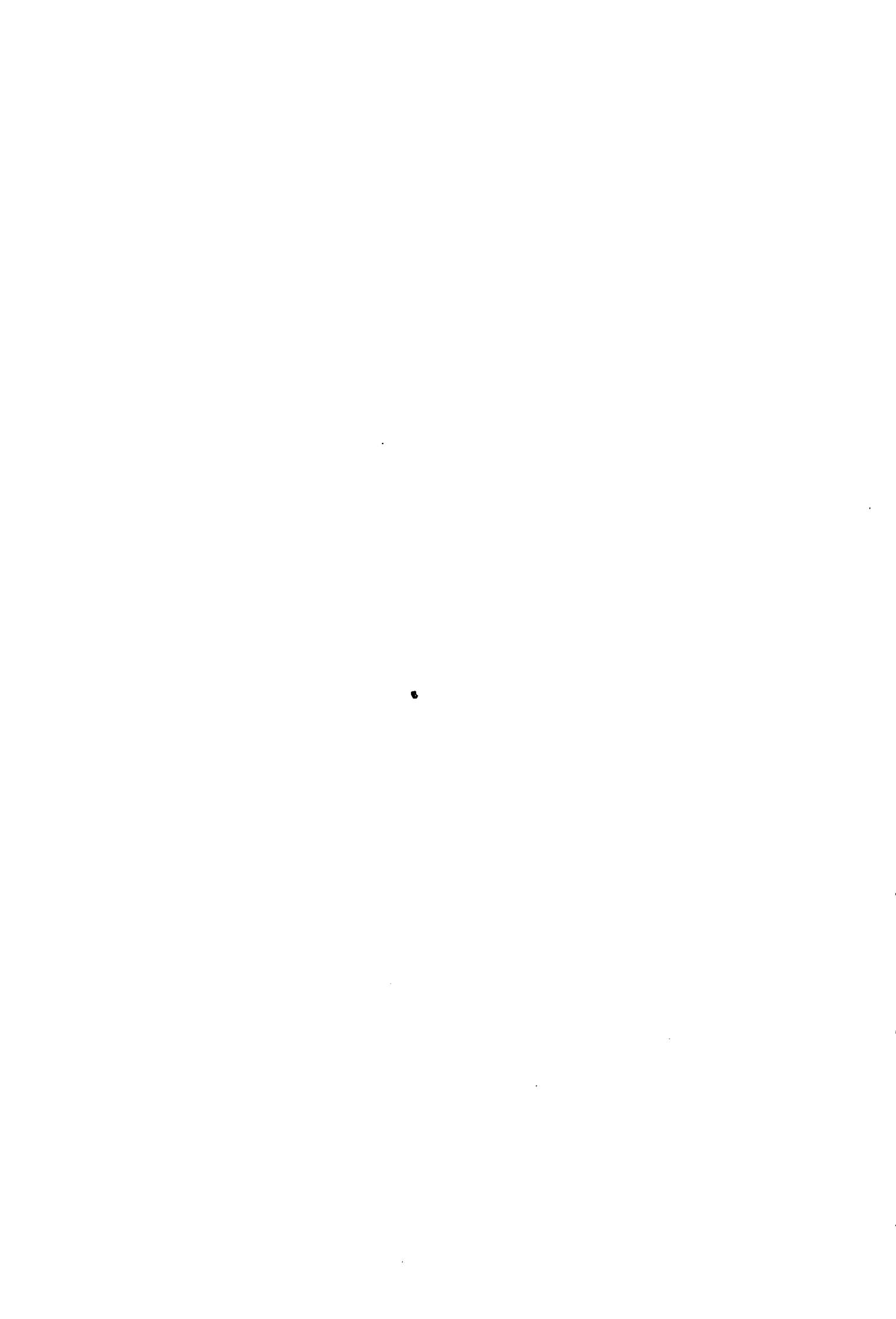
drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 475/74) for a decision on a programme on radioactive waste management and storage

Rapporteur: Mr L. NOE'

PE 39.929/fin.

1.2.2



By letter of 31 January 1975, the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision on a programme on radioactive waste management and storage.

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Public Health and the Environment as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology and the Committee on Budgets for their opinions.

On 24 February 1975, the Committee on Public Health and the Environment appointed Mr Noè rapporteur.

It considered the proposal at its meeting of 20 March 1975.

On that date it adopted the motion for a resolution and explanatory statement unanimously with one abstention.

Present: Mr Della Briotta, chairman; Mr Noè, rapporteur; Mr D'Angelosante, Mr Van der Gun (deputizing for Mr Ney), Mr Martens, Mr W. Müller, Mrs Orth, Mr Premoli, Mr Rosati and Mr Springorum.

The opinions of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology and Committee on Budgets are attached. ◊

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A

The Committee on Public Health and the Environment hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision on a programme on radioactive waste management and storage.

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 17 January 1973 on the establishment of Community structures for the permanent storage of radioactive waste;¹
 - having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council²;
 - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 475/74);
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment and the opinions of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology and the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 23/75);
1. Welcomes the Commission's proposal, which represents an attempt to find a solution at Community level to the problems posed by radioactive wastes;
 2. Agrees that commercial interests are of secondary importance in this area, and that the work in question has a public service nature;
 3. Regrets that, although the programme will be submitted for review at the end of two years, no provision has been made either for the renewal of the programme or for its extension at the end of its five-year period, and proposes an amendment to correct this omission;
 4. Deplores the attitude of the Commission in asking for the European Parliament's opinion at such short notice;
 5. Notes that almost ten years have passed since the European Parliament first demanded Community action in this field and that, in that period, the volume of radioactive waste in the Community has increased at a rate exceeding all estimates;

¹ OJ No. C4, 14.2.1973; p.10

² OJ No. C 54, 6 March 1975, p.29

6. Hopes, therefore, that the programme will be followed by concrete proposals;
7. Approves the research projects chosen by the Commission and the financial contributions proposed;
8. Reminds the Commission of this Parliament's request made in 1973 for the setting up of a joint undertaking as provided for in the Euratom Treaty;
9. Emphasises once again the need for such a joint undertaking and provides for this in its proposed amendment;
10. Notes with approval that the Commission will take into account the activities of the international organisations to avoid duplication and that a Programme Management Committee will help coordinate the studies and projects;
11. Requests the Commission to incorporate the following amendments in its proposal, pursuant to Article 119, second paragraph, of the EAEC Treaty;
12. Requests its appropriate committee to check carefully whether the Commission adopts the European Parliament's amendments to its proposal and, if necessary, to report to Parliament on the matter.

Council Decision on a Programme on
Radioactive Waste Management and Storage

Preamble and recitals unchanged

Article 1

A programme on the environment relating to the management of radioactive waste shall be adopted in the form set out in Annexes I and II for a five-year period from 1 January 1975. The Annexes form an integral part of this Decision.

Article 1

A programme on the environment relating to the management of radioactive waste shall be adopted in the form set out in Annexes I and II for a five-year period from 1 May 1975. The Annexes form an integral part of this Decision.

Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of this Decision the Commission shall submit to the Council, not later than one year before the scheduled end of the programme, proposals for its extension. These proposals shall also embody measures for the setting up of a public service for the storage and management of radioactive waste in the form of a joint undertaking as provided for in the Euratom Treaty.

The Council shall act on these proposals within six months and in any case before this Decision lapses.

Articles 2 and 3 and Annexes I and II unchanged

¹ For complete text see OJ No. C 54, 6 March 1975, p.29

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTIntroduction

1. The problem of the management and storage of radioactive wastes is not a new one for the Committee on Public Health and the Environment. Since 1965, this committee has emphasised the necessity for the creation of a Community network of storage depots for radioactive wastes. Later, in 1972, the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology drew up an interim report on the establishment of Community structures for the permanent storage of radioactive waste (Doc. 217/72 - Rapporteur: Mr Ballardini). Mr Vandewiele delivered an opinion on behalf of our committee, the then Committee on Social Affairs and Health Protection, and Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution on 17 January 1973 (OJ No. C4 of 14 February 1973).
2. Further, in the report drawn up by Mr Jahn (Doc. 106/73) on the programme of action of the European Communities on the environment, the demand made by Mr Vandewiele, calling on the Commission to present practical proposals for establishing a Community network of storage depots for radioactive wastes, is re-emphasised. Mr Jahn calls on the Commission to set binding deadlines for the projected Community measures in this domain.
3. On 19 December 1973, the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology issued a notice to its members (PE 35.321) containing the texts of the question submitted to the Governments of the nine Member States on the possibility of Community action for the storage of radioactive waste. The replies to these questions were disappointing in that only the smaller Member States were in favour of such action and one of the large Member States gave no reply whatsoever.
4. In its proposal, the Commission is in favour of action at Community level for a number of reasons, mainly because this way duplication of effort by different Member States can be avoided. Given the nature of the problem and the necessity to proceed with research with the minimum of delay, it is clear, and the European Parliament has already stressed this, that these objectives can be secured only at a Community level.

Your committee notes with approval the Commission's statement "The public service nature of this work and the second importance of the commercial interests at stake call for Community level direction".¹ It has always been this committee's view that protection of the environment and of the population should be the first priority when tackling problems of this nature.

¹ Doc. 475/74, page 3

5. The programme will have a duration of five years and is to be regarded as the first stage of a longer term programme. At the end of two years, it will be submitted for review.

It is proposed that the programme should be effective from 1 January 1975. The choice of date seems merely arbitrary since the Commission is only now presenting its proposal which will not be adopted before April if the opinion of the European Parliament is to be taken into account. Your committee considers that the Commission is being unrealistic and proposes the date 1 May 1975 for the commencement of the programme.

General Remarks

6. The Committee on Public Health and the Environment regret that it has taken almost ten years for the Commission to react to the constant demands made by the European Parliament for Community action on radioactive waste management and storage, and that another five years at least will elapse before concrete proposals will be put forward. If the situation with regard to radioactive waste was unanimously considered grave in 1965, now, in 1975 there is even more cause for concern. In 1965, it was estimated that in the following ten years the volume of radioactive wastes would increase by 50 to 100%. According to the Commission's projections in Annex A of the programme, the ten-year period 1980-1990 will see an increase in volume of high activity waste of 700%, and of medium and low activity waste of between 500-1000%.

7. It is expected that, from 1985, new types of reactors, notably Fast-Breeder reactors, will be contributing significantly within the Community. The Commission states, in its Communication to the Council on a new energy policy strategy for the Community¹: "It is, moreover, in the Community's interest to encourage the development of new reactor types, both to contribute to security of supply by the development of the breeder reactor, and to prepare the way for more rational utilisation of nuclear energy as a source of heat by the use of high-temperature reactors, and even to combine the advantages of these two types of reactors."

The advantages, from the energy point of view, are clear. These reactors produce, or "breed", more nuclear fuel than they consume, and provide cheap, abundant electric power with less pollution than uranium - fueled reactors. However, even proponents of the breeders have pointed out that the large-scale use of these reactors will pose novel difficulties arising from their production of vast amounts of radioactive plutonium - a material whose critical mass (the amount that could cause a nuclear explosion) is only a

¹ Supplement 4/74, Bulletin of the EC

few kilograms and whose radioactive half-life is about 24,000 years. Hence, the issue of the transport and disposal of radioactive waste will take on a new dimension.

8. The following table forming part of a study drawn up under the auspices of the Commission in 1973¹, gives the estimated average whole-body radiation (mrem/person-year) from various sources:

	1970	2000
Natural background	110	110
Medical	90	100
Global fall-out ⁺ (weapons)	5	5
Miscellaneous*	3	1
Occupational [♠]	0.8	0.8
Other environmental (nuclear energy production and associated industry)	0.07	0.6

+ After a peak of about 12 mrem in 1963.

* Miscellaneous: Television, air transport, consumer goods.

♠ With the main contribution so far from practice of medicine and dentistry

What is significant in these figures is not that radiation from nuclear energy production represents at present an enormous threat to mankind, but that it will continue to grow at a very fast rate unless this Commission proposal comes into effect in the near future. It is therefore imperative that every effort be made to reduce this growth.

Programme Content

9. The programme is divided into five major sectors:

- (i) Processing of solid radioactive waste;
- (ii) Storage and disposal of high-activity and/or long-lived radioactive wastes;
- (iii) Study of an advanced management model (separation and transmutation of actinides);
- (iv) Survey of the problems involved in the management of radioactive waste that could not be solved in the existing international legal, administrative and financial framework;
- (v) Study of the guiding principles for the management of radioactive waste.

¹ EUR 5001, page 32

Processing of solid radioactive waste

10. Five projects will be developed under this heading. These projects are elaborated in Annex B of the programme - sheets 1 to 5. The contribution made by the Community over the five-year period will be 5.8 m.u.a. The projects are intended to supplement work already being carried out in the Member States.

Storage and disposal of high-activity and/or long-lived radioactive wastes

11. In this sector, three projects will be undertaken, technical specifications for which are given in sheets 6, 7 and 8 of Annex B. The most important project, not only in terms of relevance, but also in terms of financial contribution by the Community (12 m.u.a) is project (b) - "Community project on the disposal of radioactive waste in geological formations".

This project would be managed by an ad hoc committee answerable to the Committee on Programme Management (comprising representatives of the Member States and Commission officials), acting under the authority of the Commission. It includes the setting up of experimental final storage sites on the basis of the results of geological studies.

The project can be seen as a first step towards the setting up of a Community network of storage sites and your committee welcomes this, having itself taken the initiative in proposing such a measure.

Study of an advanced management model (separation and transmutation of actinides)

12. This is an investigation into the possibility of separating actinides from other wastes and converting them into short-lived or inactive products. Actinides, because of their long half-lives create considerable environmental problems. The project envisages the unification of the endeavour of the various Community bodies at present working on this problem and the evaluation of such a plan of action.

Survey of the problems involved in the management of radioactive waste that could not be solved in the existing international legal, administrative and financial framework

13. This work is considered as an essential counterpart to the work being carried out on the second sector of the programme. Here, your committee recalls points 7, 8 and 9 of Mr Ballardini's report:

"7. Consequently invites the Commission to use the powers of action in the field of health protection conferred on the Community institutions by the Treaty establishing Euratom and to submit to the Council in the near future precise proposals for the establishment of a Community network of storage areas for radioactive waste together with a body of Community rules governing their operation. If and when implemented, these proposals would also form a major contribution to a common environmental protection policy.

8. Proposes that the public service thus created should be administered by a joint body with, subject to the agreement of the participants, rule-making powers similar to those enjoyed by U.S.A.E.C.

9. Urges, moreover, that the said Community service should cooperate as closely as possible with interested third countries and international organisations concerned with the disposal of radioactive waste."

In the context of this programme, the proposal to set up a Joint Undertaking remains valid.

Study of the guiding principles for the management of radioactive waste

14. As a result of the studies carried out in the previous project, the Commission hopes to be able to formulate a preliminary set of guiding principles. This will be done with the assistance of a working party, in close cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the OECD's Nuclear Energy Agency.

Consideration of the opinions of the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology

15. The Committee on Budgets gives general approval to the programme, making only the observation that an explanation should have been given for the high costs to be incurred in the 2nd and 3rd years of the programme, followed by a tapering off in the 4th and 5th years.

16. The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology re-affirms its position taken in 1973 on the creation of a Community network of storage areas for radioactive waste.

The Committee considers desirable the setting up of a Joint Undertaking and requests the Commission to seek a negotiation mandate with third States, basing this action on Article 101 of the Euratom Treaty.

17. It is pointed out that no provision is made for the renewal of this programme after its five-year term has expired.

18. The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology has therefore proposed an amendment to Article 1 of the Council decision, which consists of adding two further paragraphs requiring the Commission to present proposals for the prorogation of the programme at the latest one year before the expiry date. These proposals should also contain measures leading to the creation of a Public Service for the Management and Storage of Radioactive Waste, which should take the form of a Joint Undertaking as provided for in the Euratom Treaty. The Council would be required to take a decision on these proposals within six months, or at least before the expiry date.

19. The Committee on Public Health and the Environment finds this amendment acceptable, fully agreeing that under no circumstances must the programme be allowed to peter out at the end of 1979. It is strange that the Commission stresses the fact that this programme must be regarded as the first stage of a longer-term programme without drawing up the necessary provisions to ensure its continuity.

Conclusions

20. The Committee on Public Health welcomes the programme as a genuine attempt by the Commission to find a Community solution to the problems posed by radioactive wastes.

21. It nonetheless deplores the fact that, having taken so long to draw up such a proposal, the Commission is now demanding that the European Parliament deliver its opinion at short notice, and after the date provided for the commencement of the programme. This approach by the Commission has been condemned many times by the European Parliament, but apparently to no avail. The rule of thumb seems to be that the more important the subject matter, the less time allowed for consultation of Parliament.

22. Furthermore, while not doubting the sincerity of the Commission's affirmation that this programme represents the first stage of a longer-term programme, your committee feels that this should be provided for in the Council Decision and accordingly proposes that Article 1 be amended to this effect.

23. These considerations apart, your committee approves the proposed programme, notably,

- the taking into account of the activities of the international organisations to avoid duplication;
- the submission of the programme for review at the end of two years;
- the emphasis on the importance of Community action and the recognition of the public service nature of the work;
- the institution of a Programme Management Committee to help coordinate the studies and projects.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

Draftsman of the opinion : Mr N. Hougardy

On 11 February 1975 the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology appointed Mr Hougardy draftsman of the opinion.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 4 March 1975 and adopted it unanimously.

Present: Mr Burgbacher, oldest member; Mr Hougardy, draftsman of the opinion; Mr Cointat, Mr Covelli, Mr Giraud, Mr Guldberg (deputizing for Mr Krall), Mr Hansen (deputizing for Mr Nørgaard), Mr Jakobsen, Mr Lautenschlager, Mr Leenhardt, Mr Memmel, Mr Ney, Mr Noè, Mr Petersen, Mr Pintat, Mr Radoux (deputizing for Mr Kater) and Mr Vandewiele.

1. Introduction

1. Since 1971 the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology has, together with the former Committee on Social Affairs and Health Protection, given attention to the problem that forms the subject of this opinion.

On the basis of an intermediate report drawn up by Mr BALLARDINI on behalf of this committee and an opinion given by the Committee on Social Affairs and Health Protection (Doc.217/72), the European Parliament adopted on 17 January 1973 a resolution¹ in which it put forward a whole series of demands relating to both the Community's role in this field and the practical measures to be employed.

2. This committee had also asked the governments of the six original Member States, and subsequently also of the three new ones, in writing and in some cases verbally as well, whether they agreed that it was necessary to adopt Community measures for the storage of nuclear waste and whether they would create the necessary powers if the Commission were to submit a proposal to this end.

By the summer of 1973 only the smaller Member States had given a fully positive reply. Three of the large Member States were either non-committal or rejected the need for such measures and the fourth failed to reply altogether.²

3. The Commission has now submitted a proposal for such an act. This fact alone should be welcomed by the European Parliament, which set the example and took the initiative in this matter.

2. Assessment based on those parts of the resolution of 17 January 1973 relating to energy policy

4. According to its terms of reference this committee, having raised the question in the first place, can now act merely in a consultative capacity. We must therefore confine ourselves to those points in this resolution which concern energy or research.

5. In paragraph 1 we pointed out that the faster pace at which nuclear power stations were to be built over the next few years would lead to a substantial increase in the amount of radioactive waste in the Community. We still hold this view today and know it to be shared by the Commission. Whether the envisaged construction programme will be

¹ OJ No. C 4, 14 February 1973, p.10

² See PE 35.321 (Notice to the members of this committee)

carried out in full or, as appears more likely, will be cut back, is only of quantitative significance. The problem as such remains. Our committee still believed that it is necessary to press ahead with the construction of nuclear power stations insofar as all technical and economic considerations allow, although proper account must be given to the legitimate requirements of health and environmental protection.

6. We also stand by the opinion expressed in paragraph 3 that a network of storage areas for radioactive waste similar to the one under development in the United States should be established at the earliest practicable date in the Member States. We went on to say in paragraph 4 that this objective could be secured only at Community level since in this way alone could a rational selection be made of storage sites in restricted areas and reductions achieved in the cost of setting up and supervising the projected network. On this again our view remains unchanged.

7. In paragraph 7 we called for Community rules to govern the operation of this network, with the management entrusted to a joint undertaking as provided for under the Euratom Treaty. Finally, in paragraph 9 we urged that this network should cooperate as closely as possible with interested third countries and international organizations concerned with the disposal of radioactive waste.

8. It would be mistaken to believe that all these measures are of interest only to environmental protection. On the contrary, they have considerable implications for energy policy.

We start from the premise that measures for the storage and management of radioactive waste should be taken at Community level, since this appears to us to be the best way of ensuring safe storage and management of nuclear waste, one of the most important considerations that have to be met if the nuclear power stations which are so urgently needed are in fact to be built. After all, how could one justify their construction, however necessary it might be from the standpoint of energy requirements, without also taking measures to render harmless the waste which they produce?

9. Moreover, as we mentioned in paragraph 4 of the abovementioned resolution, only through a Community system would it be possible to reduce the cost of setting up and supervising such waste storage facilities.

In addition, Parliament has always stood by the principle whereby those responsible for its removal and safe storage (polluter-pays principle). These costs should therefore, at least in principle, be borne by the nuclear power stations. This would of course affect the cost of electricity. Whilst we still take the view that the era of cheap energy has gone, we do

not believe that energy prices should be artificially raised through failure to take cost-reducing measures such as those now under consideration.

3. Programme proposals

10. The Commission refers in the first place to the processing of solid radioactive waste, and there is nothing in the proposal to which one could object from the standpoint of an energy committee. The proposal on the storage and disposal of high-activity and/or long-lived radioactive wastes is also commendable. It is clear from the last sentence of page 7 of the basic document that the Member States have hitherto been quite unable to take effective action. It is therefore absolutely essential that measures be taken at Community level.

11. The third proposal relates to a model study. As a committee concerned with energy and research, we may say that the first practical efforts could be made not only with a view to coordination of work, but also to provide a transitional stage leading to a public service akin to the joint undertaking referred in Chapter V of the Euratom Treaty. This applies also to the fourth proposal, namely a survey of the problems involved in the storage and management of radioactive waste and financial framework. There is here a real gap in international legislation which should be filled by the Community, if only through the normative effect of the measures adopted. Here we have a real political problem. It might be possible to set up a Community body with which non-member countries could, if they wished, cooperate. One solution might be a kind of CREST extended to include non-member states, constituted in the form of a joint undertaking, which can, after all, be established to produce other than tangible goods.

12. Finally studies are to be undertaken of the guiding principles for the management of radioactive waste. Close cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency and OECD's Nuclear Energy Agency is obviously called for. Once again we feel that the joint undertaking would be the best form, with coordination through the Community along the abovementioned lines as an alternative.

13. Recent experience with energy policy in general has been very poor. The powers legitimately sought by the Commission are being increasingly transferred to the OECD's International Energy Agency. We feel strongly that such a situation must not be allowed to develop in other sectors if the Community is not to become a mere customs union. The rules governing the external relations of the European

Atomic Energy Community contained in Article 101 of the Treaty could be employed, although such a solution would not be adequate. The text provides for the possibility of action, but directives have to be issued by the Council with subsequent approval by the latter, acting by a qualified majority.

14. On the basis of Article 101 of the Euratom Treaty and after setting up of the joint undertaking, the Commission would have to request authority to negotiate with third countries, the objective being participation by such countries in the joint undertaking.¹

4. Recommendations to the committee responsible in regard to the Council decision

15. The Council decision provides a framework which embodies the various points in the programme. We recommend to the committee responsible that an addition be made to the text.

(a) Duration of the programme

16. According to Article 1 the decision is to be adopted for a five-year period. Although Article 3 provides that the programme set out in Annexes I and II will be subject to amendment at the end of the second year, a proposal which we endorse, this does not alter the fact that the programme would terminate after five years.

17. It is our conviction that the measures to be taken must be continued after the end of the five-year period. Above all we cannot countenance a situation where no decision applies. The system of Community measures for the storage of radioactive waste must neither be interrupted nor allowed to lapse automatically.

¹ Article 101 of the Euratom Treaty reads as follows:

'The Community may, within the limits of its power and jurisdiction, enter into obligations by concluding agreements or contracts with a third State, an international organization or a national of a third State.

Such agreements shall be negotiated by the Commission in accordance with the directives of the Council: they shall be concluded by the Commission with the approval of the Council, which shall act by a qualified majority.

Agreements or contracts whose implementation does not require action by the Council and can be effected within the limits of the relevant budget shall, however, be negotiated and concluded solely by the Commission; the Commission shall keep the Council informed.'

(b) International cooperation and the joint undertaking

18. We are anxious that this draft Council decision should take effect as soon as possible. This is essential if the arrangements in question are to be taken into account early enough to influence the planning and construction of the nuclear power stations required.

19. At the same time we should not like to see our request for the setting up of a joint undertaking, endorsed by Parliament in 1973, fall into oblivion. However, to insist on the setting up of such a body in the immediate future would be to disregard the difficulties involved.

The remaining possibility is therefore, that we should amplify the Council decision in such a way that the Commission and Council are compelled to act on the joint undertaking requested by us in accordance with a fixed timetable. Subject to this stipulation we could allow the decision to take effect.

(c) Proposed amendment to the Council decision

20. For all these reasons the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology requests the Committee on Public Health and Environment, the committee responsible, to add the following two paragraphs to Article 1 of the draft Council decision:

'Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of this Decision the Commission shall submit to the Council, not later than one year before the scheduled end of the programme, proposals for its extension. These proposals shall also embody measures for the setting up of a public service for the storage and management of radioactive waste in the form of a joint undertaking as provided for in the Euratom Treaty.

The Council shall act on these proposals within six months and in any case before this Decision lapses. In the event of this being impossible, the Decision shall automatically remain in force until a new decision is adopted.'

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

Draftsman of the opinion : Mr Fabbrini

On 25 February the Committee on Budgets appointed Mr Fazio Fabbrini draftsman for an opinion.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 24 March 1975 and adopted it unanimously.

Present: Mr Aigner, acting chairman and representing Mr Fabbrini; Mr Durand, vice-chairman; Mr Früh, Mr Gerlach, Mr Lagorce, Lord Lothian, Mr Notenboom, Mr Pêtre, Mr Radoux, Mr Shaw, Lord St. Oswald (deputising for Mr Kirk).

Background to the proposal

1. The Council approved the outline of a plan concerning the management of radioactive waste on 22 November 1973¹ and asked the Commission to put forward a proposal on the subject before the end of 1974. Last November, the Council reaffirmed the need for such action and indicated that it was the responsibility of the Communities and the Member States to study the problems involved.

Summary of the proposal

2. The proposal sets out the broad lines of action to be adopted to
- manage the industrial radioactive waste which is being produced in ever growing quantity and which poses a particularly acute problem for the countries of the Community which are all highly populated;
 - ensure that the waste is managed in such a way as to guarantee maximum safety and protection for the public and the environment.

Community nature of the action

3. The activity envisaged is inherently of a Community character because
- the industry which produces the most radioactive waste has a Community-wide market and has far-reaching implications for the future sources of power and for the quality of the environment of the Community,
 - an effective and economical resolution of the problems can make the use of nuclear power as a source of energy more viable and also more acceptable to the general public,
 - the finding of solutions will require an effort lasting many years and involving considerable exchange of information between Member States, an exercise which should strengthen the sense of Community solidarity,
 - the density of the population of the Community gives added emphasis to the public health and environmental aspects of the safe storage of radioactive waste, and
 - the proposals reflect a logical extension of the research work now in progress at the Joint Research Centre, the results of which will serve as back-up material for the programme now being considered.

¹ OJ No. C 122, 20.12.1973

Features of the programme

4. It is noted with approval that
- all the studies and projects - which it is proposed will be financed largely by the Commission - will be coordinated with the help of a programme management committee comprising representatives of the Member States and Commission officials,
 - activities of other international organisations will be taken into account so as to avoid duplication of effort, and
 - there will be a review at the end of two years which will enable the programme to be updated and account to be taken of developments.

Five-year budgetary estimate

5. Following is a summary of the estimates of the Community contribution to the programme:

	<u>m.u.a.</u>
- processing of solid radioactive waste	5.8
- storage and disposal of high-activity and/or long-lived radioactive wastes	12.4
- study of an advanced management model	0.76
- survey of the problems involved in the management of radioactive waste that could not be solved in the existing international frameworks	0.2
Total	<u>19.16</u>

Contract costs make up 18.4 m.u.a. of this total, while staff and administrative costs account for the balance of 0.76 m.u.a. The number of staff allocated to the programme is to be fixed at four which appears to be on the small side, in view of the wide scope of the problems at issue. Estimates are not supplied, however, for the expenditure by Member States in this domain nor for the number of staff engaged in those States.

Breakdown on annual basis

6. The Commission gives the following breakdown on an annual basis of the estimated five-year outlay of 19.16 m.u.a. which is indicated as the upper limit for expenditure commitments:-

	m.u.a.
1975	2.52
1976	5.13
1977	4.75
1978	4.07
1979	2.69

General observations

7. It is considered that an explanation for the high costs to be incurred in the second and third years of the programme, to be followed by a tapering in the fourth and fifth years, could have been supplied. In Annex B, where the more technical description of the programme is given, it is observed that the sum of the Community contributions shown on the nine sheets is 18.96 m u.a.; the balance of 0.2 m u.a. is attributable to expenditure on surveys. It would have been appreciated also if it were indicated whether a new budget heading is envisaged. Generally, when regard is had to the complex nature of the questions involved, the Commission is to be complimented on the clear presentation of the proposal.

Conclusion

8. The proposal relates to a series of problems which, as indicated at paragraph 3 above, are of a Community character, par excellence, and which, judging by the figures at Annex A to the programme, will grow in prominence over the decades ahead. Furthermore, the finding of solutions to the highly technical difficulties involved, which have the most serious industrial and environmental implications for the Community's future, would blend in readily with Joint Research Centre activities. On the budgetary plane, it is to be welcomed that the proposed programme envisages

- a review at the end of two years operation,
- the taking of steps to avoid duplication of activities carried on by other international organisations, and
- the coordination of effort by using a management committee which will include national officials.

The details furnished on the multiannual estimates are welcomed also because they give evidence of a comprehensive approach to the programme. It is appreciated that the sum of 19.16 m u.a. is a ceiling figure and may be revised in the light of developments during the course of the early years of the programme.

9. On the question of radioactive waste the Committee on Budgets wishes to:

- (1) stress the necessity and urgency of these measures in view of the considerable future expansion in this sector and to dispel the widespread and legitimate anxieties of the people most directly affected;
- (2) suggest an information campaign to acquaint the public with the nature of the measures taken for their safety;
- (3) stress the need for programmes to be reviewed and updated at the appropriate times to make full use of new technical discoveries.

A favourable opinion is recommended.