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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMON MARKET'S ENERGY COMMISSIONER ON VISIT

WASHINGTON, DC -- May 28, 1973 -- EC Commission Vice President Henri Simonet, responsible for the Community's energy policy, nuclear safeguards, fiscal policy, and financial institutions, arrives May 30 in Washington for two days of talks on Capitol Hill and with White House, State Department, Interior Department, Treasury Department, Atomic Energy Commission officials. On June 2, he will go to New York for discussions with energy experts in the private sector.

Vis-a-vis the energy-exporting countries, the Community must establish "a climate of mutual trust" in order to guarantee the stability of the Community's energy supplies. "To be permanent," the Commission said, "this trust must go along with cooperation based on satisfaction of the interests of both sides."

The Commission called for stepped-up cooperation not only on an international level but within the Community itself. Basic to this intra-Community cooperation would be common rules and laws and closer contacts between public authorities and private oil companies.

A first step would be the harmonization of petroleum product specifications to remove technical obstacles to competition and freedom of movement within the Community. A unified system should be set up to monitor supply conditions and structures. This system would include notifying public authorities of crude oil prices at the time of entry into the Community and consumer price criteria harmonized at the Community level.

To ensure a consistent, rational pattern of oil supplies, oil companies would present to public authorities five-year importation and investment plans. In addition, the Commission said, the oil companies should concert with public authorities before opening negotiations with producer countries.

Energy and Environment

"The aim of ensuring that the Community is adequately supplied with energy has to be reconciled with the demands of environmental conservation," the Commission stated. Nuclear energy provides the obvious answer.

The Commission aims for a minimum installed nuclear capacity of 130,000 megawatts by 1985. Toward this end, the Commission will submit to the Council by the end of this year proposals for an enriched uranium supply policy. The harmonization of nuclear standards would continue, and the safety of nuclear installations would be improved.

In the meantime, other sources of energy should be fully utilized, the Commission said. Given the Community's coal production potential, coal should cover as large a share as possible of the Community's total energy demands. Since the use of natural gas in the Community remains relatively rare (despite exploration efforts), the Commission concluded that it should be 'put to the best possible use.'

Environmental problems still to be solved, the Commission said, include auto exhausts, sulphur in fuels, and waste coolants from thermal power stations.

At an all-night session of the Council to discuss these proposals, May 22-23, agreement was reached on joint measures to take in time of crisis, and initial approval was given to a proposed regulation setting up Community petroleum enterprises. Agreement was also achieved on some aspects of a resolution concerning a common Community energy policy.

A committee was set up to study Community uranium enrichment potential. This committee will report to the Commission before October 30 and the Commission will report to the Council before the end of the year.

EC COMMISSION 'S "ENERGY MESSAGE"

Guidelines and priorities for a Community energy policy were contained in an April 19 communication from the European Community Commission to the Council of Ministers.

The Commission called for international cooperation to meet worldwide energy demands that are expected to double roughly every 15 years. Specifically, the Commission called for cooperation among the major energy-importing areas -- the United States, Japan, and the Community. Other importing countries would be associated.

"The most immediate benefit and the most urgent objective of the cooperation envisaged is the avoidance, by means of a continuous exchange of information and appropriate consultation, of needless and expensive counterbidding for crude oil by the importing countries," the Commission said. Such international cooperation would also entail contingency arrangements against unexpected supply shortages and collaboration in scientific and technical research.

While not recommending an institutional framework for cooperation between the United States, Japan, and the Community, the Commission did suggest the creation of a joint consultative body to meet periodically.

Mutual Trust

The Commission emphasized that cooperation among the energy-importing countries should not work "against the legitimate interests of the energy-exporting countries." Such cooperation should also "contribute indirectly to the growth of the developing countries, in particular those which have no energy resources."

B I O G R A P H Y : H E N R I S I M O N E T

Born in Brussels, Belgium, May 10, 1931, Vice President Simonet has served since January as the European Community's Commission member in charge of energy policy, nuclear safeguards, fiscal policy, and financial institutions.

Named Minister of Economic Affairs in the Belgian Government in 1972, he has been active in both politics and the academic world. In addition to a professorship and administrative positions at the Free University of Brussels, Simonet has been mayor of the town of Anderlecht, a member of the Belgian Chamber of Deputies, and has had responsibility for coordination of economic policy under Belgium's Deputy Prime Minister.