

RESOLUTION ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF ENERGY PRODUCTION

adopted by the Congress on the 6th of June 1985

following the discussion of the Report introduced by Mr. Pieter WINSEMIUS

The Congress of the European Liberals and Democrats

- noting that the environmental consequences of energy production, generation and use are a source of increasingly grave concern;
- noting, however, that the production and use of energy plays an essential role in the recovery and further development of our national economies;
- reconfirming that the environmental consequences of energy production should primarily be limited through a preventive policy which is based on energy-saving, development of clean technologies and non-exhaustion of raw materials;
- considering that solutions, that satisfy both the economic and the environmental needs of our industrialised society must:
 - a) take an integrated view of the interrelationships and complexity of the effects on our environment;
 - b) be truly international, taking into account national priorities and limiting distortions of competitive positions, and
 - c) be taken quickly in order to prevent irreversible environmental damage to our cultural heritage;
- welcoming the Council of Ministers' decision to introduce leadfree petrol by 1989 at the latest;
- noting the Council of Ministers decision that motor vehicle exhaust emissions should meet more stringent standards which will be introduced at different times for different categories of vehicle;
- calling for these two measures to be encouraged by the introduction of financial incentives to promote the development of a new European motor vehicle technology provided that they are compatible with the provisions of the Treaty of Rome;
- welcomes the Communities I third action programme, and in particular its emphasis on better resource management;

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- and believes that:

1. measures are needed to ensure greater conservation of energy;

2. more stringent restrictive measures should be introduced with respect to sulphur dioxide emissions, one of the main causes of acid rain, specifically including the reduction, over a ten year period, of each country's annual emissions of sulphur dioxide to at most 60 % of the 1980 level;

3. environmental risks - although having to be accepted as a consequence of an industrialised society - must be limited and managed, by:

- focusing environmental policy in the first place on an anticipatory and preventive approach instead of a curative one;

- establishing and maintaining international standards for emission levels environmental quality and external safety requirements;

- eliminating the antithesis between environmental protection and economic development since they are not only compatible but also interdependent and mutually reinforcing;

- using energy rationally and fighting against waste;

- effectively implementing the directive on the assessment of the environmental impact of projects in the public and private sector;

- applying appropriate criteria to the storage of all hazardous waste materials;

4. High priority must be given to national and international research programmes, especially into :

- developing ways of generating energy from renewable resources such as wind, tides, solar and biomass;

- seeking more efficient ways of generating, storing, using and conserving energy;

- further assessing all environmental risks associated with energy production;

- developing the most cost-effective measures for dealing with those risks,

5. international co-operation between countries must be enhanced by :

- exchanging relevant information;

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- establishing joint facilities for the treatment and storage of waste materials (including chemical and radio-active waste);
 - providing within each country the same democratic rights of information, participation and appeal to citizens and organizations concerned on the other side of the border, that are available to the citizens of the country, itself;
- 6, public information programmes must be expanded so as to increase public awareness of the environmental risks associated with energy production and use, as well as public understanding of government policy measures;
7. calls for research into new technologies to be encouraged to help bring about a reduction in the pollution associated with the production of energy sources;
8. asks the Liberal and Democratic members of the European Parliament to act upon this resolution and to report back to the next Congress.

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