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RECONCILIATION WITH NATURE: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BASED ON
QUALITATIVE GROWTH.

Our time is characterized by the speed and scope of changes. These changes are probably greater than at any time in human history. They may be compared to the impacts on human thinking of the great discoveries and the cartesian world picture which marked the transition from medieval time to the age of reason.

We are entering into a decade where the need for solidarity and common action is greater than ever.

- We have economic growth, but this growth has been unable to counter unacceptably high unemployment rates.
- We have expanded our educational opportunities, but millions of young people still do not share these opportunities.
- We have advanced social systems, but still the economic differences between us are widening.
- We have made progress in the environmental field, but growing awareness proves that we must make profound changes. Such changes are necessary if we are to win the battle for the environment.
- We have strengthened cooperation between us in the North, but our policies have been unable to redress the most

severe economic setback in the developing countries. The third world seems convinced that international poverty is not a mere aberration of international economic relations which minor adjustments can correct, but the unspoken premise of the present economic order.

In this overall global picture, the ongoing dynamic efforts towards closer European cooperation entails perspectives, not only for Europeans, but for the whole world.

We, as social-democrats must be actively forwarding this process. We have the ideological foundation needed to take responsibility for the future.

We have a vision of a Europe which can safeguard vital European and global interests. A Europe with full employment, high quality social and environmental security, improved educational opportunities, cultural variety and cultural interactions.

We will play our role in creating a Europe at the forefront of responsible international cooperation and leadership.

Our message must be clear. There is no alternative to more solidarity, of more caring and sharing to secure qualitative growth, meaningful and more secure jobs for all, social justice and equal opportunities.

In our efforts we must change the content of growth. Growth cannot be based on overuse of the environment. But only growth can create the capacity to solve environmental problems. Only a healthy environment can enhance our resource base and sustain the economic growth which is called for.

Sustainable development is a broad concept for social, economic and political change. It is a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of

investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs.

It is in the Western industrialized countries that many of the world's environmental problems originate. We must therefore redouble our commitment to sustainable development, be it nationally, in our European cooperation as well as globally.

"Building a future on solidarity" is the title of our conference. And rightly so, solidarity is the key notion on which our future strategy will be based.

We base our strategy on solidarity and a new comprehension of the urgency of common action in order to face the challenges of the global development crises.

While the 1980s may go down in history as a decade of progress for international peace and security, it has also been a decade of lost opportunities for The third world. Mass poverty, bleak economic prospects and a devastating debt burden in the South are paired with economic imbalances between major Nations of the North.

We base our strategy on solidarity and common action in our effort to advance European integration and further contribute to a climate of peace and cooperation across old division lines. We need a strong social dimension in the European integration process - we oppose an integration left to the market alone.

The principles of equal rights, solidarity, full employment and environmental security are not barriers, but fundamental conditions also for making Europe competitive. We do not achieve integration through divided societies.

We base our strategy on solidarity as the guideline in our

struggle for full employment, social justice and environmental security in our domestic policies.

We must face the unparalleled changes that we are confronted with. And most importantly, we must direct them. The labour movement has a strong foundation in the conviction that divided societies marked by social injustice can never properly meet these challenges, globally, on a European level and domestically.

Alternative policies are needed. The environmental crisis is the best and most striking proof of this. Most of the great environmental struggles will be played out in the 1990's. It is imperative that they be won.

In addressing the environmental challenges, let me remind you of one of the main social democratic principles: If everybody pursue their own short-term interests, then everybody's long-term interests will be damaged.

This is why our vision of cooperation will be more than a way of maximising interests. It will be the only way to avoid steady deterioration for ourselves and our children.

This awareness must be the foundation for the way we plan a strategy for qualitative growth globally, nationally and locally. And it must be the foundation for the way we plan, structure and deepen our European cooperation.

We know that Europe, European cooperation and European initiatives will play a key role in the battle for reconciliation with nature. We know through our European experience that no economic growth can be called qualitative if it fails to protect and preserve our environment.

As we enter the 1990's the future of the environment is moving into the very centre of concern for governments, for the

labour movement, and as we proceed, for companies, big and small. There - in the centre of our attention, this issue should remain. Only hard solid work to change the economy step by step will do.

We must emphasize and be more precise about the interdependence between the various elements in a strategy for qualitative growth.

We must demonstrate that we can integrate our ambitious goals in our daily political work, locally, at the working place, nationally and in our international co-operation.

Adam Smith's well known "invisible hand" has been believed to lead private self-interest unwittingly to serve the common good. In our modern world, however, it is tempting to suggest that an "invisible foot" leads private self-interest to kick the common good to pieces.

That is why a strategy of qualitative growth requires that instruments of state authority are used to accelerate the process of ecological modernization. We need to integrate an ecological rationality that can co-exist with the economic and market rationality.

We must make investment in ecologically sound projects attractive. For the labour movement, a healthy and a sound working place is an essential objective. In the current European harmonization process, we must therefore adopt to standards with a high level of protection.

Ideally, environmental concerns should be inseparable from all technological, economic and political considerations. In a strategy for qualitative growth it is our responsibility that this dimension is integrated on all levels.

In general, environmental thinking must become fully

integrated into the dialogue between labour unions and management. We must ensure that the issues are solidly placed on the agenda in all social dialogue between unions, management and political authorities.

As consumers we are becoming increasingly aware of the environmental effects of our choices. Therefore, avoidance of conflict with the environment must become part of company policy as well as an objective of our unions. Those who first succeed in integrating this thinking will have the competitive upper hand tomorrow.

It is in European industrial centres that our future can be spearheaded. From here emanate technological innovations and new industrial processes which will shape the future. Environmentally sound technology can unquestionably be a competitive edge for our industry as it moves into the 1990's and beyond.

Mankind seems to need to observe a problem before taking active steps to cure it. We need to replace the "react-and-cure" approach with an "anticipate-and-prevet" strategy.

Multilateral cooperation is one of the most vital instruments that we have at our disposal. Cooperation between nations is a process which involves change. We must remain open-minded and willing to adjust our ambitions and targets and thus change our means in the light of new circumstances and opportunities.

In the Hague two weeks ago, a process was launched that precisely aims at raising our ambitions and targets to vital challenges. The political leaders present were gathered to demonstrate their political will and readiness for concrete action to protect the earth's atmosphere.

Climate is a vital issue. Life on earth depends on it. The Hague Declaration calls for a new approach, through the development of new principles of international law including new and more effective decision-making and enforcement mechanisms.

The principles that we have endorsed are radical. But any approach that is less ambitious would not serve us.

The Declaration also states the need for a new international authority. This authority must have power - a power that could be exercised even if unanimity cannot be reached.

Sharing the burden is essential. That is why we call for fair and equitable assistance to compensate the countries which have to take on special burdens in view of their level of development.

A strong international movement like ours has the possibility of influencing the climate of public opinion. Today we need to create a durable trend that favours personal and collective behavior in accordance with environmental needs. We have the visions of collective and personal progress. That is why we have a particular responsibility for contributing to this change.

Post-war Europe has seen conflict in ideological, political and economic terms. We have had peace, but peace in the shadow of nuclear armaments. A cow-web of borders have hampered not only a more efficient use of our economic resources, but also our incentives to find common cross-border solutions to common problems.

Now that these borders are becoming more permeable, new fields

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of cooperation opens up. We, the social-democratic movement shall move our strategies and policy measures from the national to the international level. That is a necessity if we are to achieve our goals.

A Europe of freer circulation raises the question of values. What Europe do we want to create? In a world of rapid changes in markets and technologies, we need to protect and preserve our living conditions. An efficient market certainly relies on efficient people, but efficient people rely on social and environmental security.

A proof of our ability to create qualitative growth lies in the way we develop our European cooperation. Also this cooperation needs to be constately reexamined and adjusted to the challenges we face.

The need for such an ajustment was one of the reasons why I invited my EFTA-colleagues to come to Oslo last Tuesday and Wednesday. If we judge EFTA's success on the basis of our original goals, it is indeed a successful organization. But confronted with new challenges, we have seen that cooperation based on the present system has its limitations.

We see that our ambitions for the EC-EFTA cooperation goes beyond the internal market. We want to extend it into fields such as the environment, education, research and development and the social dimension. Enlarging the scope of our cooperation is necessary if we are to lay the foundation for the cooperating Europe that we call for in our policy document from this conference.

I know that my EFTA colleagues will agree when I say that the results from the Oslo meeting is a qualitative new step in direction of closer cooperation in Europe.

In our declaration from our meeting we stress the need to find

solutions of regional and global environmental problems by pooling resources and by coordinating activities throughout all of Europe.

We stress that enlarged cooperation must be accompanied by the creation of a citizen's Europe and progress in the social dimension of integration, to be achieved in full cooperation with the social partners.

We underline that to reach these goals we are ready to explore various options and ways and means to strengthen the institutional links between the EFTA States and the EC.

We do this with an open mind, and add that we would not exclude any option from the scope of our future dialogue with the EC.

The Oslo declaration is a powerful signal of political will. But political will is necessary to bring things forward. Our political will is to forward the cooperation between EFTA and the EC - to enter into a process that will strengthen the cooperation pattern in Europe.

Willy Brandt has said that the ultimate purpose of politics is to help people to a better life. That must also be the ultimate purpose of our strategy for qualitative growth.

But if we are to call our growth qualitative, it must be based on sustainable development that highlights to what extent our common challenges require common solutions.