European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Energy,
Research and Technology

on the consequences of the new technologies for
European society

Rapporteur: Mr CIANCAGLINI

By letter of 29 March 1985, the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology requested authorization to draw up a report on the consequences of the new technologies for European society.

By a decision of 6 May 1984, the committee was authorized to report on this subject.

At its meeting of 23 April 1985 the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology appointed Mr CIANCAGLINI rapporteur.

It considered the draft report at its meeting of 26 September 1985. It adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole unanimously on 26 September 1985

The following took part in the vote: Mr PONIATOWSKI, chairman; Mr SALZER, vice chairman; Mr CIANCAGLINI, rapporteur; Mrs BLOCH von BLOTTNITZ (substitute), Mr BONACCINI (deputizing for Mr IPPOLITO), Mr CROUX (deputizing for Mr ESTGEN), Mr FORD (deputizing for Mr ADAM), Mr KOLOKOTRONIS, Mrs LIENEMANN, Mr LINKOHR, Mr MALLET, Mrs S. MARTIN (deputizing for Mr LONGUET), Mr METTEN (deputizing for Mrs LIZIN), Mr MUNCH, Mr SCHINZEL, Mr SMITH, Mr SPATH, Mr STAES, Mr STAVROU (deputizing for Mr RINSCHE), Mr TOKSVIG, Mr TURNER, Mrs VIEHOFF and Mr WEST

The report was tabled on 27 September 1985.

The deadline for tabling amendments to this report will be indicated in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

CONTENTS

The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

A

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the consequences of the new technologies for European society

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council on technological change and social adjustment (COM(84) 6 final),

- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council on vocational training and the new information technologies (COM(85) 167 final),

- having regard to the motion for a resolution on the social impact of the new technologies on the situation of women tabled by Mrs CINCIARI RODANO, Mrs TRUPIA, Mrs MARINARO and Mrs SQUARCIALUPI (Doc. 2-1792/84),

- having regard to the report of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology (Doc. A2-110/85),

A.   alive to the opportunities and adjustment facing our society as a result of the technological revolution,

B.   noting that present rate of technological and economic change is much faster than that of social and cultural change,

C.   considering that a balance must be found between tradition and technological and scientific innovation,

D.   whereas not everything that is technologically feasible is necessarily socially desirable or economically viable,

E.   mindful that previous industrial revolutions created new industries based on new products and new markets,

1.   Welcomes the new technologies as a means of serving European citizens with new products and services, thus creating new markets and jobs;

2.   Points out the difficulty of identifying and assessing the social effects and the effect on employment of new technology despite the progress made in statistics and the economic and social sciences;

3.   Is of the opinion that this uncertainty with regard to the future makes technological and social pluralism and flexibility of decision-making necessary;

4.   Considers that as a general principle suiting machines to their users should be preferred to the reverse; but this will require a new international division of labour and new structures of production;

5. Is concerned at the side-effects of technology and the mounting risk of a loss of control over technology, and in particular at the helplessness displayed in the face of these situations: considers, therefore, that all new technology must be covered by health guarantees for the individual and for the Community;

6. Affirms that our society must therefore be increasingly on its guard and ensure that technology is under full scientific, economic and social control;

7. Affirms the need for a social and political consensus to be found so that our discussion of medium-term options is conducted in a long-term perspective that will make it more acceptable and reasonable;

The system of production

8. Points out that companies are at the centre of the current transformation of methods of design, production, scheduling and management, facilitating the regional dispersion of industrial activities;

9. Considers that there is undoubtedly a link between the rigidities in the system of production and the lack of industrial investment and Europe's problems of competitiveness with Japan and the United States;

10. Notes that signs are emerging of a questioning of the traditional balance of forces within the system of production;

11. Considers that trade unions and employers' organizations must accept these changes and adjust fully to them in order to ensure maximum utilization of available resources and full employment;

12. Considers that the growth of new technology heightens the need for a dialogue between the two sides of industry and for governments and the Community institutions to take on greater responsibility;

13. Notes that the disappearance of jobs through conversion, and the creation of new jobs are bringing about a permanent change in job qualification requirements;

14. Emphasizes the scale of the training requirements generated by the new technologies and by information technology in particular for both workers and management, with the matching of human skills to the new technologies being paramount;

15. Is alive to the problems that these requirements could create for certain groups in society in the future;

16. Is aware of the need to anticipate them through timely training in the appropriate skills;

17. Observes that the reduction in working time must be offset by time needed for continuing training and by lifestyles centring on the individual and the family;

18. Notes with interest the current and future benefits that the new technologies, particularly biotechnology, can bring in the agricultural sector with regard to both processing and non-food uses of farm produce;

Lifestyle and ethical problems

19. Considers that every effort must be made to halt the movement towards a 'two-tier' society made up on the one hand of people in work and with high incomes and on the other of people excluded from the mainstream of society and receiving State assistance;

20. Considers, therefore, that there should be more detailed social evaluation of technological options;

21. Wonders how much democratic control is actually exercised when technological decisions are made in the various Member States and at Community level;

22. Stresses the value of the proposal that a unit should be set up within Parliament to assess scientific and technological options;

23. Emphasizes the need for far-reaching change in national education systems in order to foster the capacity to adapt that European society lacks;

24. Affirms, therefore, the need for teaching and training staff who meet today's requirements;

25. Considers that the assistance that new technologies can provide for certain groups in society, such as the aged and the disabled, is too often ignored; there are many such areas in which new technology can be applied with considerable social benefit;

26. Observes that progress to date in information technology and telecommunications has led above all to a prodigious increase in the amount of information available, with less and less control over it; this has facilitated increasingly frequent political, economic and religious disinformation and manipulation campaigns;

27. Considers, therefore, that despite grand statements of intent, insufficient attention is devoted to the protection of the private individual in data transmission and recording systems and to preventing the release of confidential and private information and the fraud that is possible with certain means of payment and in particular stresses that national governments should not claim blanket exclusions from new provisions for the protection of data on private individuals;

28. Hopes that attention will be devoted to the health and safety problems related to new technologies: the spread of general stress generated by work with machines, and more specific problems such as working with visual display units or the use of highly dangerous substances in the manufacture of new materials;

29. Considers that particular attention must be devoted to the ethical problems that may arise in connection with the use of biotechnology and with all types of manipulation that violate the integrity of human life and respect for it;

Our relations with the Third World

30. Considers that technological advances in our society cannot be discussed in isolation from the Third World;

31. Is aware that the transformation of our society can only heighten our responsibility towards the most underprivileged countries;

32. Affirms, therefore, our obligation to transfer new technology to the Third World with the aim of meeting these countries' real needs;

33. Believes that technology should not be exported to the Third World until an objective and precise analysis of requirements has been carried out;

34. Supports in particular the development of technology characterized by low production costs and a high degree of social usefulness (energy generation, irrigation, etc.);

35. Believes that new technologies can enable developing countries to leapfrog intermediate technologies in developing their economies and that information technologies have a particular role in improving the economies of the less developed countries;

The need for joint action

36. Considers it absolutely vital that a genuien technological community be built as a key component of political integration in Europe;

37. Considers that the identity of technological developments and their consequences in all the countries of Europe must prompt a joint response;

38. Believes, therefore, that it is logical that in addition to a strategy for technology, a technological community should have a programme taking account of implications for ordinary people and for society;

39. Affirms the need for the Member States to collect and exchange information and compare pilot projects relating to social and cultural change in the wake of new technology, and to arrange for comparative studies with US and Japanese universities throughout the OECD;

40. Congratulates the Commission on the development of the INSIS programme for the introduction of office automation and advanced communications systems in the Community institutions and the civil services of the Member States;

41. Requests the Commission to study the problem of data protection at European level and to consider the approximation of legislation in this area, since several Member States have already taken steps in this direction;

42. Congratulates the Commission on carrying out, via implementation of the FAST programme, an analysis of the part played by science and technology in the economic and social development of the Community;

43. Welcomes and is extremely interested in the Italian IRIS project (Initiative for the Application of Information Technology Research in Society), a European project designed to take account of the social consequences of new technology;

44. Considers that this is a vital extension of the work carried out in the ESPRIT programme;

45. Instructs its Committee on Energy, Research and Technology to monitor the consequences of new technologies for European society with a view to presenting another report to Parliament in twelve months' time evaluating the current situation in Europe and the action taken by the Commission and other bodies concerned on the proposals and recommendations contained in the present resolution;

46. Requests the Commission to work out its views on the consequences of the new technologies for the development of European society and possible future models for economic and social development;

47. Requests the Commission, lastly, to draw up the main lines of a general programme on the consequences of new technology as a whole for European society, covering employment, health, safety, the protection of the individual and lifestyles in general, and in particular on living and working conditions, levels of culture, environmental protection, employment and health;

48. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission of the European Communities.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

I - INTRODUCTION

1. For nearly thirty years now there has been no shortage of scientists, economists, sociologists and indeed philosophers to offer us accounts of society in the technological age.

2. Even if this speculation on the future of our economic and social structures has sometimes been more in the nature of sermonizing than of genuine forecasting, it is nevertheless fully warranted by the extraordinary development of technology and its likely consequences.

3. Such an effort of prediction, which is the subject of the present report, is also indispensable if we want to ensure that we are fully masters of the new techniques.

4. But this is no easy task. The writings of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century bear witness how easy it was to be wrong, whether in technical, economic or social terms, on the possible consequences of the industrial revolution then taking place.

5. Coming nearer to our own times, we shall only refer to the work at the end of the 1960s of the celebrated futurologist Herman KAHN who was then head of the Hudson Institute, one of America's leading forecasting centres at the time. On the basis of scenarios backed by innumerable economic, scientific and political studies, Herman KAHN had set down a calendar of future events for the years 1975 to 2000. But when we read this today we find not only that the dates forecast for the introduction of new technologies have been considerably delayed but also that the predicted innovations, if they will take place at all, will not have the form foretold by the author.

6. These examples should serve to highlight the need to think about the new technologies in as comprehensive and flexible way as possible. The essential need is to resist the two opposing extremes towards which we are constantly being driven: a vision of the technological future as one of either total happiness or of total alientation for the individual.

7. With this in mind we must first examine the characteristics of the new technologies and then try to assess their effect on the production system and on our way of life. In addition to these general matters it also seemed of interest to consider some more specfic aspects, such as the social utility of the new technologies. Finally, we shall consider whether and why action at European level is required.

II - CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

8. It is convenient, and also perhaps fashionable, to speak of 'new technologies' when referring to the technical innovations we are witnessing today. But it can be legitimately asked, what makes them 'new'. After all, any technique that makes it appearance or comes to displace another is of necessity 'new' and the last two centuries, to go no further than that, have been rife with 'new' technologies, from the steam engine, to X-rays, to nuclear energy.

9. Yet it is not inaccurate to distinguish the set of 'new' technologies from those which went before because of a number of characteristics which are particular to them:

- their extremely rapid development above all: we need only to recall the advances, especially in electronics, which have been made in even such a short period as the last five years;

- their irreversibility and their interconnection: progress in each technological sector increasingly depends on technologies which at first were totally separate from it (for instance, the use of computers in biotechnology);

- their extremely rapid commercialization: every innovation is accompanied by a marketing study to assess profitability which determines whether the research will be pursued;

- their penetration into every sector of the economy: whatever their origin, new technologies, for instance microcomputers, find applications in the home, in schools and in business;

- the context of competition and national and international bribery in which they appear: new technology is the battling ground today between Japan in the Pacific region, the USA and Europe, the competition having a synergetic effect on research.

10. These characteristics clearly define the true stakes involved in the new technologies, namely the challenge of continuous adaptation which our societies pose and must face.

III - EFFECTS ON THE PRODUCTION SYSTEM

11. One of the main consequences of this great wave of technical innovation is undoubtedly the fundamental change wrought in the production system. At the macroeconomic level it is already apparent in the deregulation taking place in the United States, Japan and the United Kingdom. It can also be regarded as a more fundamental economic phenomenon, forced by the need, imposed precisely by the new technologies, to break down barriers between the various economic sectors. To take the example of telecommunications, in their present state of development they rely heavily on data processing but, in their present situation (one of direct dependence on the State in most cases) they are not able to merge advantageously with the computer sector. The present economic mould must therefore be broken so that development can proceed along the lines dictated by the new technologies.

12. At the microeconomic level, it is becoming increasingly clear that we are progressing towards the ultimate elimination of repetitive human tasks. This is a simple statement but it implies a radical change in the sructure of the enterprise itself and in the role of employers and trade unions within it. The new working conditions will necessitate profound changes in the attitudes of both employers and unions and will increase the need for dialogue in connection with collective agreements.

Employment

13. The current debate as to whether the new technologies are job-creating or job-destroying is falsely posed. Some technologies, and frequently they are the ones of which we are most aware today, do in fact lead to job elimination, but there spreads before us a vast field of new technologies which will create jobs in the same way as, for example, the development of the agri-foodstuffs sector has led to increased employment.

14. The recognition of this distinction does not mean that we should be prepared to accept sacrifices over a given period of time with a view to the ultimate benefits of the development of job-creating technologies, but it can nevertheless be very useful in controlling technological capacity and directing it to this or that particular field.

The most recent studies demonstrate that the effect on employment depends on the level at which the new technology is introduced. It appears that employment rates rise when new technologies lead to new products and increased demand. Conversely, when new technology merely improves productivity, the effect is less clearly positive.

15. At the present stage electronics, data processing, automation, the bio industry and space research are generating considerable increases in productivity which result in a rather confused situation in which a number of things are taking place at the same time: some jobs are eliminated, the communcations system within the enterprise grows, with consequent growth in staff, and the tertiary sector in the economy is on the increase.

16. The first thing that can be said about the introduction of new technologies at world level is that the international division of labour is undergoing a change.

17. Traditional and relatively simple tasks are assigned to the developing countries, while the more advanced countries tend to concentrate increasingly on the most technologically sophisticated products. Between these two extremes a whole range of intermediate products can be found, depending on the development level.

18. The above observations illustrate the difficulty of producing reliable employment forecasts.
The macroeconomic models most frequently used are inadequate because they do not take sufficient account of sociological data, though it must be admitted that these are often so contradictory that their handling is extremely difficult.
Clearly, however, we cannot do without such forecasts. All we can do is try to avoid drawing conclusions on the basis of too short time spans or of too imprecise hypotheses.

The advance of part-time work

19. Part-time work will become increasingly common in the tertiary sector and perhaps also in the secondary. While this may meet the wishes of one section of employees, it is not without disadvantages, and it is significant that all the studies carried out so far in Europe show that it is women and young people who are the first to be affected by the introduction of part-time work.

Vocational training

20. Technological change will evidently require almost continuous updating of qualifications, something of which, unfortunately, we have no experience and which is made all the more difficult by the fact that, in addition to a capacity for adaptation, it presupposes a certain level of education and training.
Today we are only entering the age of continuous vocational training. The results so far are not very encouraging, many of the failures being apparently due to the inappropriateness of the training courses to the abilities and requirements of those who undergo them. There is thus need for a systematic research on the process of vocational training, which will have to make a complete break with all that has gone before; and we shall also have to provide ourselves with instructors who can meet present-day needs.

21. Another aspect of the question of vocational training is the assumption that it should produce workers who can be almost totally interchangeable. Unless we are cynically to disregard the social aspect, we have to recognize that this requirement is wrong. It is essential to take account of individual capacity and of individual education and training, from early childhood, in this new technological context. Society's obligations towards one section of its members cannot be confined to providing social assistance.

22. We must therefore ensure that we have adaptability in the social sphere, i.e. is that society can react to technical exigencies swiftly and flexibly but also with social justice in mind.

23. Naturally, time and money will be needed to provide this continuous vocational training and updating. Yet what we find increasingly is that it is the employees themselves who take responsibility for this training while firms, for various reasons, consider that they can no longer meet this compense. This is, of course, an unacceptable situation and there must be a fair sharing of the burdens of vocational training.

IV - EFFECTS ON THE WAY OF LIFE, SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND THE SOCIAL ETHIC

The way of life

24. This is perhaps the most intellectually intriguing aspect, but also the hardest to predict. The technical innovations most widespread today, like cable television, video tapes or the micro computer, have by no means so far met the objectives, particularly of social intercourse and sociability, which were attributed to them. The example of the home computer is especially revealing. To the extent of 95% it is used by children and it is used for playing games. In other words, apart from the incorporation of electronic components, it has changed nothing as compared with other games, such as a pinball machine. Similarly, video tape machines are essentially used for viewing recorded television programmes, their more creative applications, such as their use in conjunction with a video camera, being still in a rudimentary stage.

25. Some specialists, including the sociologist Victor SCARDIGLI consider that new technologies will develop in accordance with one of three models:

1. An integrative model in which the new technologies will be harmoniously integrated in already established social evolutionary trends. In this model the new technologies meet a social need and help in the construction of a society that corresponds more closely to people's aspirations.

2. In contrast, in the second model, the new technologies do not correspond to a pre-existing social demand but are imposed by the state or other economic agents (for instance, large private concerns). In this model the new technologies will become indispensable because the services hitherto provided in the traditional ways will have been abolished. People will thus be forced to use these new technologies and the most culturally and financially disadvantaged social groups will be placed in a position of increased dependence.

3. In the third model the situation is more complex. There will be a good deal of social mistrust of the new technologies promoted by the State or by big business while they will be present, they will be used only marginally. Their role will thus be reduced to that of gimmicks, without essentially influencing people's lives.

26. In practice it is likely that these models will co-exist. The important question is how much of the social space each of them will occupy.
What these three models suggest, at any rate is that a radical change in society is really not to be expected, at least until the end of this century, but that on the other hand there may be some imperceptible behavioural changes in unwanted directions.

27. To conclude this section on effects on the way of life, we shall set down an observation that can be made already at this stage. It is being increasingly noted that the public at large is becoming resistant to some aspects of technological innovation. This is not so much an attitude of rejection as rather of doubt as to the real effectiveness of the particular techniques. This is due in the first place, of course, to the very rapid rate of innovation, but also to the fact that there is a wide gap between commercial forecasts and the real application of the new technologies. In addition, the public is confused by the swift obsolesence of products which appear on the market: by the fact, for instance, that there is a variety of standards for video tape recorders (VHS, V 2000, Betamax), or that microcomputers are not interchangeable or intercompatible. All this creates reservations on the part of the public which must be taken into account.

Social structure

28. Research, particularly in the United States, indicates that we are evolving towards a dual society. This will consist, on the one hand, of those possessed of the necessary adaptability to keep pace with the development of new techniques and to benefit directly from it, and, on the other, of 'the unadapted' who may, according to some experts, represent as much as 20% of the population, who would become society's rejects - somewhat in the manner described by H.G. WELLS in 'The Time Machine'.

29. This is, admittedly, a very pessimistic prognosis, but it does serve as a warning.

The social ethic

30. For several years already the mass spread of new technologies has been raising issues of ethics and it is to the credit of scientists that they were the first to draw attention to them. We are all familiar, of course, with the problems of genetic manipulation, but it appears that a number of principles have already been adopted which should prevent major errors in this area. Besides, since there is considerable public awareness of the problem there seems no need to dwell on it.

31. In other areas, however, we are subject to infringements of ethics, sometimes without fully realizing it. The first of these is the area of information. Thanks to our democratic system, information in our societies is free. But because of the proliferation of information sources and networks, campaigns of disinformation can today be conducted, sometimes insidiously, on economic, political, social and religious matters. We are not suggesting here some ad hoc or arbitrary solution to these abuses of information, but simply indicating that we should be aware of this problem of the manipulation of the masses and that in some particular cases we should perhaps strengthen the rules of professional ethics in the professions concerned.

32. Electronics, especially as applied in administration and banking, has greatly simplified the ordinary citizens' daily routine. It would appear that in most European countries care has been taken to protect information in data transmission and recording systems, but the protection is perhaps not yet complete. Research is needed on the most practical and reliable means of preventing the leakage of confidential and private information and also of fraud connected with certain methods of payment.

33. Although this is not strictly in the domain of ethics, attention should be drawn to the health aspects of the new technologies, whether as regards the general problem of stress in man/machine situations, or the use of VDUs, or the use of dangerous substances in industry. Passing from the level of the individual to that of whole populations, we should bear in mind the dangers of technological disasters which unfortunately are becoming increasingly frequent, both in nuclear power stations and in industry (Seveso, Bhopal).

34. This brief list of topics, each of which would require a full parliamentary report, leads us to the issue of democratic control over technological options. Never in the past has the question of democratic control been so important, precisely because new techniques so many infringements of our freedoms possible. In this context we can only welcome the most interesting proposal put forward in our committee by Mr LINKOHR, that an office for the assessment of scientific and technical decisions should be set up in the European Parliament.

V - SPECIFIC ASPECTS

35. As we have repeatedly stressed, it is not possible within the restricted framework of a report such as this to deal with all the consequences of new technologies. This is why, in addition to the general problems touched upon, we felt it would be useful to point to some specific aspects of the consequences of the new technologies.

36. To put it briefly, many people, sometimes vaguely, fear that the new technologies will lead to a caste system and to what might be called social injustice, both in national and international terms.

37. It is therefore important to realize that the new technologies in themselves are neutral and it is only the use we make of them and the decisions we make about them which may be good or bad.

38. By referring to two examples of major importance, therefore, your rapporteur would like to show how new technologies can be developed for the greatest good of the greatest numbers.

The Third World

39. One of the things that can be said with certainty about the new technologies is that they will widen the gap between our societies and those of the Third World and of course of the less developed countries. For a number of different but valid reasons we thus have a responsibility towards these countries.

40. This means that technology transfer will acquire an even greater importance, but it must be a genuine transfer that is useful to the receiving countries. This raises, of course, once again the everlasting question as to whether developing countries need new technologies or simply basic technologies. But this is, in fact, a spurious question because many new technologies allow the simplification of the basic technologies which can thus prove of fundamental value to the developing countries. Solar energy and wind energy are just two examples that come immediately to mind and many more could be quoted in many other areas.

The aged and the handicapped

41. These are two social groups who may justifiably fear that they will become the forgotten victims of a technological society, yet it is also possible to envisage scenarios in which they would be its prime beneficiaries.

42. The new technologies can bring enormous help to these two social groups. There is unlimited scope for innovations which would change and fundamentally improve their daily life.

43. There is no essential contradiction between technological innovation and social progress and this is why we should concentrate on maximizing the social benefits of the new technologies.

44. In the same way, let it be said, there is no inherent conflict between the new technologies and certain less productional life patterns which some members of our society proclaim. Enough to point to the possibilities of alternative energies to demonstrate that innovation can also be put at the service of a non-mercantile way of life.

VI - THE NEED FOR JOINT ACTION

45. Your rapporteur believes that in addition to measures already announced, action is required in areas concerning:

- control of the effect of new technologies on the quantity and quality of work; control over changes in the production system;

- a new distribution of the work available with the aim of increasing employment;

- the preservation of all the social conquests achieved so far;

- information and consultation of the workers prior to the introduction of new technologies;

- assessment of their impact on the organization of work.

46. In all the research reports which have been produced so far by the Commission and by international bodies there is no indication of any profound differences among the Community member countries as regards the consequences of the new technologies.

47. Where divergences exist, they are connected with divergences in the level of economic development of the Community member countries but it would seem that increasingly new technologies are making their appearance at the same time.

48. Since the problems are similar, a joint response suggests itself. Action at Community level means increased possibilities of analysis and comparison. Similarly, decisions on technological options taken jointly are more likely to be right.

49. A joint decision must necessarily be a comprehensive one and should not be confined to the narrow limits of Community social policy. What seems to be indicated, rather, is an evolution within a technological Community towards a programme of interaction, consisting, on the one hand, of a technological strategy and, on the other, of a social strategy that takes account of the implications of the technical objectives and, if necessary, readjusts them.

European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1984-1985

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mrs CINCIARI RODANO, Mrs TRUPIA,
Mrs MARINARO and Mrs SQUARCIALUPI

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

on the social impact of the new technologies on
the situation of women

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution on the position of women in the
  European Community[1],

- having regard to the resolution of its committees of inquiry on the
  situation of women in Europe[2],

- having regard to the Council resolution[3] on action to combat unemployment
  amongst women, setting out the measures to be implemented in the fields of
  vocational guidance and training, placement and women's employment,

- having regard to the conclusions of the Council[4] on technological change
  and social adjustment,

- having regard to the Council recommendation of 13 December 1984 on the
  promotion of positive action for women[5],

A. whereas the introduction of new technologies will give rise to a series
    of changes which will affect not only the world of work, but also the
    organization of society and the individual's way of life,

B. whereas, in particular, the opportunities for women to enter the labour
    market and the occupations they pursue will be determined to a significant
    extent by technological innovation,

C. whereas one of the goals of the campaign for women's rights is to
    improve the quality of women's lives and this goal needs to be pursued
    in full knowledge of how and to what extent the new technologies will
    change their conditions of life, both at work and as mothers,

1. Considers it essential that a detailed analysis be conducted to evaluate
    the difference in the impact that the introduction of new technologies
    will have on male and female employment;

2. Fears that there is a serious risk within the world of data processing
    that the notion of particular occupations being reserved for a
    particular sex, men being concerned with hardware and women with
    software, will acquire significantly greater currency;

3. Points once again in this connection to the importance of vocational
    training for women and emphasizes in particular the need for vocational
    guidance to be given at a very early stage, so that the selection of
    women's career models may be freed from the tendency to conform with
    'feminine stereotypes' at work;

4. Calls on the Commission to devise strategies and practical measures
    that will ensure that technological innovation results in the
    enhancement of women's role in society and an improvement in their
    position on the labour market;

5. Calls on its competent committee to draw up, as quickly as possible,
    a detailed report on the social impact of the new technologies on
    the situation of women;

6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission
    and Council of the European Communities.

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[1] OJ No. C 50, 9.3.1981
[2] OJ No. C 46, 20.2.1984
[3] OJ No. C 161, 21.6.1984
[4] OJ No. C 184, 11.7.1984
[5] OJ No. L 331, 19.12.1984

PE 98.580/fin.