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45. Stresses the need for a major reform of the Community's training and retraining policies in order to increase the research corps of Europe;

In the longer term

46. Calls for a more precise definition of a Community technology strategy;

47. Believes that this strategy should contain the following basic elements:

- the Community should maintain its comparative advantage in space, energy-related research and telecommunications;
- the Community should concentrate on improving its relative position as regards biotechnology, marine technology, new materials and micro-electronics;

48. Believes that the institutions of the Community should commit themselves to making up, in the next 10 years, by 1995, the loss in industrial competitiveness in high technology goods, incurred in the past 20 years;

49. Instructs its Committee on Energy, Research and Technology to report to it annually on the state of Europe technologically, and progress made towards the achievement of the objectives outlined above;

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50. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Parliaments of the Member States.

(b) Doc. A2-110/85

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 the 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,

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1. Welcomes the new technologies as a potential 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;
3. Is of the opinion that this uncertainty with regard to the future renders necessary a large number of technological choices, notably in view of their social consequences;
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 increasing loss of control over technology which can produce unforeseen consequences and mounting risks for workers, the population and the environment;
6. Is of the opinion that in evaluating the new technologies account must be taken of their effect on the environment and that some of these may be useful in assessing ecological problems as a whole;
7. Affirms that our society must therefore be increasingly on its guard and ensure that technology is under full scientific, economic and social control;
8. 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

9. Points out that companies are at the centre of the current transformation and they must be reorganized if the new technologies are to be introduced in an efficient and intelligent manner;
10. 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;
11. Is of the opinion that profound transformations may occur in the lives and work of individuals due to work at home, greater isolation and different political and social involvement;
12. Notes that signs are emerging of a questioning of the traditional balance of forces within the system of production;
13. Takes the view that the trade unions and employers' organizations must be consulted before decisions are taken on the development and introduction of new technologies;
14. 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;
15. Notes that the disappearance of jobs through conversion, and the creation of new jobs are bringing about a permanent change in job qualification requirements;
16. 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;
17. Emphasizes the scale of the training requirements generated by the new technologies and by information technologies in particular;
18. Is aware of the need to anticipate them through timely training in the appropriate skills;

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

20. 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;

21. Emphasizes, furthermore, the social benefits technological innovations will produce in agriculture since these innovations will give farmers conditions similar to those of other workers, and compensate for the greater increase in the cost of labour consequent upon the reduction of working hours by stabilizing the rate of employment and improving prospects for younger generations;

Lifestyle and ethical problems

22. 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;

23. Considers, therefore, there should be more detailed social evaluation and more cautious political assessment of technological options;

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

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

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

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

28. 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;

29. 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;

30. 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;

31. 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;

32. Considers that despite the opportunities it affords, genetics entails serious ethical and moral problems; that precise legal standards must be drawn up forthwith on the rights of children and unborn children; and, finally, that a dialogue be set up between scientific, medical and political circles;

Our relations with the Third World

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

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34. Is aware that the transformation of our society can only heighten our responsibility towards the most underprivileged countries;
35. Affirms, therefore, our commitment to transfer new technology to the Third World with the aim of meeting these countries' real needs;
36. Believes that technology should not be exported to the Third World until an objective and precise analysis of requirements has been carried out;
37. Supports in particular the development of technology characterized by low production costs and a high degree of social usefulness (energy generation, irrigation, etc.);
38. 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;
39. Believes that the new technologies, particularly information technologies, can contribute to a policy of education and eradicating illiteracy in the Third World;

The need for joint action

40. Considers it absolutely vital that a genuine technological community be built as a key component of political integration in Europe;
41. Considers that the identity of technological developments and their consequences in all the countries of Europe must prompt a joint response;
42. 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;
43. 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 through the OECD;
44. 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;
45. 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;
46. 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;
47. 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;
48. Considers that this is a vital extension of the work carried out in the ESPRIT programme;
49. Instructs its Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, its Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and the Committee on Women's Rights to monitor the consequences of new technologies for European society with a view to presenting another report to Parliament in 12 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;

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50. 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;

51. 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, and in particular on living and working conditions, levels of culture, environmental protection, employment and health;

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