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Attention *Muller*

~~S/S Penning~~

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President has approved statement as written per Chester Martin (NSC Staff) to Helen Brown 9/24/70

*Cy to S/S-0*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

S/S 11574

Copies To:

August 24, 1970

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: U.S. Policy toward the Major International Organizations Dealing with the Environment

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Recommendation:

That the United States (a) exercise affirmative leadership in each of the three major international organizations dealing with the environment -- the United Nations, the OECD and NATO --; (b) encourage each organization to develop its special competences to the fullest, having due regard for political and economic realities and the potential performance of each organization.

Approve \_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

Background:

Following your recent conversation with members of the Council on Environmental Quality in which you emphasized the need to consider environmental problems in the global context, Chairman Russell Train, in consultation with Daniel P. Moynihan and the Special Assistant for Environmental Affairs, Christian A. Herter, Jr., recommended that a memorandum be prepared with a description of the major international organizations dealing with the environment and assessing how the United States might wisely allocate its priorities among these organizations. We sought this kind of an appraisal as a guideline to our officials at home and

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abroad at a time when international activity on the environment is increasing, when planning for important international conferences in 1971 and 1972 is advancing rapidly, and when two of these organizations, the OECD and the UN's Economic Commission for Europe have reorganized their structure to concentrate more effectively on environmental problems.

The appraisal concludes that the United States benefits by continued substantial participation in the work being done on the environment within the United Nations, the OECD and NATO. Each of these organizations has special and unique attributes, experience and potential for dealing with various aspects of the environmental problems that will face us in the coming years. Each organization provides an important framework to facilitate United States cooperation with other nations. The United States has the opportunity in each organization to provide significant assistance and advice in making technology available to deal with specific environmental problems. Equally, this country has much to learn from other nations in areas where they appear to have greater expertise, e.g. regional planning in land use, population distribution and urban planning.

The appraisal recommends that the United States encourage the fullest and most practical development of the special attributes within each organization, with due regard to political and economic realities and the actual potential of each. It recommends that as areas of strength within each organization develop, the United States give appropriate support to those developments which promise to have a genuine impact in solving environmental issues. At the same time the U.S. should strive to achieve mutual enforcement of their environmental activities according to an overall U.S. plan so as to assure effective utilization of limited fiscal and manpower resources in furtherance of U.S. interests.

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A summary description of the three organizations and of the work in which they are or plan to be engaged is enclosed. The description also appraises the special strengths and competence of each organization.


  
Acting Secretary

Enclosure:

As stated.

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Summary Description and Appraisal  
of the  
Major International Organizations  
Dealing with the Environment

There are three principal international organizations dealing with environmental problems. They are the United Nations proper as well as the regional U.N. Organization for Europe (the ECE) and the U.N. specialized agencies; the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and NATO, through the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS).

1. United Nations

(a) The 1972 Stockholm Conference. Sweden will host a major U.N. Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in June 1972. The decision to hold this Conference reflects the intensified work on environmental problems undertaken in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the U.N. Secretariat, resulting, for example, in research, planning, and development assistance programs on the urban environment and non-renewable natural resources and on the causes and impact of pollution on a worldwide scale. The President's public endorsement of this Conference has expressed U.S. recognition that this forum is of the greatest importance for mobilizing the nations of the world to deal effectively with certain environmental problems as intrinsically international problems.

It is the only conference of this kind in which the less developed countries will participate, and it is of utmost importance that these countries take part in a substantive way which would reflect their real, although still largely unacknowledged, self-interest in joint action to improve the environment.

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The U.N. Conference can lead to one or more conventions treating international environmental problems and may establish an international organization of a new kind to handle these problems.

In short, the Stockholm Conference provides a focus for work on broad issues of environmental policies and administration in the international field. Its success in realistic and lasting terms will be important not only for the reputation of the United Nations itself but also for the work of international cooperation in this field over the next decade.

(b) The U.N. Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).  
The ECE has planned a conference of industrialized nations from the East and West for May '1971 in Prague. ECE is a principal forum in which East/West relations can be improved. Environmental problems common to East/West industrialized nations can often transcend political differences and ECE provides a setting in which continuous contacts with Eastern Europe and the USSR can be maintained. Further, the U.S. has pushed hard -- including through NATO CCMS -- to upgrade the participation in the Prague Conference to that of ministerial level, and Chairman Train has been designated to lead the U.S. delegation at Prague.

Although the ECE, because of its politically divergent membership, cannot itself be expected to undertake dramatic operational tasks on the environment, it has a respectable capability for joint studies leading to agreement on regulations and standards. Its reorganized Secretariat Staff should be able to focus more systematically on questions of the environment. Under the leadership of its energetic Yugoslav Secretary-General, Janos Stanovnik, the ECE will unquestionably play a useful and more active role in consequence of Prague; and Stanovnik hopes that this conference can be preparatory to that of the U.N. in Stockholm.

As planning for the Conference proceeds, the U.S. will explore the attitudes of the USSR and the most interested Eastern European states, particularly Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and identify possible



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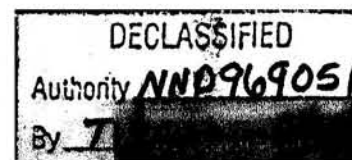
new areas for realistic East-West environmental cooperation within the ECE framework. Prospects for this are reasonably bright, since both NATO and the Warsaw Pact have acknowledged the value of environmental cooperation. The Warsaw Pact states will doubtless push hard to secure East German participation in the ECE Conference. The U.S. handling of this sensitive issue will hinge in part on the state of inter-German relations and in part on the course of international negotiations affecting Germany in which the U.S. and other Western governments are currently involved.

(c) United Nations and the Specialized Agencies.

The specialized agencies of the U.N. have by and large compiled impressive records of achievement, on a sound technical and non-political basis, in such fields as land use and conservation of natural resources (FAO), atmospheric monitoring, disaster prediction services, and weather forecasting information (WMO), international health problems of the broadest range (WHO), certain aspects of oil pollution on the high seas (IMCO), noise (ICAO), and monitoring of radioactive pollution (IAEA). Clearly, we should continue to take an active part in the work of these agencies and in addition should consider ways in which their individual fields of specialization can be more effectively related one to the other and placed in the broader context of world environmental quality.

2. The OECD, whose membership includes the nations of Western Europe in addition to Japan, Canada and the United States, brings together all the major non-Communist industrial powers in a forum dedicated to developing international economic cooperation. It has been engaged for a number of years in work on environmental problems, and is developing the particular experience and professional competence needed for analyzing the economic aspects of environmental control.

An Environment Committee has recently been established to study a wide range of economic questions related

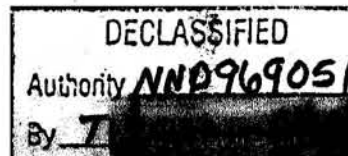


to environmental problems and to coordinate the work of the relevant sections of the Organization on these issues, in order to offer governments specific policy-oriented conclusions and recommendations for action. The Committee will appraise the possible effects of environmental measures on international trade, develop and improve indicators of economic and social well-being, and analyze how the diversion of resources to combating environmental degradation might affect economic growth and production. Such economic and social problems have international aspects that will require the development of close cooperation among the developed countries for effective solutions, a function for which the OECD is especially suited.

There is no doubt that the U.S., as a major trading nation, has a vital interest in the work of the OECD in general, as well as in specific OECD activities in the environment field such as air pollution, water resources management, unintended occurrence of pesticides in the environment, noise, urban development and transport policy. OECD Secretary General Emile van Lennep takes a strong personal interest in strengthening this aspect of OECD work, and the U.S. strongly supports the development of this improved OECD capability and the Organization's emphasis on the economic issues of the environment.

3. NATO/CCMS: Established in 1969 as a direct result of the President's initiative, the CCMS has effectively tackled specific issues such as air and open water pollution, flood and earthquake disaster relief, water pollution, and road safety.

Despite initial reservations on the part of some NATO members, CCMS has shown that the "pilot country" concept applied to environmental problems, is an effective managerial device to cut through international bureaucracy and achieve specific results in clearly defined areas within a specific time period under the leadership of one or two interested countries. The NATO capacity to gain access to authoritative political levels and its orientation toward action have also given through CCMS a new kind of impetus to work on the environment.



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Because of its derivation as a major Presidential initiative, and the importance we have accorded CCMS politically and in the environmental field, the United States should give special attention to pilot projects launched under CCMS aegis to assure their timely success.

CCMS was conceived primarily, not as an operational agency, but rather as a catalyst that would generate action by member countries either individually or in appropriate international organizations. The unique character of CCMS deriving from its links to high policy levels in Allied Governments renders it most suitable as a primary initiator for major innovative programs and policies requiring a high degree of coordination among the technically advanced and industrialized Allied countries. To achieve our political and environmental purposes, it is imperative that projects under CCMS sponsorship be given special support with respect to obtaining the cooperation of our Allies. Thus not only is our full commitment needed, but we must continue our efforts to win full Allied support.

The U.S. believes that the momentum and experience gained in this framework represent valuable assets with useful implications for other international organizations. The CCMS effort warrants our continued strong support. Any sign that the U.S. is slackening in this support would create doubts in the minds of our Allies as to our willingness to follow through on our commitments, in this case a Presidential initiative, which NATO Secretary General Brosio and several Allied political leaders have supported.

