

Berlin, 3 April 1995
CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE
Speech given by Mr Tom SPENCER MEP

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to undertake a twin task this morning. To represent, here, those environmentally concerned Parliamentarians in GLOBE International, (Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment), of which I am Vice President; and to speak via this Conference to my fellow parliamentarians around the planet.

It will not surprise you that the GLOBE Working Group on Energy and Climate Change has been active since before Rio nor that the GLOBE Europe Network meeting in March in Copenhagen endorsed the Toronto target and the AOSIS protocol.

We do not share the clever confusion of this week's Economist leader, which is a classic example of writing a story to support a cartoon, of a sunbathing penguin on an iceberg, rather than the other way round.

We choose to listen - not to the Economist but to the economists, the insurers, the bankers and all those others who know that we cannot begin to achieve emission targets of any variety without fiscal instruments.

Fiscal instruments, especially global ones, are not god-given. They are birthed in blood and tears by politicians.

Nobody said this process was going to be easy. We are part of the way through a fifteen year political marathon.

Mr President, I foresee no instantaneous burst of political enlightenment. No flash flood of eco-ecus flowing South. Rather I foresee a rising tide of recognised self-interest.

This is where the persistence of parliamentarians is important.

Our skills, the well-aimed question, the sharpened statistic, the crafted compromise, are crucial in turning the vision of the climatologist, the drafting of the diplomat and the outrage of the NGO activist into working law.

As Rapporteur for the European Parliament on the proposed CO2/Energy tax, I tabled a series of compromise amendments on Friday. These would enable the majority of European Union countries to go forward without disrupting the Single Market and in a framework that would accommodate late joiners. I look to the French Presidency of the Council and the Commission to make progress.

Progress, however slow, however partial, is precious because of the demonstration effect.

Mr President, I believe in the demonstration effect; of Northern Europe before Southern Europe, of the EU before Japan and the US, of the OECD before the newly industrialised countries, of Asia before Africa, of India before China.

So my message to my fellow parliamentarians is two fold.

Do not be intimidated by lobbies. Lobbies with a professional interest in pessimism, with fees in failure, with clients who are paying for confusion.

Do not be intimidated by Ministers. Ministers with impossibly short political timescales, who plead that it is all too difficult.

With your permission Mr President, I would remind the Conference that most Ministers are only parliamentarians made weak by too much advice, too much travel and too much ambition.

They need our votes, they need our pressure. They need our belief that a global convention on fiscal instruments can ultimately be concluded. They need courage and a sense of urgency.

Last month, I suggested in a speech to the European Parliament, that the next Conference of the Parties should convene on the iceberg that recently broke off from Antarctica. It has many advantages: it is larger than Berlin, there are fewer distractions, there is a built-in timetable for success - it is called meltdown.

My message today to you as Conference negotiators can be summed up in the words of Al Gore when he was President of GLOBE International "Whatever the complexity, whatever the obstacles, we cannot afford the luxury of despair".

Of all the negotiations that you work on in your professional lives, this is the one worth getting right.

It is precisely because of the difficulty of this task that success is so important.

If you can succeed with the climate you can succeed at anything and everything. You can girdle the globe with a framework of commonsense.



Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment

A Project of the Congressional Institute for the Future

March 23, 1995

The Honorable Timothy Wirth
Undersecretary for Global Affairs
2201 C Street, N.W.
Room 7250
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Undersecretary:

We write in support of U.S. leadership at the upcoming Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP1) which will take place in Berlin March 28th - April 7th.

As you know, COP1 is the most important international environmental meeting on climate change since the Convention was signed by 154 states at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio. We believe it essential for the United States to play a leadership role in shaping future commitments under the Convention.

In his Earth Day speech in 1993, President Clinton proclaimed his support for the Convention by committing the U.S. to return greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000 and to continue the trend in reduced emissions. At INC 9 in 1994, the U.S. clearly stated that current commitments are inadequate to achieve the objective of the Convention, a position supported by many other countries. Negotiation of further steps to ensure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions is therefore necessary.

Specifically we believe:

1. It is imperative for the U.S. and other developed countries to demonstrate their support for the Convention by meeting their current commitments to return emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000. Analyses by the Secretariat and Climate Action Network show that the U.S. and other major industrialized countries will not meet their current emissions targets unless additional action is taken. The U.S. should have new measures in place, by the Second Conference of the Parties, to close the significant gap in our National Action Plan. This is especially important in winning the confidence and participation of developing country Parties in future action under the Convention.
2. It is widely recognized that for the Convention to be a success, there must be progress toward climate change mitigation by all Parties. However, it is counter-productive to insist that developing countries adopt commitments similar to those of developed countries at this time. Insistence on such a step, especially without further clarification of what is required of these countries, will substantially hinder the negotiation process. The U.S. should instead focus on opportunities to bring developing countries into the process through measures that will be to their

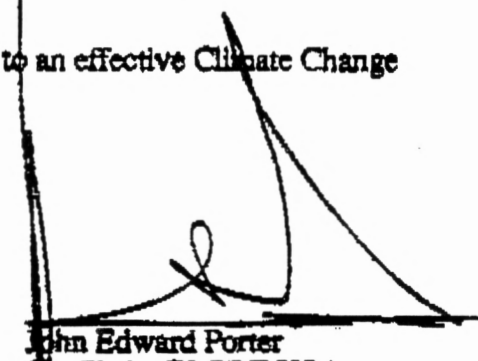
economic and environmental advantage, and lay a positive foundation for further developing country involvement in the future. This should include concrete steps toward meeting the developed country obligations for technology transfer under Article 4.5.

3. The U.S. should take a strong stand against the efforts of several oil producing states to undermine the negotiation process. These Parties have attempted to slow current negotiations and undo past progress by reopening agreements forged at earlier negotiations. It is of utmost importance that the U.S. take a strong stand on the issue of rules 22 and 42 of the Rules of Procedure, which direct the creation of the Bureau, and define the voting procedures, of the Conference of the Parties. If the oil producing delegations succeed in pushing for a requirement of unanimous consensus for adopting a protocol or in creating an OPEC seat on the Bureau, they essentially ensure a single country can undermine the progress of the entire Convention. This would not only jeopardize the Climate Convention, it would set a disastrous precedent for environmental treaties.
4. The U.S. should take a leadership role in crafting a framework for negotiating a protocol. The U.S. has recognized the necessity of establishing a new aim for the year 2010 or 2020. The U.S. has further supported completion of negotiations on this aim by 1997 in time for adoption by the third Conference of the Parties. The analytical phase and the negotiation phase are each critical to building consensus around a new aim and should run in unison in order to facilitate a dynamic sharing of information between the two. The AOSIS protocol and the German Elements Paper should also be considered in this process.
5. Finally, it has been brought to our attention that some developing country Parties, joined by some oil producing countries, are questioning the scientific authority of the Intergovernmental Panel Climate Change. This body was created by the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Environment Programme, and the World Meteorological Organization to be the scientific authority on climate issues. Its findings are widely respected in the scientific community. The U.S. should strongly oppose efforts to politicize the IPCC or to relegate it to anything other than its preeminent role.

We reassert our support of the President's commitment to an effective Climate Change Convention and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


John F. Kerry
Co-Chair, GLOBE USA


John Edward Porter
Co-Chair, GLOBE USA