Resolution 813 (1983)[1]

Contemporary architecture

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having noted the report of its Committee on Culture and Education on contemporary architecture (Doc. 5146) ;

Quality and participation

2. Recalling its long-standing interest in the architectural heritage ;

3. Concerned that buildings of today should play a role in modern society, but then also find a place in tomorrow's European heritage ;

4. Regretting that economic constraints too often lead to the sacrifice of qualitative criteria in modern construction ;

5. Concerned at the isolation of much of modern architecture from human contact ;

6. Believing that architecture, because of its direct effect on the environment and on quality of life, should be more sensitively related to the feelings of those living and working in it ;

7. Having noted Recommendation No. R (80) 16 of the Committee of Ministers on the specialised training of architects, town planners, civil engineers and landscape designers and the Symposium held in Ravello in 1978 on this subject,

8. Calls for :

8.1. a much closer association of the public in the planning process (through greater use of public inquiries and clearer information) and a greater attention to quality in the criteria for modern construction ;

8.2. a greater sensibilisation of the public to architectural design through aesthetic training, environmental education, architecture exhibitions and public debate, in which the media especially at local level can play an important role ;

8.3. the inclusion in the training of architects and planners of greater stress on the social impact of buildings and on the importance of public participation from conception to use ;

New buildings in old settings

9. Drawing attention to the need to incorporate contemporary building of quality and sensitivity within the existing architectural fabric in order to maintain a sense of continuity in the architectural tradition ;

10. Wishing to ensure the continued growth of European towns and villages, while respecting the importance of conserving the character of existing historic areas ;

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1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 23 November1983.See Doc. 5146, report of the Committee on Culture and Education.

11. Informed of the Seminar on new buildings in old settings organised by the Council of Europe in Bristol in March 1982,

12. Calls on planning authorities to take a much more positive approach to possibilities of adding contemporary architecture in historic areas, and to seek the support of conservation societies and of the public so as to have recourse to pastiche only in exceptional circumstances or as a temporary measure ;

13. Urges that planning regulations for conservation areas, while being sufficiently protective to prevent destruction, demolition or loss, should be sufficiently flexible so as not to stifle talent but to encourage architectural innovation ;

Future action at European level

14. Conscious that the majority of modern building in practice escapes the immediate control of national authorities, but believing that there is a real need for European co-operation to exchange experiences of successful examples of contemporary architecture, both at professional and public levels, and that it is the role of the Council of Europe to encourage further co-operation in this field,

15. Calls for the development of a dialogue between architects, planners, local representatives, conservationists and the general public, both at local level, and also through the media and in international bodies, including the Council of Europe ;

16. Asks the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe to consider means of improving qualitative and societal appreciation in planning decisions at local government level ;

17. Invites the European Parliament to join in considering further ways of following up this resolution, and in particular of identifying (in cooperation with architects and the construction industry) policies for promoting sensitive creativity in contemporary architecture.