

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by the following Members: Le Pen, de Gaulle, Gollnisch, Lang and Martinez

on behalf of the TDI Group

on the oil spill off the French coast

B5-0046/2000**Resolution on the oil spill off the French coast**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the oil spill off the French coast caused by the wreck of the oil tanker 'Erika',
- A. having regard to the recurrence of disasters involving oil tankers off the French coast as well as to the deliberate venting of tanks, which results in the discharge of even greater quantities of oil,
- B. having regard to the scale of the damage caused to fishermen, oyster farmers, salt marshes, people working in the tourist industry and, as time goes by, to the entire local economy, in other words, to jobs,
- C. having regard to the environmental impact on fauna, flora and landscape,
- D. whereas no progress has been made by public authorities, by oil companies or by shipowners over the past 35 years as regards the prevention and cleaning up of oil spills,
- E. whereas globalisation has actually exacerbated the situation because maximum profit has been given priority over safety,
- F. whereas technical solutions do exist which are frequently expensive but available, although unused (satellite surveillance, all-weather oil-spill clearance vessels, etc.),
- G. whereas the European Union does not envisage the regular use of double-hulled oil tankers until 2019,
- H. whereas, if ordinary people must submit their private vehicles to rigorous technical checks, it is considerably more important for more rigorous checks to be carried out on ships of 50 000 tonnes and over,
- I. having regard to the unacceptably slack approach currently taken to the campaign to prevent ships from venting their tanks at sea,
 - 1. Takes the view that the oil companies which own the hydrocarbons must remain responsible for them, even when they are spilled over rocks and beaches and whether such pollution is deliberate or involuntary;
 - 2. Calls, on the basis of the 'polluter-pays' principle, for the oil companies to bear the entire cost of cleaning up and compensating direct and indirect damage and, to that end, to set up, on an industry-wide basis, an 'Intervention Fund for the Cleaning-up of Oil-based Pollution' (IFCOP), while leaving open the possibility of subsequent recourse to insurance and, where appropriate, to the courts;

3. Calls for that Fund also to bear the costs of a study into the material resources required (e.g. all-weather oil-spill clearance vessels, effective booms, use of bacteria, etc.) which will enable oil spills in rough seas to be successfully combated in future, it being understood that oil tankers, like all vessels, rarely sink when the weather is good;
4. Notes that, at all events, the taxpayer should no longer be called upon to pay the cost of making good damage caused by private entities;
5. Denounces the practice of 'flags of convenience' and will review ways in which the Member States might put a stop thereto;
6. Denounces the scandalous practice of the venting of tanks at sea and the complicity of the authorities which fail to equip themselves with the appropriate means of detection (in particular, satellite surveillance) and which impose in dribs and drabs fines which are ridiculously small compared with the damage caused and with the actual cost of venting in port;
7. Proposes that oil tankers should not be permitted to leave port until they have fully cleaned their tanks;
8. Encourages the Member States to impound in port any oil tanker about which doubts exist or which is proved to have caused deliberate pollution and, in the near future, only to authorise double-hulled vessels;
9. Encourages the Member States likewise to hand down genuinely deterrent fines in cases involving deliberate pollution;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council of Ministers and the Commission.