

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

Session document

17 February 2000

B5-0186/2000

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Oral Question B5-0017/2000

pursuant to Rule 42(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by the following Members: Wurtz, Jové Peres, Papayannakis, Sjöstedt, and Vachetta

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on the accident involving the *Erika*

B5-0186/2000**Resolution on the accident involving the *Erika***

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 20 January 2000 on the oil slick disaster caused by the wreck of the *Erika*¹,
- A. whereas the accident involving the oil tanker *Erika* on 12 December 1999 has led to severe pollution of 450 km of coast,
- B. whereas further oil leaks from the wreck have led to renewed contamination of sites that had already been cleaned,
- C. whereas the oil slick constitutes nothing less than an ecological disaster and has seriously damaged the marine ecosystem and biodiversity, and bird-life and fish stocks in particular,
- D. whereas fisheries, aquaculture, oyster and shellfish farming, and tourism, the main economic activities in the region concerned, have been hit particularly hard,
- E. whereas oyster and shellfish farming products on many sites have been declared unfit for consumption,
- F. whereas years of efforts will be required to repair the damage caused, replace what has been destroyed, and restore consumer confidence,
- G. having regard to the strength of feeling apparent at the demonstrations, not least the one staged in Nantes on 5 February 2000, that have given vent to the outcry against the greed for profit which caused the disaster,
 - 1. Again expresses its solidarity with and support for all the victims of this oil slick disaster and applauds the work of the volunteers and professionals still cleaning up the beaches;
 - 2. Maintains that every effort must be made to pump all of the remaining oil out of the ship's tanks;
 - 3. Believes that the real culprits must be made to pay the costs arising from the pollution; calls, therefore, on the TotalFina oil company to supply the money required to help pay the cost of repairing the ecological, economic, and social damage and making amends to the victims;

¹ 'Texts adopted' on that date, Item 2.

4. Applauds the Commission for encouraging the Member States to work in coordination (pumping oil, supply of floating barriers) and releasing Community funds under the LIFE programme but considers that it has failed to show the necessary degree of Community solidarity;
5. Deplores the fact that the Commission has merely called for a change of use of existing European funds to help the stricken areas and refused to grant additional assistance under the Structural Funds;
6. Calls for further European aid to be granted to:
 - help clean up the polluted coastline,
 - help the organisations which have undertaken the task of treating oil-covered birds,
 - improve storage capacity for oil waste and treatment and recycling of such waste,
 - help damaged businesses to recover;
7. Calls on the Commission, working in partnership with the authorities and other organisations, to help set up and run an oil slick monitoring centre, which would be called upon to employ every means required to prevent a repetition of disasters such as the *Erika* accident;
8. Calls on the Commission to pay compensatory allowances to the fishermen, oyster farmers, and shellfish farmers who have sustained substantial income losses and need to invest in order to restore their facilities to their former condition;
9. Calls on the Commission to intensify research efforts under the fifth framework programme to enable the consequences of oil pollution to be tackled more effectively, focusing in particular on waste storage and treatment processes;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the governments of the Member States.