

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1981 - 1982

12 FEBRUARY 1982

1-1009/81

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mr De La MALENE

on behalf of the Group of European
Progressive Democrats

with request for topical and urgent debate
pursuant to Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure

on the signature by certain Member States of
the Community, of major contracts with the
USSR for the supply of natural gas

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the resolutions of the Council¹ on Community energy policy objectives,
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council on the development of an energy strategy for the Community²,
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council on natural gas³,
- having regard to the FUCHS REPORT⁴, adopted on 4 February 1980 by the European Parliament, on the communication from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 211/79) on the energy objectives of the Community for 1990 and convergence of the policies of the Member States, and on nuclear and energy policy,
- drawing attention to the need for the Community to meet the energy challenge, which has been reaffirmed on many occasions in the past few years by the European Council,
- whereas the necessary measures proposed by the Commission to the Council with a view to improving the security of natural gas supplies are based on the aim of reducing the relative importance of the various external supply sources,
- whereas the main objective of the Community as regards energy policy is the progressive reduction of the Community's dependence on external supplies and the diversification of supplies,
- whereas the natural gas requirements of certain Member States of the Community could be met from other sources of supply, in particular the North Sea and the Gulf of Guinea,
- whereas the degree to which the countries signatory to the contract will be dependent on natural gas from the Soviet Union is incompatible with the Commission's proposals on natural gas,
- whereas, at the technical level, dependence on natural gas results in more constraints than other forms of energy particularly as regards utilization in the field of transport,
- whereas the volume of Soviet Gas supplies provided for in the contracts signed by certain Member States - amounting to several thousand million cubic metres per year - makes for very considerable financing commitments on the part of purchasers (capital, rates of interest and duration), which will result in financial dependence in addition to energy dependence,
- whereas, moreover, a serious situation exists in certain Eastern bloc countries which, as recent events have shown, are facing persistent difficulties,

¹ OJ C 153 of 9.7.1975 p.1 and OJ C 149 of 18.6.1980 p.1

² COM (81) 540 final

³ COM (81) 530 final

⁴ Doc. 1-704/79

I. ASKS THE COMMISSION AND COUNCIL TO SAY WHETHER:

1. The foreseeable consequences of these contracts would not be as follows: a de facto increase in the Community's energy dependence, an undermining of the EEC's security of energy supplies, and the complete jeopardization of the Community's energy strategy;
2. These decisions, the stated reason for which is the risk of a shortage of natural gas supplies, are truly rational, bearing in mind that experts estimate that the real risk of a shortage of gas relates only to a short period, i.e. from 1985 to 1990;
3. These decisions will not result in excessive economic dependence vis-à-vis the supplier country;
4. These decisions, which were taken or confirmed a few weeks after the tragic events in Poland, are not also likely to have serious political consequences;

II. INVITES THE COMMISSION :

5. To study, as soon as possible, the political, technical and financial implications of the Soviet gas supply contracts signed by certain Member States of the Community, with particular reference to the independence and security of supplies sought by the EEC;
6. To communicate to Parliament, in time for its next part-session, its initial views and findings on the matter and then to submit to the Council appropriate proposals, and
7. Invites the Council urgently to draw the attention of the Member States to the considerable risks inherent in the bilateral contracts which a number of them have concluded with the Soviet Union in respect of supplies of natural gas and to the need to reaffirm the energy policy objectives defined by the Community;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, Council and Governments of the Member States.