

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1981 - 1982

18 FEBRUARY 1982

DOCUMENT 1-1055/81

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mr MUNTINGH, Mrs SEIBEL-EMMERLING,
Mr BOMBARD, Mrs B. WEBER, Mrs A. KROUWEL-VLAM,
Mr COLLINS

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure
on Greenland

The European Parliament,

- whereas the Arctic waters around Greenland to the north of Canada constitute an area of considerable and so far virtually untouched natural value,
- whereas the area of the Lancaster Sound (400 x 120 km) provides an unusually rich food source derived from ocean currents passing through these areas,
- whereas 6 million of the 8 million sea birds from the Canadian archipelago have their breeding grounds in the Lancaster Sound (in 6 major colonies),
- whereas 60% of narwhals, 40% of beluga whales and a large number of seals (harp, bearded, ringed), walrusses, polar bears and whales (killer, bowhead) are found here,
- whereas the Inuit people with their traditional life style are dependent on these natural riches,
- whereas oil and gas fields have been discovered in these areas,
- having regard to the Arctic Pilot Project under which initial attempts are to be made to transport 7 million m³ of LNG per day in 'icebreaker tankers' from Melville Island along the coast of Greenland to southern Canada,
- having regard to the risks involved in transporting LNG in highly experimental icebreaker tankers over pack-ice two metres thick under extreme climatic conditions,
- having regard to the opinion of the Canadian Ministry of Indian and Northern Affairs that a major oil or LNG disaster can certainly be expected in the next 20 years and that there can be no guarantee that cleaning-up operations could be carried out,
- whereas the prospecting and exploitation activities will seriously affect colonies and groups of birds, whales, narwhals, walrusses, seals, polar bears and other animals by disturbing their natural patterns of migration, breeding, rearing their young and hibernation,
- having regard to the statement made by the abovementioned Ministry that this would lead to the final disappearance of the walrusses,
- whereas the icebreaker tankers - which also operate during the winter - would cross the migratory routes of the Inuit people and of arctic foxes and caribou and would thus effectively clear these areas,

- whereas the marine animals in these areas will be alert over tens and even hundreds of miles both for orientation and communication purposes,
 - whereas icebreaker tankers are equipped with extremely powerful engines delivering 200,000 hp thereby tripling the previous world record in this field,
 - whereas these LNG tankers can produce underwater noise levels of 67 dB over a distance of up to 100 km which means that whales less than 100 km from the tankers will only be able to communicate with each other at a distance of 5 metres,
1. Concludes that implementation of the APP is unacceptable in terms of its scope, environmental effects and the risks involved at the present stage of technological development;
 2. Feels that the APP constitutes a very serious threat to the natural riches of this area and to the population of Greenland which is directly dependent on them;
 3. Calls on the Commission to join with the people of Greenland to make known to the Canadian Government their concern over the APP and to press for the project to be halted.

