

European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1981 - 1982

16 December 1981

DOCUMENT 1-899/81

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mrs BOOT, Lord BETHELL, Mr van AERSEN,
Mr BOURNIAS, Mr EISMA, Mr GALLAND, Mr HAAGERUP,
Mr van den HEUVEL, Mr KATZER, Mrs L. MOREAU,
Mr PRAG and Mr SEEFELD

for entry in the register

pursuant to Rule 49 of the Rules of Procedure

on the rights of the disabled in the
Soviet Union

PE 76.580

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,

- whereas the International Year of the Disabled is now coming to an end;
- disturbed by the statement by an official Soviet representative in Toronto in 1976 to the effect that there were no invalids in the USSR¹;
- disturbed by reports from the USSR² according to which:
 - the overwhelming majority of invalids barely attain the minimum subsistence level;
 - there are no facilities for invalids other than war invalids, whether their invalidity is congenital or the result of sickness, accident, industrial or road accident, and they receive an inadequate invalidity allowance or pension;
 - many of these invalids are interned in special camps for invalids where appropriate facilities for them are non-existent or inadequate and where they are forced to work;
 - the Invalids Federation, which had existed since 1925, was suddenly abolished in 1956 without apparent reason;
 - it is now forbidden in the USSR to set up an Invalids Federation for the protection and defence of the rights of invalids;

Having noted that³

- there are no houses, vehicles or public buildings suitably adapted for invalids in the Soviet Union;
 - there is a general lack of wheelchairs, prostheses and other appliances for invalids there;
 - the lack of such facilities constitutes an obstacle to their integration or reintegration into social, cultural and economic life;
 - in the Soviet Union moreover, invalids are as far as possible banished from public view;
- Having regard to the Declaration of Human Rights of 1948;
 - Having regard to the Final Act of Helsinki of 1975;
 - Considering the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons, proclaimed by the General Assembly of the U.N. on 9 December 1975; in particular:

Article 3 Disabled persons have the inherent right to respect for their human dignity. Disabled persons, whatever the origin, nature and seriousness of their handicaps and disabilities, have the same fundamental rights as their fellow-citizens of the same age, which implies first and foremost the right to enjoy a decent life, as normal and full as possible.

and Article 9 Disabled persons have the right to live with their families or foster parents, and to participate in all social, creative or recreational activities. No disabled person shall be subjected, as far as his or her residence is concerned, to differential treatment other than that required by his or her condition or by the improvement which he or she may derive therefrom. If the stay of a disabled person in a specialized establishment is indispensable, the environment and living conditions therein shall be as close as possible to those of normal life.

- Considering that in UN-Resolution 31/82 of 13 December 1976 the General Assembly recommended: 'that all Member States should take account of the rights and principles laid down in the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons in establishing their policies, plans and programmes;'
- Considering also that in UN-Resolution 31/823 of 16 December 1976 the General Assembly proclaimed the year 1981: International Year of the Disabled;
- considering that according to reports and evidence from witnesses⁴ there is a stark contradiction between the declarations referred to above and what happens in practice;
- considering that the Soviet Union refused to organize the Paralympics alongside the 1980 Olympic Games;
- considering that the Soviet authorities have ignored the declaration of 1981 as the International Year of the Disabled;
- having regard to the persecution of those disabled who have taken the International Year of the Disabled seriously despite the fact that the activities have been in strict conformity with national and international legislation;

1. Calls on the governments of the Member States:

- (a) in the framework of the current Review Conference in Madrid on the Helsinki Final Act, to draw the attention of the Soviet Union to the lack of adequate care for the disabled in the Soviet Union which fails to meet the requirements and standards laid down in the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons in 1975;
- (b) to appeal to the Soviet authorities to observe the 1975 Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons;
- (c) to appeal to the Soviet authorities to support the humanitarian initiative of the United Nations and to take part in its activities in connection with the International Year of the Disabled;

2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the parliaments and governments of the Member States and to bring it, through the appropriate channels, to the attention of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Supreme Soviet.

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1. Information Bulletin of the Initiative Group for the Defence of the Rights of Invalids in the USSR, No. 8, of 20.2.1980.
 2. - idem, Nos. 1-12.
- Steven Marc GLICK, Disability in the USSR - A dissident view.
ISBN 90 242 0569 7, London 1981.
 3. See footnote 2; also film interviews with Yuri KISELYOV,
Published by: Vladimir Bukovsky Foundation Committee, Amsterdam
 4. idem.