

16 March 2000

B5-0290/2000

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

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

by the following Members: DiLello, Frahm, Papayannakis, Manisco, Theonas, Alavanos, Sepanen and Sjostedt

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on Echelon

B5-0290/2000**European Parliament resolution on Echelon***The European Parliament,*

- S having regard to article 6 of the Treaty on European Union, which recalls the principle of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights as the foundation for a modern, democratic open and tolerant Europe,
- S having regard to the Universal declaration of Human Rights, especially Article 12 thereof,
- S having regard to article 8 and the principles recognised in the European Convention for the Protection of Human rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- S having regard to the United Nations guidelines concerning computerised personal data files,
- S having regard to Directive 95/46/EC concerning data protection,
- S having regard to Council of Europe Convention 108,
- S having regard to OECD privacy guidelines,
- S having regard to the STOA report on "Development of surveillance technology and risk of abuse of economic information" (PE 168.184),
- S having regard to the hearing on data protection arranged by the Committee on Citizen' Freedom and Right, Justice and Home Affairs, and the Committee on Legal Affairs and the Internal Market, held on 22 and 23 February 2000 in the European Parliament,
- A. considering that the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand have access to a widespread data cooperation network (ECHELON), operated and conducted by the US National Security Agency (NSA), which makes it possible to carry out illegal surveillance and espionage for commercial, military and political ends,
- B. considering that ECHELON provides access to billions of messages every hour (telephone, telex, e-mail, Internet, fax, etc.) throughout Europe,
- C. considering the statement before the European Parliament on 14 September 1998, during the debate on transatlantic relations, by former Commissioner Bangeman, on behalf of the Commission ("If this system were to exist, it would be an intolerable attack against individual liberties, competition and the security of the states"),

- D. considering the fact that the US recently admitted the existence of ECHELON in the declassified document of 3 September 1991, detailing the activities of an NSA surveillance post in West Virginia,
1. Finds it wholly intolerable that citizens, enterprises, institutions and governments are illegally spied on in this way;
 2. Condemns the lack of response and persistent denial of the existence of ECHELON from the Commission, as represented by Commissioner Bolkenstein, as well as its attempts to play down the issue; asks President Prodi to explain this position;
 3. Is shocked at and condemns the participation of the United Kingdom, as an EU Member State, in this network; asks to know what steps the Commission and the Member States will take against the UK;
 4. Asks the United Kingdom to clarify its participation, and calls on the Member States to react on this point;
 5. Demands that all Member States respect the international conventions on fundamental and democratic rights;
 6. Asks the Commission how the European Union can guarantee and protect its citizens, enterprises and institutions against illegal interception and surveillance when the latest computers are able to break practically all encryption codes;
 7. Calls for the cooperation and information sharing between the Commission, the Council of Ministers, the Member States and the candidate countries regarding ECHELON, and for Parliament to be kept fully informed;
 8. Demands the complete dismantling of ECHELON;
 9. Calls on the Commission to act on the findings of the STOA report and to propose EU action requiring telecommunications network operators to protect users' privacy, and to prevent the extension of the ECHELON system;
 10. Fully supports the initiative to set up a temporary committee of inquiry, in accordance with Rule 151, to investigate ECHELON;
 11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, and the Governments of the Member States and the candidate member states.