

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2318/03  
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to the Council

Subject: European citizens' right to privacy

The EU-US summit was held on 25 June this year. One of the topics was or should have been the TIA project (originally 'Total Information Awareness', subsequently changed to 'Terrorism Information Awareness'), basically a project to provide a gigantic apparatus for gathering and analysing information obtained from the most varied sources, ranging from existing data banks to commercial transactions, from people's movements to intercepted communications. According to Stefano Rodotà, the guarantor of the Italian privacy watchdog, we are witnessing a new dimension of surveillance, which increases the power of the State to obtain any personal data, irrespective of who gathered it and the original purpose for which it was gathered. The European Parliament, via its President Pat Cox, made its views clear: 'we cannot let the US dictate law in Europe'.

1. What was the outcome, as regards the TIA, of the summit meeting between the EU and the US held on 25 June this year?
2. Does the Council not consider that US legislation on the subject cannot and must not have extraterritorial validity and that, if necessary, the most appropriate way of settling such issues is by international treaty?
3. Did the Council uphold the principle that it is unacceptable that the United States should gather, by any means at its disposal, information resulting from communications freely exchanged between European citizens?
4. What steps will the Council take to safeguard the privacy of European citizens?