

ORAL QUESTION H-0255/09
for Question Time at the part-session in May 2009
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Alexander Alvaro
to the Council

Subject: Freedom of speech and the Czech Act limiting the freedom of the press

An unprecedented law limiting freedom of speech and freedom of the press has recently been introduced in the Czech Republic, namely the Czech Act of 5 February 2009 which amends Act No 141/1961 Coll., on criminal court proceedings (Criminal Code), providing for up to five years in prison and a heavy fine of up to EUR 180 000 for publishing any account from police wiretapping.

Is the Council aware of whether the recently adopted Czech Act has a precedent in any other EU country?

Does the Council recognise that the newly-adopted Czech Act is in clear contradiction with the European Human Rights Court Judgment of 19 March 2007 in the case of *Radio Twist, A.S. v. Slovakia* stating that publishing police wiretapping records in the public interest overrides the right to privacy protection?

Does the Council think that the aforementioned Czech Act complies with the basic principles of freedom and liberties, as outlined by the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Article 6 of the TEU on which the European Union is based?

Tabled: 20.04.2009
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