3. The Regulation was adopted unanimously by the Member States and received the assent of the European Parliament. As explained above, the Italian proposal was considered inadmissible not because of the new criteria as such but rather because it was not in compliance with Article 4(4) of the Regulation.

4. The criteria laid down in Article 4(5) and (6) of the Regulation do not penalise any Member State.

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(2000/C 280 E/012)  
WRITTEN QUESTION E-2171/99  
by John McCartin (PPE-DE) to the Commission  
(29 November 1999)

Subject: Interception of telecommunications by British Intelligence Services

In the light of reports that the British Intelligence Services are intercepting all telecommunications to and from Ireland, will the Commission seek to establish what the implications of this action are for the political cohesion of the Union?

Further, what are the implications for the right of commercial undertakings to engage freely in communicating internationally and within the EU, and what are the implications for individual citizens engaged in personal or commercially sensitive communications?

Can the Commission ask the British authorities if the reports are actually true and, if so, if the British are spying on all other Member States of the EU in a similar way?

Could the Commission also state whether such activities are in violation of any EU law?

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Answer given by Mr Vitorino on behalf of the Commission  
(27 January 2000)

The Commission has no knowledge of the matters to which the Honourable Member refers.

In any event, the Commission takes the view that it has no jurisdiction to deal with the question asked, which is a matter solely for the national authorities concerned.

The Commission nonetheless remains vigilant in defence of Community interests, and condemns any and all threats to the integrity of communications within or exchanged between institutions, commercial enterprises or by individual citizens engaged in communicating internationally and within the Union.

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(2000/C 280 E/013)  
WRITTEN QUESTION E-2175/99  
by Umberto Bossi (TDI) to the Commission  
(29 November 1999)

Subject: Marking of PDO and PGI products

Several bodies licensed by the Italian Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry Resources to certify PDO products and to append the PDO identifying stamp on those products use the services of the respective Consorzi di tutela (organisations for the protection of individual products) in the capacity of outside bodies. Apparently, the equipment for marking the products (branding or other methods) to show that they have been certified to be PDO is not therefore in the possession of the body authorised to certify such