

Wednesday 5 July 2000

10. Echelon

(a) B5-0594/2000

European Parliament decision on the Conference of Presidents' decision not to propose the setting up of a temporary committee of inquiry into the Echelon interception system

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the request by some 172 Members — more than a quarter of Parliament's Members — for a temporary committee of inquiry into Echelon to be set up;
- having regard to the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 13 April 2000 not to propose that the European Parliament set up a temporary committee of inquiry pursuant to Rule 151 its Rules of Procedure;

1. Endorses the decision of the Conference of Presidents not to propose the setting up of a temporary committee of inquiry.

(b) B5-0593/2000/rev.

European Parliament decision setting up a temporary committee on the Echelon interception system

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 150(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 15 June 2000 to propose the setting up of a temporary committee on the Echelon interception system,

1. Decides to set up a temporary committee with the following powers:

- to verify the existence of the communications interception system known as Echelon, whose operation is described in the STOA report published under the title 'Development of surveillance technology and risks of abuse of economic information';
- to assess the compatibility of such a system with Community law, in particular Article 286 of the EC Treaty and Directives 95/46/EC and 97/66/EC, and with Article 6(2) of the EU Treaty, in the light of the following questions:
 - are the rights of European citizens protected against activities of secret services?
 - is encryption an adequate and sufficient protection to guarantee citizens' privacy or should additional measures be taken and if so what kind of measures?
 - how can the EU institutions be made better aware of the risks posed by these activities and what measures can be taken?
- to ascertain whether European industry is put at risk by the global interception of communications;
- possibly, to make proposals for political and legislative initiatives;

2. Decides that the temporary committee will have 36 members, whose names are annexed to this decision.
