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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: US Congress, NSA butt heads over Echelon

From: Josh Goldstein <clearlt@pacbell.net>
Date: Tue, 08 Jun 1999 22:46:53 -0700
Fwd Date: Wed, 09 Jun 1999 18:27:20 -0400
Subject: Re: US Congress, NSA butt heads over Echelon

>From: stig.agermose@get2net.dk (Stig Agermose)
>To: updates@globalserve.net
>Subject: Congress, NSA butt heads over Echelon
>Date: Tue, 08 Jun 1999 00:56:39 GMT

>Source: Federal Computer Week,

><http://www.fcw.com:80/pubs/fcw/1999/0531/web-nsa-6-3-99.html>

>Links are preceded by an asterisk.

>Stig

>***

>JUNE 3, 1999 . . . 18:34 EDT

>Congress, NSA butt heads over Echelon

>BY DANIEL VERTON (*dan_verton@fcw.com)

>**

>Congress has squared off with the National Security Agency over
>a top-secret U.S. global electronic surveillance program,
>requesting top intelligence officials to report on the legal
>standards used to prevent privacy abuses against U.S. citizens.

>According to an amendment to the fiscal 2000 Intelligence
>Authorization Act proposed last month by Rep. Bob Barr (R-Ga.),
>the director of Central Intelligence, the director of NSA and
>the attorney general must submit a report within 60 days of the
>bill becoming law that outlines the legal standards being
>employed to safeguard the privacy of American citizens against
>Project Echelon.

>Echelon is NSA's Cold War-vintage global spying system, which
>consists of a worldwide network of clandestine listening posts
>capable of intercepting electronic communications such as
>e-mail, telephone conversations, faxes, satellite transmissions,
>microwave links and fiber-optic communications traffic. However,
>the European Union last year raised concerns that the system may
>be regularly violating the privacy of law-abiding citizens
>[*FCW, Nov. 17, 1998].

>However, NSA, the supersecret spy agency known best for its
>worldwide eavesdropping capabilities, for the first time in the
>history of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
>refused to hand over documents on the Echelon program, claiming
>attorney/client privilege.

>Congress is "concerned about the privacy rights of American
>citizens and whether or not there are constitutional safeguards
>being circumvented by the manner in which the intelligence
>agencies are intercepting and/or receiving international
>communications...from foreign nations that would otherwise be
>prohibited by...the limitations on the collection of domestic
>intelligence," Barr said. "This very straightforward
>amendment...will help guarantee the privacy rights of American
>citizens [and] will protect the oversight responsibilities of
>the Congress which are now under assault" by the intelligence
>community.

>Calling NSA's argument of attorney/client privilege
>"unpersuasive and dubious," committee chairman Rep. Peter J.
>Goss (R-Fla.) said the ability of the intelligence community to
>deny access to documents on intelligence programs could
>"seriously hobble the legislative oversight process" provided
>for by the Constitution and would "result in the envelopment of
>the executive branch in a cloak of secrecy."

>Mail questions to *webmaster@fcw.com

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Please remember that Echelon is a joint program shared by countries other than the US. Just this evening a show titled "Big Brother" was on the Discovery Channel. On that show a former member of ESC (the Canadian equivalent of the NSA) claims that the US trades domestic spying with other countries. In other words, since domestic spying is illegal, he claims that the US has other countries spy on our domestic targets as a trade for us spying on other countries' citizens.

Due to the 13 Echelon Sattelites covering all sectors of the globe, no electronic communications can evade monitoring. Who knows what programs may have been developed to unscramble encryption? Big Brother (and to be equal, Big Sister) may be hot on your trail. From now on I'm only going to communicate through whispers what I don't want THEM to know. Does this give you the same feeling as seeing a police car in your rear mirror? Or a gray by your bedside? Or a bird flying faster than your plane?

"Paranoia runs deep, into your heart it may creep"
Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young

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