



**Statewatch  
announces an**

## **International project to stop “Policy Laundering”**

**EU liberties being undermined by the influence of secretive International fora**

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Statewatch, which monitors civil liberties in the EU, with its partners - the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the human rights group Privacy International - today announced the formation of a new international “Policy Laundering Project” to monitor and counter the increasing policy-making influence on civil liberties issues through international organizations such as G8. The project is being launched on Wednesday, 13 April, at the annual *Computers, Freedom and Privacy* conference in Seattle, Washington. USA.

*“In more and more areas we are seeing security and law enforcement agencies pushing measures through international fora which undermine and endanger civil liberties and privacy which are then introduced through the national political process,”* said Tony Bunyan Director of Statewatch. *“This is the strategy we call policy laundering. The security and law enforcement agencies have “gone global” and so must the protection of civil liberties.”*

Statewatch cited several direct impacts of policy laundering on Europe:

- \* Hundreds of millions of EU citizens, resident third country nationals and visitors over the next few years will have to attend a “processing centre” to have their finger-prints compulsory taken if they want a passport - and will have to do this every ten years.

- \* The biometric fingerprints and personal data will be stored nationally and on EU-wide databases and accessed by every law enforcement agency across Europe and outside. Similarly, under the so-called “principle of availability” all personal data held by any law enforcement agency will be open to access by every other agency both nationally and across the EU. Privacy and data protection are to be sacrificed to meet the demands of the “politics of fear”.

\* The European Union is currently discussing plans to put everyone's communications - phone-calls, faxes, mobile phone calls and internet usage - under surveillance by requiring the mandatory retention of all traffic data by service providers so that the law enforcement agencies can have access to it.

\* EU, US and G8 plans under the "politics of fear" view every migrant fleeing from poverty and persecution at worst as a terrorist and at best a criminal and in either case not as a person in need of help, compassion and humanity.

As one example of the growing trend of globalised security cooperation, Statewatch pointed to the case of the independent news collective *Indymedia*, whose London-based servers were seized by the FBI at the behest of Swiss police who were angry that photographs of undercover officers at a political rally had been published and the Italian police who did not like the coverage of the protests in Genoa in 2001.

*"As an organisation our work is focused on protecting liberty and democratic standards in the European Union, it is now impossible to do so without "going global", said Bunyan. "Law enforcement, military, and intelligence agencies from different nations are increasingly working together out of the public eye to amass new powers and assert hidden influences on policy-making. Statewatch has always adapted when necessary to protect liberties and rights, and now is such a time. We intend to step up our ability to join the fight on the international stage."*

A classic case of "policy-laundering" are the plans, that started in G8 which are now being pushed in the EU by the USA and the UK, to bring in preparatory "terrorist" offences, to give a free rein for intrusive investigative techniques and allow "intelligence information" in to be used in court while protecting the sources , see Statewatch's report:

<http://www.statewatch.org/news/2005/mar/exceptional-and-draconian.pdf>

*Statewatch* said that the "Policy Laundering Project" will focus on building up the capacity to monitor and influence international governmental organizations (IGOs), building connections with civil society groups and national parliaments around Europe and the world by keeping them informed about the ways in which their governments and the European Union stand to be affected by various policy laundering attempts.

In conjunction with the announcement, *Statewatch* also announced that a new Web site is being launched at: <http://jcs2b.home.mindspring.com/>

over the next few days the link will become: <http://www.policylaundering.org>

For further information please ring: 00 44 208 802 1882

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