Europol

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The rapporteur, Mr Nassauer (EPP, D), called on Parliament to give a clear political signal for the creation of Europol – which was the most important project of the third pillar – in order that this organisation might be able to start work. Mr Nassauer said that Europol should provide an independent European response to the growing problem of organised crime, with a view to ensuring maximum protection for Community citizens. He considered that Europol would be more effective than Interpol or than any simple form of cooperation between police organisations, as it was to have on-line access to databases and could guarantee a high degree of protection when accessing these data. Finally, he called for a revision of the Europol convention as regards increased parliamentary scrutiny and for the European Court of Justice to be conferred with powers to give preliminary rulings. Commissioner Fischler took the view that the creation of Europol was a symbol of the Union’s willingness to combat organised crime. As far as the Court of Justice was concerned, he thought that the compromise proposed by the Spanish Presidency (for a separate protocol on the jurisdiction of the Court, which would be signed by those Member States that accepted this role) was quite acceptable. He also wanted to see the ratification procedures completed as quickly as possible. Finally, the Commissioner was of the opinion that Parliament was quite justified in its complaint that it had not been consulted during Europol’s preparatory phase. This was why he was in favour of a stronger consultative role for Parliament under the third pillar.