



## State pushes ahead with ID and Identity Register

The government is determined to get national ID in place for most of us within the next few years by creating a National Identity Register that you'll be added to when you apply for or renew a passport.

This is now planned for sometime between 2009-2012. Identity and Passport Service offices ('interrogation centres') for in-person applications, vetting and biometric scanning have already opened in some parts of the country. Even if you don't hold a passport, only one more act of parliament is needed to force ID registration on everyone over 16 years old.

### Creeping compulsion

Having judged the strong opposition that already exists against having an actual card, the government announced in March 2008 that it won't now make it compulsory except for airport workers and others like doctors,

nurses, teachers and social workers. That's still a lot of people, but whatever, let's not be fooled, because the real danger is not the carrying of a card, it's the computerised identity register which we'll all have to be on. Plus the state really does want us all to have a card, and actually hopes we'll get one by choice!

Young people applying for their first bank account will be encouraged to get an ID card for convenience when they apply for a bank account or student loan, and to prove their age in the pub. The rest of us are expected to follow later when we realise we can't live without one. All of this shows us that the state is bent on imposing ID cards by stealth.

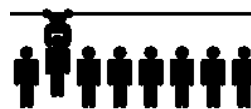
It's worth noting that before the ID Cards Act was passed, state officials took advice from their industry partners that they would need to tread carefully and introduce an ID scheme step-by-step. For example, foreign nationals will be issued with ID cards in the guise of 'biometric visas' as soon as this year (2008), linked to the UK Borders Act 2007.

Moreover, the Children Act 2004 allows creation of separate databases for all children in England, that could easily turn into ID for everyone as this generation ages – one estimate is 50% of the population could be covered within 20 years! Mandatory fingerprinting as well as facial biometrics are looking

more likely for all passport and travel documents within the EU. Plus, pupils and parents are already protesting against fingerprinting (and even eye-scanning) that is being introduced to many schools for checking out library books, getting school dinners and signing attendance registers. In Scotland, a national pensioner' cards has already been issued which is actually a multi-purpose ID card disguised as a bus pass.

Not only that, but in November 2007, we heard that post offices and travel agents are likely candidates for mass ID card applications and fingerprinting. So it's important to see this is not just about opposing one single Act of parliament and also that bureaucrats in Whitehall, local councils and private companies are already busy preparing the ground for compulsory ID.

**RESIST  
SOCIAL CONTROL!**



## Police to be enabled to persecute at will

The state is planning to lessen restrictions on police power. Following a recent report by Sir Ronnie Flanagan, Chief Inspector of Constabulary, the Home Secretary has proposed reforms that will enable the police to persecute with greater freedom, unencumbered by much of the red tape currently involved in stop and



searches and arrests.

Police will be allowed to introduce random stop and searches in 'designated crime hotspots', similar to the hated 'sus' laws which permitted a police officer to stop, search and even arrest anyone on the basis of 'suspicion' alone; which effectively enabled the police to harass anyone they chose, usually non-white people. The sus laws were abolished following intense riots in Bristol, Brixton and Liverpool the early 80s, and were condemned for their clear contribution to racial tensions and vast infringement on civil liberties.

Withholding identity or refusing to answer questions during one of the new arbitrary stop and searches could lead to a £5,000 fine.

The Police will use mobile electronic devices to transmit stop records to police stations, with some reference to the ethnicity of those stopped.

In addition there will be a large reduction in form-filling for lesser crimes like shoplifting and vandalism. Ministers hope that less red tape will encourage the police to lose what is described as 'a risk-averse culture,' and so harass people who have committed minor crimes with greater zeal.

The powers of police community support officers will also be extended.

## University surveillance of students to prevent "extremism"

At the end of 2007, the Government issued a report on how universities can "root out terrorism" on campuses. This was further to a similar guidance issued in 2006. Both documents suggest that universities monitor Muslim students and Islamic groups, forge links with local police and report suspicious student activity to Special Branch.

The vigilance encouraged in the 2006 report was apparently justified by a study conducted at Brunel University's Centre for Intelligence and Security which claimed to show that Islamic groups at universities encourage Islamic extremism. The study, published by right-wing think tank The Social Affairs Unit, was widely criticised for being based on anecdotal case studies unsupported by empirical research.

The authors counted every student suspected of extremist activity, even those that weren't charged, and in cases where there was an "extremist" link, there was no evidence suggesting that campus life had led to it. To prevent these supposed threats, the authors proposed that a university should limit the ethnic minority student intake at a given time!

### So why the further guidelines?

Despite the absence of any credible evidence to support their position, the government are still

citing the threat of Islamic terrorism and pushing for universities to be wary of Muslim students. It seems that the biggest threat posed by these students is not their susceptibility to commit terrorist acts, but that their interest in events in the Middle East leads to disagreement with government policy and to political action. The report claims to be about maintaining academic freedom but conveniently suppresses critical voices.

## State Snoopers

Almost 450,000 requests were made to monitor people's telephone calls, e-mails and post by state agencies and other authorised bodies during the 15-month period from 2005 to 2006, according to a report by the Interceptions of Communications Commissioner published last year. However the more than 1000 snooping requests a day may be just the start given the new powers that have been enacted.

At the beginning of October 2007, the government "activated" part three of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 granting various branches of the state wide powers to access telephone records without recourse to a judge.

Up to 800 state agencies can now seek access to telephone records, including the security forces, all of Britain's local authorities and even non-governmental organisations as the Ambulance Services or the Food Standards Agency.

## Get involved

Nottingham Defy-ID Meets at the Sumac Centre the 1st and 3rd Wednesday each month from 6-7.30pm. All are welcome.  
Nottingham/Notts Defy-ID  
C/o the Sumac Centre  
245 Gladstone Street  
Nottingham NG7 6HX  
Phone 0845 458 9595  
Email: [info@nottingham-defy-id.org.uk](mailto:info@nottingham-defy-id.org.uk)  
[www.nottingham-defy-id.org.uk](http://www.nottingham-defy-id.org.uk)

### State harassment of the month

Police continued their campaign of intimidation against the public by photographing everyone who entered the Sumac Centre one weekend recently. Maybe they were there because there was an Earth First meeting that weekend, but as there was no threat of crime or public disorder the only motive must have been political.

A particularly nasty twist is that there was an unconnected skillshare session on map reading being held that day for walkers. So people from the local community, many visiting for the first time, and the volunteer who had given his time to teach the skill, had to run the gauntlet of the police and have their photo taken.

