NO ID
Identity Cards Do Not Stop Terrorism
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COMPULSORY IDENTITY CARDS ON THE WAY
Today, the British Home Secretary announced his intention to bring in a compulsory national identity card (the last scheme was scrapped in 1952—see BBC Online <http://tinyurl.com/yvbl5>). The ID card system is to be based on 'biometric' information—information such as fingerprints, or a scan of the iris of the eye—taken from all 60 million people living in the UK.

   David Blunkett has long been trying to introduce national ID cards (called 'entitlement cards' at one point), but was forced to water down his proposals last Nov. after objections from Cabinet colleagues. 'But sources say opposition to ID cards has weakened since the Madrid attacks. "The realities of the past few weeks have had a big impact," one said.' (*Independent*, 5 Apr. 2004, p. 1)

   The 'war on terrorism' is being used as a justification for ID cards. **But there is no evidence that ID cards can help stop terrorism.**

BLUNKETT ADMITTED IT HIMSELF
On 3 July 2002, Labour MP Chris Mullins asked the Home Secretary, among other things, 'will he confirm that the card will be **little or no use in combating terrorism**?' Mr Blunkett replied, 'I can say **yes**... Yes, I accept that it is important that **we do not pretend** that an entitlement [identity] card would be an overwhelming factor in combating international terrorism.' (House of Commons <http://tinyurl.com/28okf>)

   Launching his plans for a compulsory ID card, Mr Blunkett was confused: 'The primary reason for having ID cards is not because we believe they will stop terrorists... but it will make a big difference to the operation of the

identity of another) person.' (*Mistaken Identity*)

   Biometric data can also been **forged**. In May 2002, a Japanese cryptographer, Tsutomu Matsumoto, used superglue, a printed circuit board available in hobby shops, and gelatine (from a sweet) to copy a fingerprint from glass and create a false fingerprint which reliably fooled commercially-available fingerprint readers. <http://tinyurl.com/ysjlw>

   In the same month, German technology journalists used a digital photo of an eye to fool a commercial iris scanner. <http://tinyurl.com/3a5wj>

   Mr Blunkett, biometric cards are **not** 'fool-proof'.

BUILDING ON QUICKSAND
The foundation stones of the biometric ID system are going to be the passport and the driving licence. True, these are the two most reliable pieces of government-issued identity in Britain, 'but in both cases genuine documents exist which support false identities', points out technology journalist John Lettice: 'These "relatively reliable" documents are currently used to provide proof of identity in order to obtain one another; a driving licence helps you get a passport, a passport helps you get a driving licence, and once you've got both you're pretty nearly real.'

   The currently circulating false driving licences and false passports will somehow have to be found and eliminated. If not, if the new scheme simply adds the biometric data of the bearer onto an existing ID, 'then it will merely **strengthen existing false IDs**.' <http://tinyurl.com/23hpm>

TERRORISTS DON'T SHOW UP AT POLICE STATIONS
On current plans, 'Police will only be able to demand the card if the person is suspected of committing a crime. Similar to driving licences, individuals will then have a number of days to produce the ID card at a local police station.' (*Observer*, 11 Apr. 2004, p. 5) Will a professional terrorist show up at a police station? Or is this scheme a waste of time?

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU
ID cards do not provide security. ID cards do not stop terrorism. They are a means of social control, of state surveillance. They are an invasion of privacy. They strengthen police racism. **They must be defeated.**

   For more information and links, please go to <www.j-n-v.org>

counter-terrorism and security services.' (*Guardian*, 26 Apr. 2004)

IDENTITY CARDS DO NOT STOP TERRORISM
The Israel-based *International Policy Institute for Counter-terrorism* has drawn up a list of the 25 countries which it assessed as having suffered most from terrorist attacks since 1986. While the list is biased (for example, Sudan is not mentioned, despite the US cruise missile attack in 1998), Privacy International used the list to draw this conclusion:

'Eighty per cent of these countries have long-standing identity card systems, a third of which contain a biometric such as a fingerprint. While it is impossible to claim that terrorist incidents have been thwarted as a result of an ID card, the above data establishes that the cards are **unable to eliminate terrorist incidents**.' <http://tinyurl.com/ywtlz>

AN IDIOTIC ANTI-TERRORIST STRATEGY
Ministers have suggested that a biometric ID system could help in the fight against terrorism by detecting when a person is using multiple identities; by determining whether a person is using a false identity; by detecting those people who have a background that is indicative of a terrorist profile; by exposing those terrorists in the UK who have not registered.

Privacy International (*Mistaken Identity*) notes that these claims assume the following circumstances: ⊠ The target terrorists will be **entitled** to an identity card. ⊠ The target terrorists will **apply** for an identity card. ⊠ Target terrorists who are entitled and motivated to apply will do so using their **true identity**. ⊠ Measures will be in place to detect suspected persons who are living in the UK **without** an identity card. ⊠ Data matching systems will reveal information that relates to a suspect.

SINGLE IDENTITY TERRORISTS
David Winnick MP says, 'If the emphasis is now on terrorism, the fact remains that in Spain identity cards are compulsory from the age of 14 onwards. In what way did that stop the massacre which occurred?' (*Times*, 8 Apr. 2004, p. 12)

Mr Blunkett says, 'The Spanish do [have an ID card]—but it isn't a foolproof [see next page] biometric card with a database, with the ability to test not only the card... but actually the person and the card they hold. That's what will be potentially possible and this will ensure that they can't have multiple identities.' (BBC News Online, 25 April 2004)

But Mohammed Atta, the leader of the 11 September hijackers did not use multiple identities. Nor did the men suspected of the Madrid bombings. Their plans would not have been hindered by biometric identity cards. Privacy International notes that, 'It is possible that the existence of a high integrity identity card would provide a measure of **improved legitimacy** for these people.' (*Mistaken Identity*, April 2004)

Compulsory ID cards in Spain did not stop the Madrid bombings. Compulsory ID cards in Germany did not stop the planning of the 11 September attacks by Mohammed Atta and his associates in Hamburg.

TERRORIST TRICKS
Then there are people intent on terrorism who **are** using false ID, but in ways that cannot be detected by the proposed ID card system.

For example, terrorists could use a tourist visa—25 million people visit Britain every year as tourists, half of them from outside the European Economic Area. Jack Straw, now Foreign Secretary, and formerly Home Secretary, has attacked the ID card proposal on grounds of unworkability: 'There will be large numbers of people who will be entitled to both [employment and government services] without a card, starting with EU nationals, who will be able to stay and work here for three months without any official documentation... This is an obvious loophole for illegals to exploit, given poor security of some EU documents.' (*Sunday Times*, 12 Oct. 2003, p. 1 <http://tinyurl.com/3c6wg>)

All but one of the hijackers involved in the US attacks entered the country on a tourist visa. (Privacy International, *Mistaken Identity*)

Mr Blunkett says that 'In circumstances where it was crucial to have a full identity check and there was not an easy way to get the card the police would actually be able to take the biometric of the individual'—an iris scan, perhaps. But the British biometric database could not confirm their ID if they came from a country which did not have a biometric database, or if that country's database was not entirely reliable.

FOOLING BIG BROTHER
There are plenty of other ways that a determined terrorist could evade biometric identification controls. How could the British Government check the identity of someone from a country which does not have a reliable biometric database? Privacy International points out, 'It is a relatively simple matter for a terrorist to assume a **clean** and **legitimate**