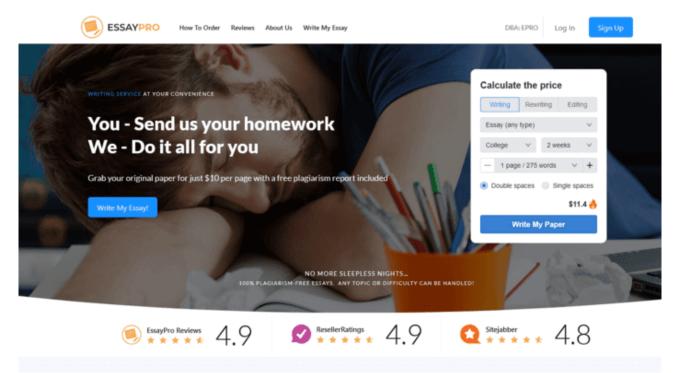
National ID Card



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National ID Card

There has been much discussion over the issue of a national ID card. Can it guarantee national security? Can it even improve the current state of security in the US? Is implementation feasible? Is it an invasion of privacy? These are just a few of the questions that surround the issue of a national ID. The scene that the NID evokes in me is from the movies of the forties and fifties. The security officials from some eastern European country move from passenger to passenger in a train demanding "Papers please." The US citizenry have never been subject to that kind of open scrutiny before and it is disturbing to contemplate the implementation of such a draconian system.

Consideration of a NID system deserves to be isolated (at least initially) from the emotive imagery that many critics would bring to bare. So the first question to tackle is that of the necessity to national security. What can an NID system do to protect the US from its enemies? It could be added to the screening process at the airports. Each passenger could be made to swipe his or her card through a card reader as the pass through security. In order to actually verify their identity passengers would have to have to be scanned by a biometric device; the data taken on site then being compared to recorded information. The

question of the security of the card will be taken up later, but it is far from certain that the stored information could be made both secure and available in the nation's airports.

Every US citizen would, presumably, posses a NID card, including those who work in sensitive places. The corruption of information on a single NID card would lower threshold of areas that defined as ...

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Security: Creating the NID card would breach more security then it would protect. If an NID card were taken at face value by even the lowest level security, its user would have a foot in the door and would be able to exploit it.

Privacy: The only area where the NID card excels is in the violation of privacy. Currently the average identity thief has to work a little to get information on a victim, and he still has to find a gullible credit card agency to gain access to the victim's money. The NID card would allow a thief access to the victim's most secure information and assets.

Cost: Business interests are the only ones to gain from the NID. If the offer by Scott McNealy (Sun Microsystems CEO) is taken at face value it still means a government contract with Sun, or at worst, a huge contract for an industry which is currently lagging.

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