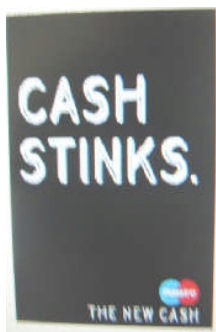


Resistance

GONE FOREVER, THE POUND IN YOUR POCKET?



MASTERCARD'S 'MAESTRO' a.k.a. 'the new cash' is like a phonecard. Electronic money (eMoney, ePurse) is also being promoted by the government and the EU.

Although no serious economist sees the UK joining the Euro in the near future, the Northern Ireland Civil Service recently produced an updated 200 page changeover plan. Blair's government obviously still sees this to be a priority area!

At the same time, various government initiatives are pushing smart cards for cashless payment. Transport for London recently boasted of the 'success' of the Oyster card – only 4% of London bus fares are now paid in cash. (Forcing passengers to use the pre-paid card for season tickets and charging double for cash fares are two reasons for this 'success').

AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE?

The 'London Connects' programme¹ revealed that "central government has applied pressure" to adopt smart cards

The **National Smart Card Project**² urges that a local authority 'payment card' must work across 'national and regional boundaries' – even though it admits international payments are 'extremely costly'.

A strange proposal - either (a) local authorities are to be reorganised across national boundaries (unlikely?) or (b) there is a pressing reason for handling multiple currencies.

Another document³ lets it slip that this '**Citizen Purse**' enables 'a migration from Sterling to the Euro Currency'. Hyped as 'more convenient than cash' it recalls a memory from the 1990s of cash being described as an obstacle to adopting the Euro in the UK.

For the record, a federalist group⁴, the United Europe Foundation, senses opportunity. It looks forward to a cashless 'single electronic currency in the world'. As a stepping stone, it believes in looking at 'all means' of getting Denmark, Sweden and the UK into the Euro... including 'electronic money'.

(By coincidence, both UN⁵ and EU⁶ seem to share similar visions on what they call 'information society' or 'e(lectronic) Government', although as yet neither seems to publicly insist on a totally cashless future).

The EU is, however, very interested in developing cash-replacement payment systems, and the European Central Bank has a card blueprint.⁷

- Prof. Charles Hildreth⁸ of Long Island University, USA, noted (2003) that the European Commission was promoting a 'European Citizen Card' that could be used as an ID card, with possible 'medical' and 'payment' use.
- The London boroughs' programme (London Connects) coincidentally has been developing a 'London Citizen Card' with payment capability and has applied for EU funding.



To make this EUTOPIAN scheme work, some system of EU-wide records would be needed. Paolo Balboni of Tilburg University (Netherlands) sees¹⁰ "a big threat to citizens' privacy ... the potential risk for abuse is high"

This also worries national authorities, who want sensitive personal information to be kept 'national'. The European Commission feels that¹¹ keeping an 'EU-based' register might be justified if there are 'imperative public security interests'.

As far as the technology side is concerned, it's early days. In the UK, 2/3 of personal payments to local authorities are still made by cash.

Cash payments will still continue in retail (etc), but if the volume gradually goes down, banks might respond by raising their handling charges. Could the UK eventually follow Singapore, which intends to phase out its historic coins and notes after 2008?



'Tax is a matter for national governments' – well, if the EU says so?

★ The Yorkshire Post¹² senses that the Government is threatening to withhold transport funding from local authorities in Manchester, Yorks and the W Midlands unless they sign up for **road pricing** schemes (that have been dubbed 'Big Brother on wheels').

Road pricing has been pushed¹⁵ by the EU since 1997, even though one researcher notes that it isn't effective against pollution or congestion. London's congestion charge zone is now seeing a rise in both....

★ Uproar followed revelations¹³ of local authorities microchipping wheelie bins to enable household waste to be weighed. This seems to be aimed at fining residents who exceed a Government-set quota; Councils must now meet **EU targets** for waste disposal or get fined £150/tonne.

Imagine the protests from residents charged for what someone else dumps in their bin to avoid a fine?

Or a rise in fly-tipping, or the effect on sewers when householders flush waste food?



★ The European Court of Justice amazingly reversed two earlier EU judgements that Italy's regional tax ('IRAP') was illegal. The real reason seems to be that Italian government finances would otherwise have been £82Bn worse off. This would have hit the **Euro** so much that either Italy would have been forced to abandon membership or its exchange value would have collapsed.

Yet Italy's tax clearly breached the Sixth VAT Directive! The Court is more about **politics** than a level playing field, and it will be interesting to see if it will allow the UK to keep its landfill waste tax that also seems to be against the letter of the Directive!

An election year study¹⁴ was carried out for the UK privacy watchdog (the Information Commissioner). It found that protecting personal information was a key concern of **83%** of those asked – equal to the NHS and only just behind education and crime.



CAMPAIGN SUCCESSSES

► We provided a speaker on ID cards' EU connections for the NO2ID campaign's September meeting.

► A network of campaigners and groups has stopped the government from scrapping our veto on Justice and Home Affairs – at least for now.

In June, the government's willingness to cave in received comment from the **OpenEurope** research group and **Nigel Farage MEP**. With September's EU meeting looming, **Daniel Hannan MEP** and **Torquill Dick-Erikson** urged Britain to wake up.

The volume of protest would be critical. We managed to:

- Get **Anna Calder's** letter into high circulation regional papers, including in Liverpool, Yorkshire, London, Wales and the South-West
- Host an early web-page to explain the threat in everyday language
- Do our first ever mailshot to 200+ radio stations, including the more unbiased local BBC outlets
- Get a follow-up letter into the Sun
- Mailshot campaigners to speak out, also shadow Europe Spokesman, Graham Brady (whom we have corresponded after he made pro-withdrawal comments in June).

Perhaps the biggest splash was made by **Mark Wallace** of the Freedom Association (TFA), who got the Sun to cover the threat in an article. TFA also hosted two South-West meetings with Torquill, and got MPs/MEPs to get a letter into the Times.

Others managing to get into print included **Dr Denis Cooper**, **Anne Palmer**, **MEPs Graham Booth** and **Godfrey Bloom**. OpenEurope did a news release suggesting 72% of the public wanted to keep the veto.

WARNING !!!

The Government has been known to 'flip' suddenly and will face new EU demands at the **December** summit.

Please follow developments and help keep this **vital** issue in the public eye

HOW 'EUROSCEPTIC' IS JOHN REID?

Some papers reported that Reid is 'the most Eurosceptic' Home Secretary and wants to keep the veto. Others claimed that the Home Office won a tug of war with the Foreign Office.

✳ His voting record¹⁶ shows slavishly toeing the party line on Europe. (And don't forget that Blair long ago decided "We reject permanent opt-outs")

✳ Although Reid admitted¹⁷ reservations on the EU Constitution, as Defence Minister, he urged EU member states to "transform" their forces to provide a "heavy, military deployment" in the interest of "EU credibility"

✳ In August, he supported¹⁸ harmonising security measures

✳ In June,¹⁹ a month after he became Home Secretary, the Government indicated readiness to drop the veto. It is difficult to believe that Reid was totally detached from a major decision concerning his department.



"Reid argued that it would be impossible to sell to the public any dilution of the British veto" – Guardian, 20.9.06

...and now for what the other half 'thinks'...

✳ Sadly, one journalist refused to support the call to save our legal system and *habeas corpus*, on the grounds that 'remand prisoners are detained without trial for long periods'.

- The law actually allows release²⁰ on bail **unless** the accused is shown to be likely to abscond, harm someone etc, in which case they are remanded. They still receive an early hearing.

✳ Maik Martin, Justice's legal officer²¹ claims we don't understand the EU's intentions, as it isn't anti-jury trial or *habeas corpus*. He should study the EU Arrest Warrant and Corpus Juris!

✳ Commissioner Frattini says that²² Britain will not be safe from terrorism unless we give up our veto! Germany just wants the full EU Constitution!

At stake – control over

- Our civil and criminal justice system; definition of crimes and penalties
- Policing and the prison system
- Anti-terrorism measures
- Border controls and ID cards
- Whatever else the EU wants to label under 'justice and home affairs'



**EU PROPAGANDA
WATCH a.k.a.
'Germany calling'**

► Not content with launching 'Plan D' in 2005 and 'Europe Direct' in March, the Commission is to use Berlin PR agency Media Consulta on a £50m a year programme.

Its aim²³ - to plant favourable stories about the EU and to 'break up resistance to the EU Constitution'.

• This may not altogether be a bad thing, as there's the right of reply – and the more the public hears about the EU, the greater the opposition!

It is bound to stimulate much-needed activity from quieter campaigners, and might even force David Cameron to 'talk about Europe'.

► The 'Oneseat' campaign to axe the Strasbourg European Parliament site, hyped as saving money, was aimed at promoting the Constitution. Its backer, Cecilia Malmstrom MEP, wants to reuse the money on an 'EU university'!

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