

Resistance

'ARE EU ID CARDS



A THREAT AGAIN?'

The award to Gemalto of the contract for British passports raised eyebrows, not just because it's Franco-Dutch, but because it is also a leading supplier of ID cards abroad.

Last year Gemalto published a pro-ID card article: **"UK national ID: Britons, no need to worry"** claiming that "the benefits far outweigh the fears of an overreaching state".

Five local authorities recently trialled **'Voter ID'** in elections, albeit with only Woking seeking photo-ID proof.

Richard Angell of New Labour pressure group Progress called for ID cards/entitlement cards to quash concerns over 'health tourism' and take the sting out of Brexit. He dubbed them a 'Single Market' solution.



In 'Left Foot Forward', Anna Turley MP also called for ID cards for EU workers to be extended to the British public too

Brexit secretary David Davis denied claims that the 'settled status' document for EU citizens staying on would be an ID card. "It's rather like a birth certificate; they won't have to carry it around all the time."

IRELAND TIGHTENS THE SCREW

Many people now use the internet to renew parking permits, pay Council Tax, etc – 'e-Government' services. The EU wants to co-ordinate these across Europe.

The Irish Republic keenly supports this initiative, and requires a PSC - **'Public Services Card'** and 'MyGovID' – to be used for applying for driving licences, passports etc. Civil liberties group Digital Rights Ireland (DRI) says that the PSC is an ID card in practice.

DRI claims that "you will not be able to travel abroad, claim a benefit or open a savings account without it. It is a compulsory ID card by the back door and there has been **no consultation.**"

Worse still, "the PSC is actually much bigger than the card itself. It is a plan that will result in the linking up of private, intimate details of Irish citizens' lives across **all sections of government**, including the education system, police and health service. There is no legal framework to provide for this to be done in a fair, safe and legal manner."

The Irish government claims it is not compulsory to get a PSC. However DRI replies that anyone wanting to lead a normal life will be forced to get one and be part of an extensive database, referred to as **a national population register** in all but name.

To the many of us who campaigned against UK ID cards under New Labour, this all sounds very familiar!

Even though the Blair government had mock ID cards with the EU symbol, umbrella group NO2ID fell short of calling the card an EU initiative, as it wasn't based on a specific EU-wide legislative proposal. NO2ID was wary of the EU's 'database state' interest, though, and noted its *political* and *financial* interest in ID card research.

Irish Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe maintained that the PSC was designed only for public services, but DRI points to a Bill that would widen its use for identification!

Obviously a spoof...

Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump for President, Releases Statement

TOPIC: Pope Francis Endorses Donald Trump



But the EU wants to decide what news is 'fake'. As part of the 'Digital Single Market'!



Donohoe noted that the Commission was very committed to **'cross-border eGovernment'** and the establishment of a 'Digital Single Market'. (The latter is basically trading goods, capital and services including broadcasting online in the SM. The UK wants it completed in 2018 but to leave it in 2020!)

The EU adds that this allows people to 'move freely', dealing easily with public services outside their own country.. Hence a 'common framework' for citizen electronic identity management

While we were fighting our 2016 referendum, a European Parliament Committee released a report "The Legal and Political Context for setting up a European Identity Document".

This admitted that the idea of an EU ID Card had been raised a few times in the 2000s, including in **2005** during the **UK EU Presidency** (when our ID card legislation was being pushed through!)

It could find 'no legal basis' for an EU ID card except 'exercising EU political rights' and 'free movement'. As a spur for **EU action**, it noted the 'difficulties' faced by EU citizens in registering for local elections abroad (only 10% of EU expats were registering abroad.)

Passing **legislation** for 'ID cards' or 'free movement/internal market' might be subject to veto ('Articles 77/114'), with non-ID card Denmark and the UK - if still in the EU - being sceptical. However the EU has been creative in finding means to bypass a veto, and some see an 'equality' loophole.

Germany, despite its reservations on centralised (population) registers has already added 'electronic ID' to its national ID card. The UK government also has a (voluntary) 'electronic ID' system for government services, Verify, without requiring an ID card.

Under current 'transition' plans, the UK has to accept virtually any new EU legislation to 2020 and the situation over 'citizen rights' is still unclear. If we are daft enough to give the EU a blank cheque, don't be surprised if it uses it!



The Brexit Rumour Mill

✧ A reader passed on a reply from a Parliamentarian, which perhaps typifies the attitude of Leaver MPs?

The reply meekly regretted that the government needed to show greater firmness in the negotiations.

There was resignation that it "made sense" to delay leaving the EU, to put new customs arrangements in place, train staff etc, although "just a year" would have been preferred...



Good ruddance! Former Home Secretary was a leading campaigner for BSE:

✧ City AM had a headline "David Davis admits UK could **push back Brexit day...**" Apparently when facing questions from the Exiting the EU Committee, he theorised that the Article 50 process could be extended - but qualified this by adding that only if it was agreed by every parliament in the EU.

Separately Davis said he did not expect to have to extend the Customs Union membership, because of technical or logistical issues. The EU has in principle already reallocated the UK's European Parliament seats, so only extension of membership till the end of June 2019 would be feasible; anything later would mean treaty obligations for the UK to hold EP elections, which would be nonsensical.

✧ Why should the EU risk losing our precious money and the pleasure of having us as a vassal state without a vote for nearly 2 years after March through 'no deal'?

As for that scenario which Davis discussed, there would then certainly be **emergency measures** to avoid a "cliff edge" for both UK and EU. Peter Mandelson's consulting outfit, Global Counsel, has plenty to suggest.

✧ The article doesn't mention it, but the WTO waiver could also be used to keep existing **free trade flowing**.

✧ Given that our government makes noise but then caves in with regularity, a soft Brexit seems on the cards. It's what the three EU institutions involved in negotiating want, and minister Lord Prior gave the game away last year.

✧ CIB have an interesting perception on continued access to the Single Market. As membership of the EEA is by a **separate Agreement**, and a year's notice was not given this March, we should continue on the same trade footing with countries like Norway as well as the EU.

✧ Maybe Remoaner MPs know this, which is why in the debate on 26 April their focus shifted to the **Customs Union**. Their tactic is to scare people into thinking that if we don't sign up for "a customs union" with the EU, trade will grind to a halt.

✧ According to EUreferendum blog, a customs union wouldn't deliver much, as the **Single Market/EEA** side would provide trade access (no tariffs or quotas with EU/EEA). The UK would still need to formalise the abolition of border checks on top of this.

It is the **Common Commercial Policy** (EU members only) that blocks us from agreeing other trade deals.

A **customs union** would just mean levying a common external tariff (CET) on other imports; typically paid into the EU budget. It would not stop deals on services (zero tariffs) or even trade in goods, so long as re-exported goods' tariffs were duly managed.

✧ The DUP leader at Westminster, Nigel Dodds, has made his position on Single Market and Customs Union clear. However the indelible ink **red line** is that N Ireland must not be treated separately from the mainland. If N Ireland is effectively 'annexed', the DUP would end support for the May government. Reading between the lines, the SM plus a customs union might just be tolerated for now if it achieved Brexit while maintaining trade and keeping the UK together.



ANY TAKERS? Remoaners are marking the 23 June referendum anniversary by organising a march to call for another referendum. But the public doesn't agree!

✧ Even if defeated in the Lords on some points, the government can use the Parliament Act to push through the **EU Withdrawal Bill** in September. As a simplification, this will repeal the 'European Union Act 2011' requiring a referendum on new EU treaties.

✧ In practice, there should be little new for the public to vote on; the transition period is more of the same, and only the basic principles of the future UK-EU relationship should be agreed by October. The EU will only start negotiation on a new trade deal after March 2019 when we leave.



ID CARDS /continued

✧ ID card manufacturer Gemalto was seriously embarrassed last year. A card supplied by one of its companies suffered a serious security breach. It cost tiny Estonia €1m to contain, with €20m in compensation demanded against the wider flaw. The latter hit other countries' ID cards; Spain had to 'deactivate' uses of its ID card.

Gemalto preened itself as "the world leader in digital security". President Macron of France had held Estonia up as a model to copy for 'eGovernment'!

✧ There are questions as to whether 'eGovernment' commoditises public services and readies them for privatisation and even offshoring. The Commission is using the "European Cloud Initiative" for public authorities to open their data and services, creating a "Government as a Service" (GaaS) base for the EU. The EU has a public private partnership on cyber-security.

GDPR - New data protection rules alert. If you haven't already told us you'd like future copies of *Resistance*, please do so **now**. Alternatively you can check online for new issues and back numbers on: www.newalliance.org.uk/resistance.htm

References and notes for this issue www.newalliance.org.uk/ref518.htm



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