

NO2ID, Box 412,  
19-21 Crawford Street,  
London W1H 1PJ

Letters Editor,  
The Telegraph,  
111 Buckingham Palace Road,  
London SW1W 0DT

27<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Sir,

You may be aware that from today the government begins issuing what it calls, with an obvious nasty spin, "ID cards for foreigners". You may not be aware what this means in practice. First affected will be students and those marrying Britons. The plan is that gradually residents from outside Europe will be fingerprinted and have to account for their movements. (Later so would we all.)

This is irrelevant to refugees and the poor unskilled with nothing to lose. But successful foreigners such as Robinho or Kevin Spacey, and the overseas students who subsidise our universities, have a lot of choice where they study or exercise their talents. Some will decide Britain has become too unfriendly. When the US introduced more hostile visa conditions 3-4 years ago, the numbers applying to study there fell by 15% and Bill Gates complained that Microsoft could no longer hire some of the best software engineers.

If this scheme is continued it will lead to less fee-income and lower international status for our educational institutions. British students will have to pay higher tuition to make up, and will have less money to spend with local businesses. Fewer of the world's leading performers in every field will choose to make their homes here than do now.

We the undersigned value the contribution that these people currently make to our institutions and our society. We think our country should treat them as guests, not criminal suspects. "ID cards for foreigners" is not just a small-minded slogan - Britain will suffer culturally and economically.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Booth - National Coordinator, NO2ID

Guy Herbert - General Secretary, NO2ID

Prof Ross Anderson - University of Cambridge

Mark Ballard - Rector, Edinburgh University

Anthony Barnett - Founder, openDemocracy

Sophie Barrett-Brown - Chair, Immigration Law Practitioners Association  
Gerard Batten MEP  
Tony Bunyan - Statewatch  
Shami Chakrabarti - Director, Liberty  
Barbara Cohen - Discrimination Law Consultant  
Dr Rachel Lara Cohen - Warwick University  
Kevin Eldon  
Matthew Elliott - Chief Executive, TaxPayers' Alliance  
Brian Eno  
Mohammed Esharif - Chair, Exiled Journalists' Network  
William Heath - Ideal Government  
*Roger Helmer MEP*  
Becky Hogge - Executive Director, Open Rights Group  
Gus Hosein - Privacy International  
Sally Hunt - General Secretary, University and College Union  
Chris Huhne MP - Liberal Democrat Shadow Home Secretary  
Baroness Helena Kennedy QC  
Prof Douwe Korff - London Metropolitan University  
*Dr Caroline Lucas MEP*  
*Matilda MacAttram - Director, Black Mental Health UK*  
Crispian Mills  
Henry Porter  
Adam Price MP  
Philip Pullman  
Lucy Porter  
Simon Richards - Director, The Freedom Association  
Alexandra Runswick - Deputy Director, Unlock Democracy  
Samuel Tarry - Chair, Compass Youth  
Neil Tennant  
Mark Thomas  
Martyn Thomas CBE FREng  
Lisa Tarbuck

*\*signatories in italics just missed the print deadline.*