

*They came first for the asylum seekers,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't an asylum seeker.
Then they came for the refugees,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a refugee.
Then they came for the migrant workers,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a migrant worker.
Then they came for me...*

Worried about ID cards, biometric passports, and the surveillance society in general?

Then you should be concerned about the repression of migrants by government and corporate immigration 'services'. Because ID cards have already been tested on asylum seekers and will be used first on other 'foreigners'.

The UK Border Bill introduced in January 2007 formally brought together border controls and compulsory ID. From this November foreign nationals wanting to enter the UK will have to apply for "biometric residence permits" and their details will be entered into the national identity database. From next year foreign nationals living in the UK will begin to be issued with ID cards. The aim is that 90% of foreign nationals in the UK will have ID cards by 2015.

The Home Office is now much more open about its intended use of a biometric ID database scheme to control Britain's borders than previously. This is not completely new, we know that ID technology has always been tried out first on asylum seekers. For example, the Application Registration Card (ARC) that is carried by asylum seekers is used for their regular reporting and to obtain NASS payments from the post office. It is an ID card containing the bearer's fingerprint, photograph, name, date of birth and nationality.

The plan for a new National Identity Register has been dropped in favour of combining three existing database: the Home Office asylum-seeker database, the Identity and Passport Service database, and the 'National Insurance' database. Although the eventual plan is to extend ID cards and database to everyone in Britain, this change of policy makes it clear that asylum seekers and other 'foreigners' are first in line for more repression.

The fact that ID cards and fingerprinting technology has been tested on asylum seekers shows that the state is prepared to impose ID on those people with the least voice to oppose it, before rolling it out to the whole population. The government is trying to get its ID plans accepted by cynical scapegoating of immigrants and asylum-seekers. Once migrants have been used to test the scheme, the government's plan is to issue identity cards to UK citizens on a voluntary basis from 2010, then in 2011 bringing in compulsory 'choice' of a passport, ID card or both.

By resisting the repression of migrants, we defend the freedom of everyone!



No Borders South Wales is a collective of people who organise for freedom of movement for all, we currently meet every other Thursday, 7pm at the Riverside Community Centre, Brunel Street, Cardiff. All welcome, though discrimination is not tolerated.

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