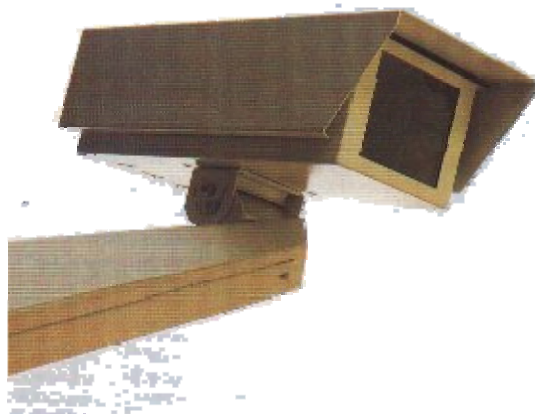


# **Enquiry 4**

## **Individual Privacy & Human Rights**



## Your Human Rights

The **United Nations** is an organisation of countries. Today there are 191 member countries. The UN was set up after the Second World War. Its aims are to keep peace, to develop friendly relations among nations, to help solve international problems and to promote respect for human rights and freedoms.

In 1948 the UN passed **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights**. This was a list of 30 basic human rights for everyone.

In 1950 a special **Human Rights Court** was set up in Strasbourg, France. Anyone who felt that their human rights had not been respected could take their case there.

In 1998 the **Human Rights Act** was passed in the UK. This means that you do not need to go to France if you feel your human rights have been violated. For the first time, human rights are a central part of the country's law and apply to all its citizens.

The Human Rights Act lists 16 basic human rights for all UK citizens. Here are 12 of them:

- Right to life
- Freedom from torture
- Freedom from slavery and forced labour
- Right to liberty and security
- Right to a fair trial
- No punishment without law
- Right to respect for private and family life
- Freedom of thought, beliefs and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom to gather in groups, and to protest
- Right to marry
- Freedom from discrimination

## Enquiry 4: Privacy & Human Rights

## Sheet 2

There a number of techniques which enable the police and the government to find out information about individuals - fingerprinting, CCTV cameras, voice recordings etc.

### **Now look closely at Article 8 of the Human Rights Act:**

"Everyone has the right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence"

This act is intended to guard against intrusion into someone's privacy or family by the police or government unless there is a very good reason.

As a result of this new Human Rights Act, many UK policies are now being altered:

- Prison authorities cannot interfere with a prisoner's private mail
- Police cannot tap an individual's telephone without legal authority
- People cannot be secretly filmed

### **What do you think? Give reasons for your answers.**

Is it ever acceptable to intrude into someone's privacy?

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What about surveillance equipment? Is it OK to use CCTV cameras to prevent crime? Are there some places where you shouldn't place cameras?

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Do you think the government and the police know too much information about us, or not enough?

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## Enquiry 4: Privacy & Human Rights

## Sheet 3

Think about the media attention that celebrities, footballers, and the Royal Family receive. The media and newspapers have been accused of going too far in their search for headlines and a story. Do you think that this attention is an infringement of their right to privacy under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act? The media defends its actions by saying it is in the public interest.

**What do you think? Look at these newspaper headlines below. In groups, decide which ones you think are in the public interest and ought to be reported in the press, and which ones you think are a media intrusion.**

**Cute photos of singer's kids in park!**

MPs enjoy luxury holidays at taxpayers' expense...

Premiership footballer is regular wifebeater

Joe Bloggs earns £300,000 a year. His house is worth £1 million. Where did his money come from? We investigate...

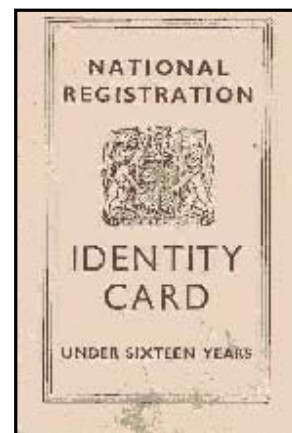
Nude pictures of radio star on beach!

WE EXPOSE OLYMPIC ATHLETE'S DRUGS SHAME

**Singer's mum in cancer scare shocker**

## The Identity Card Debate

Look at the identity cards in the Loan Box. One of these is from the Second World War: these ID cards were abolished in 1952. Compare this to the ID card which is currently in use in France.



### Identity Card Facts

- The government has announced that it is considering the introduction of a form of identity card for UK citizens
- The card would be called an "Entitlement" Card
- The card's purpose would be to:
  - fight terrorism,
  - reduce benefit fraud by checking rights to receive NHS treatment, education and state benefits
  - reduce illegal immigration
- The information stored on the card would include a photograph and personal information
- The card might also contain **biometric** information: DNA profiles, fingerprints, hand or facial characteristics and speech patterns
- This scheme would be the first ID scheme in the UK since the Second World War
- Basic plastic cards would cost £1.3billion, while cards able to hold data like fingerprints and iris patterns would cost £3.1billion
- According to current proposals, card ownership would be compulsory, but there would be no legal requirement to carry it at all times

## Enquiry 4: Privacy & Human Rights

Sheet 4b

**Read the following arguments. Mark next to each whether you think it is an argument in favour (F) of the introduction of identity cards, or against (A):**

"The innocent have nothing to hide"

Spokeswoman for the democracy campaign group Charter 88 "We should not need to carry a card and have our privacy infringed in order to affirm our right as citizens to have use of public services like education and healthcare".

"The entitlement card would be used to clamp down on fraud by checking rights to receive NHS treatment, education and state benefits".

"The UK, perhaps, in comparison to other countries, is a relatively unpoliced society". Home Office

"Terrorists are unlikely to be deterred by forging a piece of plastic"

John Wadham, director of civil rights organization Liberty: "ID cards make us suspects not citizens, that's why all innocent citizens should oppose them."

John Abbot, director general of the National Criminal Intelligence Service: "An entitlement card could have a major impact in the prevention of certain areas of organised crime - e.g. widespread benefits fraud."

"An investigation by the Sunday Mirror revealed an array of fake European passports and IDs for sale".

"The scheme's running costs would be hundreds of millions of pounds per year."

"Identity theft and fraud cost the economy at least £1.3 billion per year".

"In the European Union, identity card schemes can be used for cross-border travel to other states within the Union"

"Identity Cards will regulate citizens' access to government services."

"Any form of identity card scheme would require a national database storing vast amounts of information on everyone."

"The scheme will help people gain entitlement to products and services provided by both the public and private services."

**What about other countries?**

- 12 of the 15 EU states have state-authorized identity cards
- Australia, New Zealand, the US and Japan have no identity cards

In **Belgium**, compulsory ID cards must be presented to the police if demanded, and detail the citizen's blood group, as well as giving access to government services.

In **France**, voluntary ID cards with photographs give access to health, education, voting rights, and are needed for bank and post office transactions. The carrying of the card is nearly universal.

In **Italy**, there is a voluntary ID card that can be used as a passport across the EU.

In **Germany**, ID cards are compulsory, and citizens must remember a PIN number to accompany them in order to obtain local government services.

In **Portugal**, compulsory ID cards contain both photograph and fingerprints



### Group Discussion - The Identity Card Debate

**In your group, you are going to hold a discussion about identity cards. Read carefully all the information on Sheets 4a-c, and think about the following questions. Nominate one member of your group to report back your opinion to the rest of the class. Remember to think of as many reasons as possible to back up your opinions...**

- Assess how useful you think ID cards would be for:
  - a. countering the threat of terrorism
  - b. reducing benefit fraud
  - c. reducing the number of illegal immigrants
- Are ID cards a cost effective answer to tackling crime?
- Would it be better to spend the money on other public services - e.g. more police officers?
- How easy would it be to fake a card?
- What would happen if a card were lost, stolen or damaged?
- Are ID cards against Article 8 of the Human Rights Act, or are they a necessary intrusion to improve policing of the country?
- What about an individual's right to anonymity and privacy?
- Would the cards make "identity theft" easier or harder?
- If the cards were issued, should they be compulsory or voluntary?
- If the cards were issued, what should they be used for?
- If the cards were issued, at what age should a young person get their first card?
- Would you have to carry the card at all times?
- If the cards were issued, what information would you put on them?
- Would the police be able to stop you at anytime and demand to see the card?
- Would you support free movement within the European Community, using ID cards instead of passports?
- Would the card scheme mean the creation of a "Big Brother" government database on all its citizens?
- Does your group support the introduction of Identity Cards into the UK?