

Biometrics and the Emerging Global Identity & Tracking System

September 15, 2004

Barry Steinhardt
Director, Technology & Liberty Project
American Civil Liberties Union



“Policy Laundering”



Cycling policies through international bodies that can't be enacted directly at home

Biometric Passports

- **Required by US Congress**
- **Standards created by ICAO**
- **US Announces Biometric Passports**



Biometric Passports

- **Face-Recognition set as the standard**
- **RFID chips included too**
- **Standards allow for optional use of other biometrics**



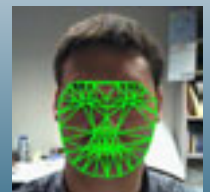
RFID Chips



- **Can be read at a distance (20m in tests)**
– see <http://tinyurl.com/46vml>
- **No encryption**
- **Could enable tracking**

Face Recognition

- **Highly unreliable biometric**
- **Allows tracking-at-a-distance**



Once created, biometric passports will:

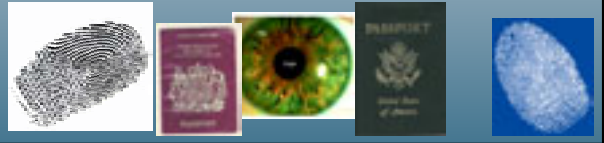
- Become gold standard of identity verification around the world
- Become template for domestic National ID systems
- Increasingly be demanded for more and more purposes, abroad and domestically
- Be subject to private sector “piggybacking”
- Eventually they may become practical necessities



Expansion is inevitable

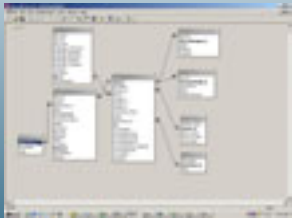
Once created, passports are likely to:

- Be used for more and more purposes
- Contain ever-more information
- Incorporate more biometrics, such as fingerprints and iris scans



Passports won't exist in a vacuum

- National Identity systems
- Immigration database systems
- Passenger profiling systems



“Policy Laundering”

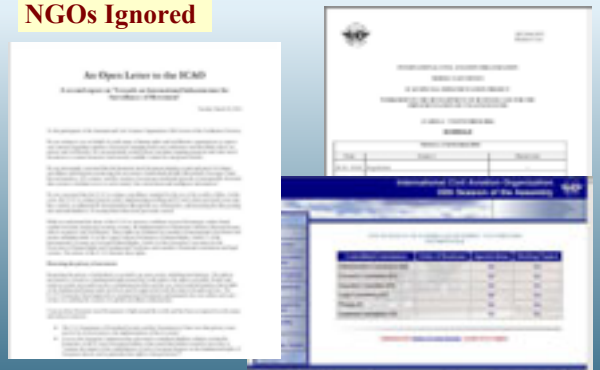
- National ID proposals failed in US
- US sets standards for allies
- US prods international body (ICAO) to set standards
- US complies with international standards

NGO input could have improved the product

- Biometrics can be implemented in ways that prevent use for surveillance or tracking
- Local storage
- 1-1 checks
- biometric systems related to physical characteristics which do not leave traces (e.g. shape of the hand but not fingerprints)

Attempts to participate were rebuffed

NGOs Ignored





For More Information:

www.aclu.org/privacy

PASSPORT



*United States
of America*