

# The Final Round<sup>1</sup>

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## Connecticut Debate Association

Stamford High School

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**Resolved: Federally standardized, electronically readable driver's licenses & ID cards and their associated federal database should be implemented throughout the United States.**

## A Note about the Notes

I've reproduced my flow chart for the final round below augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. Others may have slightly different versions. I'm sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, at points, "That's not what I said!" I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight that what a judge hears may not be what they say or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention "flowed" across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It's close to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

## The Final Round

The final round was between Joel Barlow (Isaac Mann and Jason Kaplan) on the Affirmative and Hamden (Eric Kirchner and Khalid Lum) on the Negative. The debate was won by Hamden.

### 1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) Opening Statement: There is a new weapon in the war on terror...a piece of plastic
- d) A1<sup>2</sup>: We cannot go on with existing drivers licenses

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<sup>2</sup> "A1" refers to the Affirmative first contention, "N2" to the Negative second contention and so forth.

- i) 9/11 shows the threat of terrorism
  - ii) crime and illegal immigrants (“II”<sup>3</sup>) are persistent problems
  - iii) an electronic ID (“EID”) makes it possible to monitor and track their movements, facilitating law enforcement
  - iv) currently it’s easy for criminals to slip through, and police to miss convictions
  - v) what is worse, the current system can be exploited for malicious purposes
  - vi) Bureaucracy provides a solution in this case
    - (1) A central database makes it easier to maintain the EIDs accurately
    - (2) There is increased security and the data can be kept private
  - e) A2: The government needs to protect the people
    - i) This is more than just plastic, but a fail-safe way to know who is who
    - ii) We realize this is not a panacea, but it is a much better system
      - (1) Provides a tool for police and the INS<sup>4</sup>
    - iii) Some may call this monitoring Orwellian, but consider
      - (1) The cards are encrypted and the database is protected
      - (2) The Federal government will invest in developing a good system once and for all
  - f) A3: This is a more convenient system that has commercial and medical applications
    - i) You would only need to carry one card for many activities
      - (1) One swipe and a doctor would have your entire medical record
      - (2) Could be used for purchases in place of multiple charge cards
    - ii) This card will change our lives
- 2) Cross-Ex of the First Affirmative**
- a) There will be one central database (“DB”)? Yes, federally monitored and made secure by the NSA<sup>5</sup>
  - b) Can’t these systems be cracked? No system is completely secure, but the NSA has the largest staff of mathematicians in the world. They would use all means to make it secure.
  - c) Why do we need these cards? To help catch terrorists.
  - d) No, what in reality, what phenomenon requires these cards? It will permit the job to be done drastically better.
  - e) Isn’t the immigration problem one of enforcement, not of catching IIs? Both are important. With these EIDs the INS can no who is legal.
  - f) You didn’t answer my question on need—what is wrong with the status quo? Nothing that will kill us tomorrow, but there are lapses in existing ID like passports.
- 3) First Negative Constructive**
- a) Introduction
  - b) Resolution
  - c) Definition: “EID” is one card that will carry all of your information
  - d) N1: EIDs will compromise security

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<sup>3</sup> This introduces an abbreviation. “II” will be use to for “illegal immigrants” for the rest of the notes.

<sup>4</sup> Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Federal agency dealing with immigration enforcement.

<sup>5</sup> National Security Agency, the Federal agency dealing with electronic communications, eavesdropping, encryption and code-breaking.

- i) Hackers and other criminal elements will break in and misuse the data
  - (1) They can tap wireless laptops in internet cafes from a van parked outside
- ii) Government systems have been tested
  - (1) E-voting machines have been shown vulnerable to hackers
  - (2) FBI has lost hundreds of computers with sensitive data
- iii) Government employees can be corrupted
  - (1) More will have access to this system in order to make it work
- e) N2: EID system will hurt the economy
  - i) Not all bureaucracy is bad, e.g. FDR created bureaucracy to deal with the depression
  - ii) EID/DB will make jobs disappear, all the secretaries and others who check information
  - iii) A federal electronic systems will cause many to lose their job
    - (1) States provide more secure employment
- f) N3: EIDs infringe civil liberties
  - i) The threat is much less than the Affirmative claims
  - ii) It is a problem of enforcement
    - (1) we can find IIs, we just can't agree on what to do with them
  - iii) Death from terrorism is about as statistically likely as being hit by an asteroid
  - iv) UK has become a surveillance-based society

**4) Cross-ex of the First Negative**

- a) You define EID as containing all information? The Affirmative gave no definition, and we believe this is implied by the spirit of the resolution
- b) Have hackers cracked a WiFi<sup>6</sup> system protected by the NSA? Don't know.
- c) Isn't e-voting better than paper with respect to accuracy? No, the machines can be hacked
- d) Can you elaborate on your definition? EID has all your personal information
- e) You worry about losing jobs, so you must believe strip searches are better than metal detectors? Not a good comparison. It's better to have manned metal detectors than unmanned card machines
- f) Terrorism isn't a threat? It's a very small threat, especially compared to the perception.
- g) Won't EIDs require technical, middle class jobs? Perhaps a few technical jobs, but it will eliminate many more infrastructure jobs.

**5) Second Affirmative Constructive**

- a) The terrorist threat is evidenced by the events of 9/11
- b) A1: Like therapy, the first thing we have to do is admit we have a problem
  - i) The existing bureaucracy failed us
  - ii) Remember also, the new American republic rejected a single, central currency
  - iii) UK shows that a system can work
    - (1) Train bombing is not a counterexample, as UK has been a terrorist target for a long time
    - (2) Recent interception of terrorist plots shows their technology works
- c) A2: EIDs optimize security and privacy
  - i) This is 21<sup>st</sup> century electronic technology

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<sup>6</sup> "WiFi" is the technology used in wireless personal computer networks, among other devices.

- ii) Only violates privacy of those who are investigated
- iii) Affirmative ignores the fact that encryption will prevent abuse
  - (1) We've known how to disseminate secret codes securely since World War II ("WWII")
  - (2) Hackers haven't broken into the CIA, or at least not very often
  - (3) System will have the best regulations and security
- iv) Assume that hackers do break in to the system
  - (1) How much more damage can they really do with a system with 250 million names as compared to California's license system with 50 million names
  - (2) The risk already exists, we are not increasing it
- d) A3: EID card can be extended to medical and commercial uses
- e) N1: The Negative ignores the effectiveness of encryption
- 6) Cross-ex of the Second Affirmative**
  - a) Do you believe it is wise to put all your eggs in one basket? Yes. There is no increase in risk whether there are 250 million or 50 million names in the system, and there are enormous advantages
  - b) What keeps someone from stealing my card and using it? The WWII Enigma system shows we can change the codes securely
  - c) Are all Americans computer scientists? No
  - d) Are all Americans capable of dealing with the complexity of the codes? They would not need to.
  - e) How will these scanners do the job? The cards will be scanned by radio frequency from a close distance using an encoded signal
  - f) Will this be similar to electronic entry card systems? Those are technologically outdated systems
- 7) Second Negative Constructive**
  - a) A1: II and terrorism are not the problems the Affirmative claims
    - i) We have the tools to deal with II
      - (1) We are afraid to use them as business and the migrant community protests show
      - (2) EID will weaken the existing tools.
    - ii) We've only had one attaché
      - (1) Attempts haven't increased, 9/11 was a fluke
      - (2) EID is an emotional, not a practical response
    - iii) The "war on terrorism" is like the "war on poverty"
      - (1) Poverty wasn't any higher than it had been when war declared
      - (2) After it was over, we had as much or more poverty
    - iv) EIDs are just not an effective weapon
  - b) A2: "Protecting Americans" is not a contention
    - i) The need to protect people is obvious
    - ii) The resolution is about the means we should use
  - c) A3: This card will have all information—resume, driver's license, birth certificate, credit cards, medical history—all in one place
    - i) Countries with national ID tend to lock you up if you lose or don't carry it
      - (1) In Algeria, you must carry it or you are detained and fined

- ii) The Affirmative gives no definitions, assumes no missteps, are completely vague about the system
  - iii) Law enforcement personnel are not perfect either
    - (1) I've been stopped on planes as a terrorism suspect
      - (a) System permits profiling and abuse
      - (2) They could sell information.
      - (3) These are the same government thieves who over-tax us and spend our money
    - iv) This is a "feel good" resolution, not an effective response
    - v) The real problem is that we are unwilling to have law enforcement make an effort using the tools they have
- 8) Cross-ex of Second Negative**
- a) Doesn't a national EID provide another tool? It's unnecessary, useless spending
  - b) What does the war on poverty have to do with this resolution? It's an example of another feel good program, like this. 9/11 was an exception, not a rule. Other means would have been more effective against poverty. We are manufacturing an enemy.
  - c) Won't EIDs help against crime? We have effective tools, we just don't implement them.
  - d) What examples can you give of Orwellian countries? Egypt, Algeria, Turkey. UK has surveillance cameras practically everywhere. Vietnam, Indonesia and Cambodia all have terrible records
  - e) Won't card help in airports? You haven't given enough details to decide. If you swipe your card and still get pulled aside, it's irrelevant
- 9) First Affirmative Rebuttal**
- a) The Negative presents a vision of despair, coupled with a refusal to act
    - i) The Affirmative says all we need is one more tool to be effective
  - b) The Negative agrees we have some problems
    - i) The Affirmative believes we need to work on a plan to fix them
  - c) N1 and N3 can be dealt with by encryption
    - i) It prevents stolen cards from being used and allows easy replacement
  - d) With respect to civil liberties, we are going to collect the same information in databases have now
    - i) It will be better protected in one place
  - e) The US is not like the countries cited by the Negative—Egypt, Algeria, etc.
    - i) The UK actually shows how these cards might work
      - (1) No abuses of the surveillance camera system
      - (2) Laws and courts will ensure rights continue to exist
  - f) With respect to the economy
    - i) EIDs will introduce many new jobs.
    - ii) Technology will change our lives
      - (1) No need to carry papers
      - (2) ID, medical information, every aspect of your life in one place, all perfectly protected
      - (3) No worry about profiling. All information is on the card and you can show it to anyone

### **10) First Negative Rebuttal**

- a) The Affirmative conceded there is a risk in one system, one card, one database
  - i) If everything is in one basket, then if anything happens we lose it all
- b) The Affirmative says we need a new weapon
  - i) We already have all the weapons we need but we don't use them
    - (1) Will we use EIDs against IIs if we can't decide what to do now?
    - (2) EIDs are a false comfort
- c) EIDs present a security problem
  - i) We don't carry all this information around with us for good reason
    - (1) What if it's lost or stolen
    - (2) What happens if we forget or refuse to carry the EID?
- d) Of course the fact that the US is different is good
  - i) We don't want to be like these other countries
- e) Terrorism is a small risk
  - i) The issue is overblown by emotion
  - ii) It's not denial, but dementia brought on by trauma
- f) Convenience isn't worth the sacrifice in quality
  - i) We don't go into a "convenience store" if it's being robbed

### **11) Second Negative Rebuttal**

- a) N1: at the individual level, the criminals and the government can abuse the information
  - i) We should use what we have or look for different tools
  - ii) In Algeria, terrorism was a daily problem, 800 dead per day
    - (1) We've had only one attack on the US, and none since 9/11
- b) N2: New technology doesn't create new jobs
  - i) We are just retooling from one set of jobs to another
  - ii) We are substituting a bad bureaucracy for a good one
  - iii) It's an exorbitant amount of money to spend to lose jobs
- c) N3: National IDs are already abused around the world
  - i) Implementation in the US will lead to abuse
  - ii) The Affirmative haven't given any examples where these systems weren't abused
- d) A1: the only problem is that we don't use the tools that already exist

### **12) Second Affirmative Rebuttal**

- a) Negative ignores the use of encryption
  - i) Never said other systems aren't worse
    - (1) Ballots are much less secure than e-voting
  - ii) Can't claim mathematicians will not get it right
- b) Basket size doesn't matter. We already have large electronic databases
  - i) 250 million not significantly different from 50 million
- c) Negative dropped the point on strip searches
- d) Consider what the negative has to do to prove their case
  - i) To disprove A1, they would have to show there is no risk
  - ii) Claim EIDs will lead to a profiling nightmare
    - (1) There is nothing in the packet that suggests Muslims will be pulled over
  - iii) To disprove A2 they would have to deal with the effectiveness of encryption

- iv) A3 was ignored
- v) Negative has not proven there is any difference between a database with 250 million or 50 million
- vi) Negative has not dealt with the issue of the Black Swan, as described by Karl Popper—there is always the risk that another 9/11 will come along