



Written by [Becky Akers](#) on October 27, 2010

Body Scanners: Irradiating JFK

These are the [carcinogenic contraptions](#) the TSA insists are perfectly safe as they X-ray us through our clothing. We appear naked on monitors the TSA claims show only a [“chalk etching”](#) or a [“fuzzy photo negative,”](#) and we do so in such detail that [British airports won’t scan children](#) lest they violate their government’s anti-smut laws. These gizmos also notoriously [store and transmit their naughty negatives](#) despite the [agency’s vehement denials](#). And yet, after all its lies, the TSA expects us to believe its Orwellian promise to [“protect passenger \[sic\] privacy”](#) as it strips us naked.

Meanwhile, this vile, deceptive [agency calls scans voluntary](#) because it pretends it offers a “choice”: if we don’t want its perverts leering at our nakedness, they will grope us instead. Victims report that said molestation is [“extremely invasive”](#) and obviously punitive. When the liege orders serfs to strip, they dare not refuse but instead say, “Thank you for the privileges of obeying and titillating you, O Supreme Majesty.”



The TSA has [labored since 2002 to inflict this nightmare on us](#) — perhaps because so many [ex-bureaucrats, martial brass, and other sociopaths](#) with ties to the federal government have invested in the companies that manufacture the scanners. While screeners ogle your teen-aged daughter, nuns, and expectant mothers, [Michael Chertoff](#) (former Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security; after leaving office, he founded a firm [“whose clients include a manufacturer](#) of body-imaging screening machines”) and his ilk are smirking all the way to the bank. The revolving door between the Feds and corporate America is as lethal to liberty as the IRS, Barney Frank, the Drug War, Bushes or Kennedys, the Patriot Act, standing armies, or Obamacare.

Despite the TSA’s tireless efforts to denude passengers over the past decade, its prey refused to cooperate. Flyers strenuously objected to exposing themselves to government agents each time the TSA tried to shove them into its scanners — until the [Underwear Bomber](#) conveniently provided a pretext for nationwide nudity. Never mind that this [technology cannot detect explosive diapers](#): the profoundly dishonest TSA swears that these scanners will enable it to intercept other terrorists so attired. Call me cynical, but I wonder exactly how many nuts out there are willing to emasculate themselves for Allah. And I’m certain there are better ways to foil all two of them than wasting billions of our dollars ([each pornographic machine costs \\$150,000](#), not counting installation, maintenance and personnel) and humiliating two million innocent passengers daily.



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Nonetheless, the TSA's mechanical Peeping Toms have invaded concourses all this year. [Three hundred currently infest 61 airports](#) with many more coming. The incursions follow a pattern, regardless of location: the TSA installs its porno-scanners as the city's media [praise it for](#) "protecting" passengers. [Reporters quote the TSA's "Federal Security Director" at the airport](#) or one of the agency's [spokesliars](#), who hype the scanners' benign effects on both health and privacy. Sheep dressed as [passengers echo these sentiments](#); at least [one will reliably bleat](#) that he supports "whatever it takes to keep the plane secure."

Then readers have a go at this propaganda. [Their comments excoriate the TSA](#) for its incompetence, inefficiency, rude and nasty screeners, and utter absurdity. Astoundingly, reporters interviewing passengers about the new equipment never seem to encounter any of these dissidents at airports, let alone quote them.

The pattern prevailed at JFK this weekend with one variation. No local leech would do: Janet Napolitano herself, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and the TSA's ultimate boss, descended on the airport to deliver the usual sound-bites: "[These machines represent](#) an important way to stay ahead of the ever-evolving threat that faces the aviation industry," blah, blah, blah. But our fearless leader refused to put her money where her mouth is: "when it came to testing the devices ... she turned the floor over to some brave volunteers." Gee, do you suppose it was the ever-evolving threat of cancer or of exhibiting her private parts that inspired her refusal?

When the TSA's obscure underlings were good enough for airports this summer, how does JFK rate a Cabinet-level bureaucrat, even if she is a dumpy coward? Probably because JFK's an international airport and one of the country's largest. And apparatchiks' schedules are often set weeks or months in advance. Still, I'd rather think Janet was boring everyone to death because of the growing rebellion against the scanners.

For almost a decade now, the TSA has launched one demeaning, nonsensical assault on passengers after another. Largely because it swore its silliness kept them safe, travelers accepted whatever the agency unleashed. But this time, the TSA seems to have crossed a line. People who have shuffled barefoot across miles of filthy airport floors, who have been frisked as though they were entering prison rather than boarding a plane, whose children or elderly parents the TSA abused, have reached their limit. Finally, they are standing up to the TSA.

Folks in Spokane are advertising on Craigslist "[to bring us all together](#) in a peaceful and much needed public protest rally" in an effort to stop "this awful encroachment on our travel liberties, our families, and individual human decency." The [Electronic Privacy Information Center \(EPIC\) has filed a lawsuit](#) to prohibit the TSA from strip-searching us with its scanners. A pilot challenged the TSA on its evil "option"; he refused both a scan and the "alternative pat-down." "I just want to be able to go to work and not be harassed or molested without cause," [said Michael Roberts](#). "... I'm just not comfortable being physically manhandled by a federal security agent every time I go to work." He, too, is suing, with the [Rutherford Institute](#) representing him. The [New York Daily News conducted an online poll](#), which, when I participated a few days ago, showed 79% of respondents "did not approve of the introduction of body scanners at the nation's airports."

So the pass Americans have granted the TSA may be expiring. Which is as catastrophic for the agency as it is indispensable for liberty. Even the most totalitarian regime rules only with its citizens' indulgence: once enough people determine to overthrow tyranny, not even the most indomitable dictator can withstand them.



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Let us fervently pray that the TSA is about to learn that lesson.

Becky Akers, an expert on the American Revolution, writes frequently about issues related to security and privacy. Her articles and columns have been published by *Lewrockwell.com*, *The Freeman*, *Military History Magazine*, *American History Magazine*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *New York Post*, and other publications.



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