



Written by [Becky Akers](#) on July 21, 2010

The Most Effective Weapon of Every Arbitrary Government

Soon they'll be popping up in bus, subway, and ferry stations. Look for them to spread as well to public schools, courthouses, post offices, bureaucracies such as Social Security and Departments of Motor Vehicles, the banks and hospitals our rulers increasingly control, and perhaps one day every intersection and sidewalk. Indeed, you may not even realize that officials are violating you since the next generation of these contraptions [digitally divest crowds of their clothing collectively](#) from a distance rather than requiring victims to pose one at a time after entering a booth.

Often compared to Superman's X-ray vision, this technology first cursed the world in the 1990's. Its clients were primarily ["correctional and prison facilities, ... military zones, ... and border crossings,"](#) where the subjects of the humiliating and dangerous scans (we're talking radiation, after all - but without the lead apron your dentist provides) had little or no choice about their exposure.



Ditto for one of its newer customers, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The Feds hatched this Orwellian monster in 2002 when they nationalized American aviation's "security." And though most taxpayers associate the agency with airports alone, its ["mission" actually encompasses](#) "the Nation's transportation systems" - proving [Jefferson's thesis that](#) "The natural progress of things is for liberty to yeild [*sic*], and government to gain ground."

The TSA has already invaded [subways, ferries](#) and [busses](#). In fact, it's even barred dissidents-sorry, it's even [screened those attending political conventions](#). But far from "protecting" us, these generalized searches instead train us to expect that the State's lackeys can and will grope us whenever and wherever they please, without a warrant or even the slightest suspicion.

The agency has also taught us to submit to its outrages without so much as a sigh by [savagely](#) and [immediately punishing](#) those few passengers who dare complain. Now that [most serfs have learned that lesson](#), now that they recite - all together now - "[If it keeps us safer](#), than [*sic*] I'm all for it," the TSA has taken the next step: stripping us naked.

Why? Because humiliation is as effective as physical pain at controlling people; the more agonizing the humiliation or pain, the more complete the control. Robert Jackson, a justice on the Supreme Court who represented the United States at the Nuremberg Trials, opined in *Brinegar v. United States* (338 U.S. 160, 180 [1949]) that freedom from arbitrary search "belong[s] in the catalog of indispensible [*sic*]



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freedoms. Among deprivations of rights, none is so effective in cowing a population, crushing the spirit of the individual and putting terror in every heart. Uncontrolled search and seizure is one of the first and most effective weapons in the arsenal of every arbitrary government.”

No sooner had our arbitrary government empowered the TSA specifically for uncontrolled search and seizure than the agency tried to push passengers into its smutty scanners. But even with 9/11 just a year in the past, [people balked at stripping for government agents](#). They continued resisting until Christmas Day of 2009, when the Underwear Bomber boarded a flight. [Our rulers immediately claimed that scanning us naked would have prevented his boarding](#) – though the gizmos [can't detect the sort of bomb he used](#), as even the [Government Accountability Office admits](#). Besides, technology is only as good as its operators: bureaucrats who couldn't intercept a terrorist despite [his father's ratting him out](#) aren't likely to catch him with machines that overlook liquid bombs.

But such details don't bother politicians intent on fulfilling every government's fantasy: unlimited, generalized, thoroughly humiliating and retaliatory search. And so, [in late June](#), legislation was introduced in the Senate to require the security administration to replace magnetometer metal detectors with body scanners at all airport checkpoints by 2013. 'Magnetometers are not enough in this post-9/11 world,' said Senator Bob Bennett, a Utah Republican who is the co-sponsor of the bill, along with Senator Amy Klobuchar, a Minnesota Democrat.”

The Feds have been surprisingly blunt about their ambitions for ogling us. In 2006, [Consumer Affairs noted](#) that body scanners are “likely future replacements for the metal detectors now in use.” And in 2008, [James Schear, the TSA security director at Baltimore-Washington International Airport,](#) enthused to *USA Today*, “It's the wave of the future'... Schear said the scanners could eventually replace metal detectors at the nation's 2,000 airport checkpoints and the pat-downs done on passengers who need extra screening. 'We're just scratching the surface of what we can do with whole-body imaging,' Schear said.” Indeed. *Consumer Affairs* also noted that the machines, “already used by Customs inspectors to search for drugs, are also being considered for big-city train and subway stations.” [USA Today agreed](#): “The TSA also will look at using the machines in subways.”

Michael Chertoff, then Secretary of the DHS, pooh-poohed victims' concern about their lost dignity: [“We need to not get](#) so caught up in the endless debate [about privacy] when the technology is available and out there.” Chertoff left the DHS in 2009, but [he continued hyping these pornographic scanners](#). And no wonder: the [consulting company he formed](#) represents their manufacturers. [“The revolving door](#) between government and industry has brought a half-dozen former high government officials of the Bush administration into the Chertoff Group. Not only does it count on the political and business connections of Chertoff, the new firm has a roster of five other former government officials that can translate government experience into lucrative industry contracts. [Chertoff boasts](#), 'Among the six of us we pretty much have all of those things in DHS, in DoD, and the Department of Justice, law enforcement and finally, in the intelligence community. So we have pretty much every element of homeland security covered.'” When the TSA strip-searches your wife and kids, remember that their degradation enriches slime like Chertoff.

Picking up where Chertoff left off is the TSA's new director, John Pistole. He considers “subways and rails ... an equally important threat area” with airports. [“Given the list of threats on subways and rails](#) over the last six years going on seven years,” he told *USA Today*, “we know that some terrorist groups see rail and subways as being more vulnerable because there's not the type of screening that you find in aviation.” Chillingly, he added, “I want to take TSA to the next level.”



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On that brave, new level, only the emperors wear clothes.

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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