



Written by [Becky Akers](#) on March 2, 2011

Training for the Police-State

“A video of Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) screening passengers at a Savannah, Georgia Amtrak station has been gaining quite a bit of attention,” burbles the Transportation Security Administration’s (TSA) blog.

Thus does the TSA admit that a tape one of its victims recorded on his cell phone is legitimate. It isn’t a hoax, nor did Brian Gamble, the firefighter and part-time travel agent who shot the footage and posted it on the internet, fudge the details: the TSA’s goons did indeed grope passengers trying to depart from a train rather than those boarding a plane.

So yes, indeed, the film has “gain[ed] quite a bit of attention.” “I am all about security,” [said one of those the TSA assaulted](#), “but when have you ever been harassed and felt up getting *off* a plane?”



He isn’t the only guy asking. “Many are wondering why we were screening passengers who had just disembarked from a train,” [the TSA chortles](#). “We were wondering the same thing.”

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What a wit! Don’t you love jaunty tyrants?

Obviously, this warrantless search was just an error in scheduling, [the agency chuckles](#), because “the screening shown in the video was done in conjunction with a VIPR [[Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response](#)] operation. During VIPR operations, any person entering the impacted area has to be screened.”

He does? Says who? Funny, I read exactly the opposite in the Constitution. “However, ... this particular VIPR operation should have ended by the time these folks were coming through the station since no more trains were leaving ...” The agency’s unconstitutional indecency (“[female TSA officers](#) made [women] lift their shirts up to their midriffs and patted their bras”) “[may have](#)” “[inconvenience\[d\]](#)” [its targets](#) but nothing more, ha ha.

Few are laughing with the TSA; rather, the multitudes of enemies it has made are laughing at it. They consider this atrocity — and yes, sexual assault is an atrocity, even when the government commits it and even when it claims it was all a mistake — just another in the long line of snafus proving the agency’s absurd incompetence. “This doesn’t make sense at all,” says Gizmodo, one of the websites publicizing the story; most pundits and readers who comment echo this analysis. “Why search people *after the train trip*? What’s the logic here?”

Obviously, there is none — if you accept the TSA’s pretence that it “protects the Nation’s transportation



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systems” from all us terrorists scheming to blow ourselves sky-high.

But if you understand that the TSA’s purpose is to subjugate, control, and intimidate citizens until they degenerate into docile dependents of the police-state, this search makes all the sense in the world. It was not a mistake; we should expect to see many more like it once the brouhaha over this particular one dies.

Governments benefit enormously from searching their subjects — especially when those searches can ensnare anyone at any time in any place. Such random rubbings guarantee that almost everybody will obey his rulers’ decrees. What American pothead will stuff a baggie of weed in his pocket before leaving home if he knows cops will probably frisk him on the street? Likewise, what Chinese Christian totes a Bible with him? Will a Moslem in Saudi Arabia carry a bottle of wine to his friend’s home when invited to dinner?

But searches enhance government’s power far more enormously and insidiously through the humiliation they inflict. Despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, subjects of even the most despotic regimes usually assume that whomever the authorities bully must have done something to deserve it. No one wants to be pulled aside for a search and implicitly branded a criminal; it’s human nature to feel deeply, excruciatingly shamed at such attention — let alone the potential for either physical or psychological harm and sexual abuse when a stranger manhandles your body.

Most people will do anything to avoid such embarrassment. They try not to stand out from the crowd, and they keep their head down lest they catch an official eye; they dare not protest their own or their neighbor’s abuse; they accept whatever other horrors government dishes out in silence, too.

Prove this by watching the line at the TSA’s checkpoint. No matter how offensively or senselessly the TSA molests nuns, arthritic great-grandfathers, little boys, buxom women, or expectant mothers, no one murmurs a word of outrage.

Or view these videos. [In the first, the TSA’s goons wrestle](#) a cooler away from an older woman who had received explicit permission from the agency’s headquarters to carry applesauce, cheese, and other snacks onboard to succor her fragile, 93-year-old mother during their flight. She explains this to the checkpoint’s savages as they fight her; surely those passengers within earshot overheard. Yet after some initial glances at the fracas, they studiously ignore it.

[In another clip, cops and the TSA’s thugs slam a woman into a table](#) at Reagan National Airport in 2007. The surveillance camera doesn’t capture many of the witnesses, but observe those few it does: no one helps the heavily outnumbered prey against the predators pounding her.

Meanwhile, as usual, the TSA lied about its latest barbarity. “It should be noted,” [the blog announces](#), “that disembarking passengers did not need to enter [Amtrak’s] station to claim luggage or get to their car,” *i.e.*, they could have avoided the search if they had wanted to. Oh, right: after a long and frustrating trip on the federal boondoggle called Amtrak, one prone to serious delays and discomfort, passengers voluntarily waited in line so they could enjoy a good groping while a [kleptomaniac](#) pawed their belongings. Not only is this whopper as ludicrous as all the others the agency tells, but one of Amtrak’s [passengers had reported three days earlier](#) that “there were about 14 agents pulling people inside the building and coralling everyone in a roped area after you got off the train.”

How has the land of the free descended to such totalitarian agony? Look no further than the words of our firefighter/travel agent/filmmaker: Brian Gamble “says he would have had no problem with such a search” — *sic* for “sexual assault” — “happening on a train, ‘But getting off the train, that was kind of



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backwards.”

Serfs who allow the Feds to search us onboard should expect to be searched everywhere.



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