



What We Need Is Whole Congress Imaging

As I write, Congress is indulging in one of its usual shams: a “hearing” to determine whether blatantly unconstitutional, unconscionable federal crimes are in fact constitutional and conscionable — or can at least be made to seem that way. Specifically, the Subcommittee on National Security is listening to assorted “experts” and at least one victim (Alaska’s state representative, Sharon Cissna, who famously travelled four days via car, small plane and ferry rather than endure a groping at Seattle’s airport) in a farce it entitles “TSA [Transportation Security Administration] Oversight Part I: Whole Body Imaging.”

Given the TSA’s highly publicized sexual assaults on passengers for the last six months, you might think even the average cretin — sorry, congressman would know enough to damn the TSA’s molestation as unspeakably evil. And you’d hope he’d demand the agency’s immediate abolition.



Indeed, [our host for this charade](#) has [personally tangled with the TSA](#) several times. One of his encounters prompted Rep. [Jason Chaffetz \(R-UT\) to announce](#), “Whole body imaging is as complete an invasion of privacy as there is. For the federal government to view passengers naked or to pressure or mislead them into believing they must enter an imaging machine before boarding a flight is flat out wrong. I fly every week... We can secure airplanes without totally surrendering our civil liberties.”

Sounds good, doesn’t it? Ditto for his cry, “[Nobody needs to see my wife](#) and kids naked to secure an airplane” with which the new congressman introduced his first legislation: a bill to restrict — though not outlaw — the TSA’s use of its porno-scanners. Yet Our Rulers are so depraved that even this mild proposal fell a casualty.

In for a penny, in for a pound. Considering the obstacles he would certainly face, why didn’t Jason sponsor a bill prohibiting the Feds from foisting such horrific technology on us altogether? Or, even better, one abolishing the TSA? Alas, Jason is far more fervent for government and its power than for his constituents and their rights. Last November he pooh-poohed rather than support National Opt-Out Day: the [Salt Lake City Tribune reported](#) that “Chaffetz ... says he still has many concerns about the full-body scans but says Americans should object through Congress, not to TSA agents. ... ‘I just think there’s a better, smarter way to do it than protesting and missing your flight home to grandmother’s place for Thanksgiving,’ Chaffetz said ... ‘That’s not the way to change the system.’” Of course not. Instead, we should go hat-in-hand to Our Rulers and beg them to hold hearings that never change the system but do afford Jason and his accomplices plenty of photo-ops.



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The hypocrisy and betrayal of freedom continue: [Jason also voted to renew provisions of the Patriot Act.](#)

No reason to pick on him, though: we could charge any of the sociopaths on Capitol Hill with the same sort of wickedness. Never forget that Congress could disband the TSA tomorrow — could end its [molestation](#), [barbarisms](#) and [cruelty](#), [fascism](#), and [killings](#) immediately — by refusing to fund it with money stolen from us. Instead, the day before Chaffetz's circus, the TSA's administrator appeared "[before a House appropriations panel](#) ... to defend his agency's budget request [of [\\$8.1 billion](#)] for fiscal 2012." Which "defense" ran along the lines of, "Good morning, distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, the TSA is so incredibly inefficient that the '[overall cost of aviation security has grown by more than 400 percent](#),' yet we're only socking the suckers — I mean, passengers with a measly \$2.50 tax every time they board a flight. What say we raise that to 4 bucks and throw in some more groping, heh heh!" So long as [cronies](#) and [contributors](#) profit enormously from our misery, Congress will continue to hold hearings and destroy freedom.

Meanwhile, the TSA proves itself talented at pursuits other than pedophilia and pornography. It also excels at enhancing our status of international laughingstock while shooing away foreign tourists and their dollars from America's hurting economy.

Francesco Pagano, 32, of Sicily was visiting New York on business when he apparently "[told a ticket agent](#) [at the Greater Rochester International Airport] that he had a bomb in one of his bags. ... Pagano later told deputies that he was joking, officials said."

Perhaps Mr. Pagano has read the Constitution, including its First Amendment, and mistakenly believed he was in a country that upholds the people's (NB: not just the citizenry's) right to speak freely. Or perhaps his English is no better than the ticket agent's Italian. But that's the wonder of the police-state: give it a simple misunderstanding, and it can ruin lives. Mr. Pagano "was charged with second-degree falsely reporting an incident, a felony, and taken to Monroe County Jail, said Monroe County Sheriff's Cpl. John Helfer."

Naturally, the police-state exploited this absurdity to prey on anyone unlucky enough to be in the vicinity. Rochester's airport "was shut down for about three hours ... bomb-squad members ... use[d] bomb-sniffing dogs to check the airport terminals ... four departing flights were delayed during the proceedings Passengers aboard the flight that Pagano had intended to board had their bags re-screened, and all of those passengers went through a secondary security check [*sic* for 'were sexually assaulted']."

Utterly nonsensical overreaction? Shameful hysteria? Goodness, no, as spokesmen for the TSA and the local cops explained at great length to the obliging *Democrat and Chronicle*: their victim was buying his ticket on the spot rather than in advance, which Our Rulers decree the mark of a terrorist, not a nimble entrepreneur or maybe just a guy changing his mind at the last minute; he had toted only one of his three bags to the counter with him (note to passengers: don't pack more than you can carry, even when heading overseas); and, most incriminating of all, Mr. Pagano seems to have responded poorly to the TSA's bullying and interrogation: "The interview of him didn't go well. He was stoic [*sic* for 'dignified?']," according to John McCaffrey, one of the TSA's "federal security directors" [*sic* for "leech"].

Competing last weekend with the morons in Rochester for the "Idiot of the Year" Award are those at Alaska Airlines. "[An orthodox Jewish prayer observance](#) by three [Mexican] passengers aboard an Alaska Airlines flight on Sunday alarmed flight attendants unfamiliar with the ritual, prompting them to



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lock down the cockpit and issue a security alert. ... ‘The three passengers were praying aloud in Hebrew’ ” - whoa! Who’d’a thunk Al Qaeda would sink this low? - “ ‘and were wearing what appeared to be leather straps on their foreheads and arms,’ [a spokeswoman for the airline] said. ‘This appeared to be a security threat,’ ” - to what? Cows? - “ ‘and the pilots locked down the flight deck and followed standard security procedures.’ ” [See: [“Phylactery”](#) and [“Tefillin.”](#))]

Once upon a time when America was free, an airline would have profusely apologized for employees this offensive while comics on late-night TV ridiculed their ignorance. And that would have been the end of it. Not anymore. Rather, dozens of troops marched to secure the Homeland: when the flight “from Mexico City to Los Angeles International Airport landed safely [surprise!] at LAX,” it “was met by fire crews, foam trucks, FBI agents, [TSA] personnel and police dispatched as a precaution.”

And how much did this little “precaution” cost taxpayers? Who cares? Certainly not Our Rulers, if Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.) is any measure. As one of the TSA’s creators, Mica tops Chaffetz for hypocrisy: he regularly chastises his brainchild in the hopes of replacing its employees — though not its power — [with “private” screening companies who “contribute” to his warchest](#). [“I’ll spend any amount of money](#) to make sure the country is safe [*sic* for ‘TSA remains in business to sexually assault the taxpayers footing my bills’] or passengers are safe [*sic* for ‘TSA remains in business to sexually assault the taxpayers footing my bills’] or the airline industry is safe [*sic* for ‘TSA remains in business to sexually assault the taxpayers footing my bills’],” Mica blustered last week.

And why not? It isn’t his money.



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