

Naked protest to TSA

Posted At : May 10, 2012 11:23 PM | Posted By : Michael Smith

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May be naked protesters would stop the TSA madness! Seriously this [article](#) also points out that the "War on Terror" has saved several orders of magnitude less lives than died in car accidents in the same time period. What is the really reason for all the law changes in the last 10 years in the US?

Airport security is difficult enough. Depending on the country, that might mean shoes off, belts off, metallic items out of pockets, computer laptop(s) out of bags, iPads out of bag (sometimes - they can't quite figure out if it qualifies as a computer yet), jackets off, sometimes sweaters off, going through the scanner or getting a patdown (using the back of the hands only of course), boarding pass in hand, passport in hand, stand on one leg and bark like a dog... well, you get the idea.

Recently, one fellow traveling through Portland, Oregon in the US Pacific Northwest had had enough.

When taken away for "extra security measures", he stripped down to his birthday suit and made a political statement that, while ignored by much of the mainstream media it seems, is highly worth giving some serious thought to.

In today's feature, Dale Sinner, in his International Man debut, does just that.

Naked man at the airport

Probably the last thing anyone expects to see at the airport is a fat, naked middle-aged man. But that's just what passengers saw a couple of weeks ago at the airport in Portland, Oregon as they waited to go through security screening for the hour-and-a-half flight to San Jose, California.

Transportation Security Administration agents called John Brennan, 50, aside for "extra security measures." That was the last straw. He complied by stripping naked.

He reportedly asked, "Do I have anything illegal? Am I good to go through now?"

He wasn't good to go through, though.

Authorities arrested him for indecent exposure, restricted, then later restored his right to fly in and out of the state, and offered to drop the indecent exposure charge in exchange for an undisclosed amount of time in community service.

Brennan said no and is going to court.

The TSA responded by announcing an investigation into his "disruption" of the security check line. Brennan says he is being harassed.

A lot of Internet buzz has been focused on seeing a "disgusting, fat middle-aged man naked in the airport." But is that really the issue?

Brennan says it's not - 4th Amendment rights against unreasonable search and seizure are. I'd agree.

I was once called out for TSA "special screening" before boarding a similar flight. It was both infuriating and dumb as hell.

Some years back I was going through security at SEATAC airport for a flight from Seattle to Sacramento and I got called out for special screening for wearing a Japanese "jimbei" - a kind of casual, light summer jacket.

I've seen Americans in jackets like that, especially in Seattle. I didn't think it was any big deal.

It wasn't any big deal to the woman doing the X-raying. She could see there was nothing in my pockets and told me I didn't have to take the "jimbei" off - just go on through.

That set the TSA jackboot on full alert.

He screamed at me.

He ordered me to take it off, ordered me not to move, then stood himself directly in front of me - his nose perhaps two inches in front of mine.

He stared into my eyes with the fury and intense scrutiny you might expect if someone had concealed weapons or knives. I never imagined my slightly funny jacket would set off such alarm.

He turned to look at my US drivers license, carefully examined both sides and commented that I had a funny name. "Yep," I said.

He found nothing to justify detaining me further. He then simply said, firmly, "You have a nice trip," and that was the end of it.

I felt abused.

I was in a hurry and the episode could have easily made me miss my flight, so I cooperated in the abuse. Most Americans do.

But as time goes by, more and more people like naked Mr. Brennan are getting fed up and venting. It's easy to understand the anger.

Some have stripped naked as if to say, "Is this what you want?"

Others have gotten furious, shouted, and ultimately gotten arrested for speaking out a little too loudly. A little more than a week ago, [a mother and her 4-year old daughter were detained](#) in a ridiculous spectacle of an out-of-control government.

What is going on?

People my age remember being taught to hate the Soviet Union by showing how Americans were free to travel without being stopped at "internal checkpoints" while those sad Russians -- under the boot of communist dictatorship -- were scrutinized at every turn.

Our Saturday afternoons were spent watching World War II movies about Nazi Germany where people lived in fear of the words, "Papers please!"

How lucky we were to be American. How times have changed.

One wonders how big the threat of terrorism really is to justify all this heavy-handed domestic security.

Maybe a look at the numbers will show how real the risks are.

According to the [Global Terrorism Database](#), 30 Americans died in terror incidents within US borders during the period between 2002 and 2011.

OK, that's not many. What about abroad?

Since 2005, 158 Americans have been killed in terror attacks abroad -- roughly 16 per year. Those were mostly in war zones like Iraq and Afghanistan.

That makes an American's chances of being killed in a terror attack worldwide about one in twenty million, on average, in any given year.

The risk is far less domestically.

Chances are you are far more likely to die in a car accident, die in a bathtub drowning, or even get struck by lightning than being killed in a terrorist attack.

Authorities will say that shows how effective anti-terrorism efforts have been. But does that justify the estimated [\\$1 trillion](#) spent on anti-terrorism in the US since 9/11 (which doesn't count spending in Iraq and Afghanistan)?

One analyst calculated that all the foiled terror plots in the US over the past ten years would have resulted in a maximum 2,300 potential deaths or about 230 per year. If true, that means the [US government has spent \\$400,000,000 for every potential person saved](#).

Raise your hand if you believe any government would spend that much to "keep you safe."

Consider these other recent efforts to keep you safe:

- The Department of Homeland Security just ordered 450 million rounds of special "hollow point" .40 caliber ammunition
- Protestors can now be held indefinitely without trial and without legal representation
- Unpaid taxes can prevent the issuance of a passport
- The TSA can now make random car stops
- Anyone taken to jail can now be strip-searched, even for unpaid traffic tickets

Sound like a bit of overkill to keep citizens safe against a 1 in 20,000,000 risk? Kind of leaves me wondering what the government has in mind.

It also leaves me wondering if we might not see a lot more reports of naked air passengers, 4-year olds under arrest and other authoritarian-inspired mayhem in coming days.

Papers, please.

[Post your comments here](#) .

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From <http://www.internationalman.com/global-perspectives/what-a-naked-computer-technician-says-about-airport-security>