



Did Osama Win That War?

(Reflections on criminal treatment)

By R. S. Scheyer ©2014

In the eyes of our own government, no less, we are all criminal types at the airport, wanting to hijack a plane and take it to, to, I don't know, let's make it my mother-in-law's house? Where I will do evil things with it. (Okay, so maybe not a complete stretch of the imagination.)

This however, is being justly thwarted by the screening process at the airport. Darn those airport authorities.

Oh wow no, I just got placed on the "possible suspects" list because I'm intent on exposing the absurdity, wait, hold on, I am currently in an airport, I won't say which one, and a police officer just walked by and sort of caught out of the corner of his eye me typing into what is usually a normal looking netbook that has become a lethal weapon in an airport. Dangerous, dangerous, dangerous am I. The pen is mightier than the sword.

Well, okay, there is this guy over there with an fu-man-chu beard, no sleeve shirt, backwards baseball hat, wearing a football allegiance shirt for a team that I think is okay and yea, maybe that screening process they have at the airport is going to find out but no, wait, he is on the OTHER SIDE of the screening procedure just like me. Too late, criminal thru the screening process. Much trepidation now as I think about flying on my airbus.

This, of course, now has me thinking that maybe, just maybe even that isn't protecting me. Worse yet, he appears to be getting on my plane. Well, not big worries, I think three or four of us can take him if push comes to shove. He appears to have taken some drugs in the past or present.

This makes me remember the lady with the baby carriage who had to have the carriage thoroughly gone through at the screening process. Clearly, ladies with baby carriages are a threat to the American's National Security.

But wait. Here is a guy who is wearing sandals going through the screening process. You know, sandals that have see through features that make one's feet available for view. Guess what? Yea, you got it right, he is taking off his sandals to make sure that there is nothing he is hiding near his perfectly visible feet. Arrrrghhh, the irony of it all.

Okay, I'll try not to worry like what the federal government is apparently doing.

Wait, my cell phone (i.e. glorified walkie-talkie) may be leaving me a text message right now that says the government is going to check my background to make sure I haven't had any contact with people who are out there trying to visit my Mother-in-law's house by taking a plane in the wrong direction.

I know what I will say in the interrogation room, "It's not me, I didn't do it, whaaa, aaaa, aaaa." Boy, now I'm sounding like I'm at my Mother-in-law's house.

But I digest. (even as we speak.)

What do I find when I go to the airport screening line that determines my criminal intent?

Why, I find a different line, a "TSA" line that says there are people who have been determined beforehand that they are not of criminal intent. This is somewhat new from the last time.

So I do, I try and sneak into that prescreened line. Somewhat criminal, sneaking in, I know. I mean, apparently, if you are of criminal intent, there are your shoes to deal with. I need to take off a few more articles of clothing, etc. If I have been somehow exonerated from such suspicion, well, the shoes get to stay on. Man, what I won't do to keep those shoes on!

(Okay, I think I may have actually succeeded in sneaking through at this line at another time before, but please, don't tell anyone. However, I can't tell you how wonderful it was to leave those ol shoes on while still being scanned for "weapons." Please, please don't tell anyone and neither will I. I'm a good person, really I am.)

The "guards" at the check station are on to my devious scheme apparently and the nice lady there says I'm in the wrong line. She does however, check over my ticket carefully which may or may not offer some clue as to my intent.

(I find out later on, when my wife gets to go through the prescreening line that leaves the shoes on that the authorities just pick people at random to get to go through this line. What?! Criminals are apparently now randomly “unchosen?” Well, at least they believe in their own philosophy.)

Not wanting to cause a scene, I go to the next line and wait my proper turn. Why, I even let someone in ahead of me, but then I realize that criminals with intent usually are not polite. So, I’m not about to do that again.

Out comes my boarding pass and my I.D. when I get to the proper place. Things are circled and checked and as I look at it later, it does appear to be some sort of code about me or at least about my whereabouts at the time. It all looks very official on a piece of paper that is going to be tossed in the trash in the next few hours. Clearly, there are grave concerns involved.

I am given the go ahead and I remove as much metal as I have and those dangerous, dangerous shoes. And sure enough, the detector shows some metal in the middle of my back and it almost always shows my right thigh as possessing a dangerous object. An invisible gun I am ready to draw. My eyes meet the security person’s eyes.

“You have some metal on your thigh?” <

“Uhu, no, no I don’t”

“Going to need to feel there anyway.”

Yea, okay.”

He touches my thigh with his blue gloved hand. I’m thinking the glove is a detriment to feeling concealed small pieces of metal. I’m also thinking that I should get this checked out by my doctor because it is very consistent, this non-existent piece of invisible metal on my right thigh at these screenings. Both the feeling up part and that I have a dangerous piece of metal lodged in my thigh that, for some reason, only a airport metal detector can find. Can’t figure out why something showed up in the middle of my back though. This, fortunately, is not so consistent.

Now, before you start agreeing with Osama and deciding I’m being way too cavalier (maybe that’s it, I’m just too cavalier. Gotta love that word, cavalier. I wish I was a Cavalier. It sounds like a glorious occupation to me. Like you get to carry a sword or something. Oh wait, just kidding airport authorities, I don’t really want an occupation that carries a sword. Forget I wrote that.)

Well, okay, alright, I get it. It is not like I’m siding with the crazies of this world. I realize there must be some precautions involved here.

But remember the good ol days of air travel? When none, except an incredibly small amount of people in the entire world, like less than the chance of winning the

mega-lotto, were of criminal intent? You know, actual criminals who thought that taking a plane the wrong direction was a good idea. Well, I'm having a little trouble remembering it too, but it really wasn't so different.

So, to dig deep into the memory banks here: There was a screening process way back then too and you actually kind of liked it. It made you feel like you were someone special riding on the plane. It was a NECESSARY PRECAUTION. I get it. But, a couple of people made a mistake way back in 2001 and millions, literally millions and millions and perhaps trillions of people are now under suspicion.

And I just got singled out for pointing out the absurdity of the situation.

Yep, I'm not so sure Osama didn't win that war. Page settings Options