

PROTECTING DC'S METRO FROM THE FBI AND FACEBOOK

While I've been in moving hell (one more day, a long drive, and then!!! relax), there have been two developments in the FBI's efforts to fearmonger in the DC Metro.

As I first reported several weeks ago, TSA Director and former FBI Deputy Director John Pistole testified to Congress that we need to implement searches on public transportation because of the threat invoked by an FBI-invented plot.

We need to search people on the DC Metro, Pistole was basically saying, because the FBI chose to target the DC Metro in one of their stings.

On Thursday, the DC Metro announced they will—in conjunction with Pistole's TSA—start conducting the random searches Pistole said we needed because of FBI's sting.

Metro Transit Police today advised customers they will conduct random inspections of carry-on items, as part of the continuously changing law enforcement programs designed to keep the system safe.

[snip]

The inspections will be conducted in conjunction with Transportation Security Administration officials and are expected to take only minutes and are designed to be non-intrusive, as police will randomly select bags or packages to check for hazardous materials using ionization technology as well as K-9 units trained to detect explosive materials. Carry on items will generally not be opened and physically inspected

unless the equipment indicates a need for further inspection.

Anyone who is randomly selected and refuses to submit their carry-on items for inspection will be prohibited from bringing those items into the station. Customers who encounter a baggage checkpoint at a station entrance may choose not to enter the station if they would prefer not to submit their carry-ons for inspection.

Since the time Pistole tried to use an FBI-invented plot to justify searches, a somewhat more real threat to the Metro did occur. On November 18, 2010, Arlington, VA resident Awais Younis boasted on his Facebook about the best way to maximize damage on—among other targets—the Metro.

The complainant recounted that during a chat with Ghilzai [aka Younis] in November 2010, Ghilzai described how to build a pipe bomb and what type of shrapnel would cause the greatest amount of damage. Ghilzai also stated that he could place a pipe bomb under a sewer head in Georgetown (assumed to be a reference to the neighborhood in Washington, D.C.) at rush hour to produce the greatest number of casualties. Ghilzai further stated that the third and fifth cars in the METRO trains had the highest number of commuters on them and he could place pipebombs in these locations and would not be noticed. Complainant responded by saying “you wouldn’t do that,” and Ghilzai replied by saying, “watch me.”

Mind you, there was little to indicate this was anything more than a boastful threat on the Toobz—Younis didn’t act on this threat. The FBI has as much as admitted that when they have emphasized that Younis wasn’t charged with any

terrorism related charges.

Yet coverage of the decision to search the Metro mentioned both the FBI-created sting and this Facebook boast to explain the threat:

The inspections have been in the works for years, and are not a response to any particular threat, Taborn said. However, in recent months various threats to the system have come to light. One man was accused of casing stations in what he thought was an al-Qaida plot to bomb and kill commuters and another man is charged with threatening on Facebook to detonate pipe bombs in the subway system.

So it all works out! Based in part on the FBI's own manufactured "terrorist attack" DC's commuters will experience the joy of random searches.

Who needs real terrorist threats when the FBI can invent their own?

Update: Joy for job fixed per zapkitty.