

# " Terrorism and Film "



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by Pedro Meyer

The fall out of what happened on Sept 11th has had repercussions in so many unanticipated ways; one of these has to do with taking photographic materials with you as you travel by air.

In an excellent technical information bulletin prepared by Kodak herewith enclosed, in PDF format, we can learn of all the perils of having your film go through the regular X-ray machines at airports. [WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND that you read it.](#)

For those of you who are still film enthusiasts, you will be able to notice that using film is not without its problems. In this respect it appears that digital cameras, no universal panacea either, have a strong advantage over film. In particular when the airport security checks, have multiplied like a plague. I have gone through as many as three different x-ray machines on my way to board a plane.

As we reported in last month's editorial, a digital camera's picture file survived unharmed the collapse of the World Trade Center, whereas film based cameras fared rather poorly in having its film survive.

What is going on at airports with all the security checks seems to have become a true example of bureaucratic lunacy. The idea that you could kill or threaten someone aboard the plane with finger nail clips or a small key chain pocket knife, just because the terror-

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ists of Sept 11th had cardboard cutters, does not seem to be very sophisticated thinking.

Anyone could, if that was their purpose, make a very sharp knife out of a broken bottle of alcohol or perfume sold at any Duty Free shop, or take the power cord of any of the thousands of computers or hair dryers allowed aboard planes and strangle someone.

Why not forbid belts, they do in prisons. It would be hilarious to see many passengers loose their pants, if belts were no longer allowed aboard planes. Or how about, the disposal cigarette lighters that are being sequestered from one's luggage destined for the cargo area of the plane, while allowing the identical lighters to go on board in the hand carry on bags or pockets of passengers. I suppose setting the plane on fire in the passenger compartment might be less of a danger.

On board airplanes they replaced metal knives with plastic ones, but I ask myself as I cut very easily into the chicken on my dinner plate with the plastic knife handed to me, what is the difference between that chicken and someone's throat? If it cuts into the chicken, it would surely do its job on my throat if someone had such evil intentions.

Now they even stopped serving wine from bottles that have a cork in them, as corkscrews are no longer allowed on board. I can just see a terrorist use a corkscrew as a weapon; the threatened passenger would probably die of laughter at such a ridiculous threat.

Just take the glass out of your eyeglasses and you can have a sharp edged knife, which could then be attached onto a wooden handle, which would have been allowed on the plane, bingo, you have the equivalent of a paper cutter.

Billions of dollars will be spent, on what seems to be a total charade. None of this is really a deterrent for terrorism on board planes. We cannot afford to let all of this nonsense to continue unchallenged, we deserve security not placebos. The cost of all this useless security in case you had not noticed will be passed on to us in the form of higher air fares.

The photographic community does a lot of traveling, and it is in our own best interest to voice our opinions on this matter. I don't expect too much will come out of it, but a voice here and a voice there, will probably in time rise the consciousness to what is going on.

We wish all of you dear readers, that you and your families enjoy a safe and wonderful holiday season.

Pedro Meyer  
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