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CLIQUE E ASSINE CORREIOWEB  
DISCADO. 0800 031 5000



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Brasília, Monday, January 11, 2010

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# Research profile of the passengers may be more revealing than scanner

Isabel Fleck

Published: 10/01/2010 09:55

The line that separates today's security measures against terrorism and respect for privacy was even more tenuous after the failed assassination attempt on a flight to Detroit on Christmas Day. If some passengers felt humiliated for taking their shoes and go through magazines at airports after the September 11, 2001, the new threat will further strengthen the tracking of potential terrorists, including the widespread use of the scanner body - which virtually naked passenger - not only in the United States, but also in several European countries. Another controversial measure is the return of profiling, which maps passengers at physical and social, especially the origin.

"Traveling is about to become more inconvenient than ever. But does anyone believe it really leave us safe from a nearby Abdulmutallab (Umar Farouk, a Nigerian who tried to detonate an explosive device in flight toward Detroit), or some other after him? "Argues Clifford May, president of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, a Washington Institute specializing in terrorism. The question must be asked by the government before deciding surveys increasingly invasive on all flying. In May, the new measures are a beginning, but are still far from sufficient: "We learned in the incident of Christmas, a security system billionaire for an airport can not work."

According to him, today's security officers are focused on seeking possible weapons in "Swiss Army knives, nail clippers and tubes of toothpaste, but do not look for" terrorists. " "It would take an extremely intrusive magazine to find the explosive loaded by Abdulmutallab. But it was easy to recognize that he was at high risk noting that paid the fare in cash and had no luggage, or by descent, "says Mar. For the specialist, this option would not be condemned for classifying a passenger in a "profile terrorist "that takes into account the origin and the past pattern of behavior, but not racial characteristics.

Political scientist Benjamin Friedman, the Cato Institute, says that in the short term, the focus on terrorism should be "on intelligence and policing, but that does not necessarily include the wider use of body scanners. "It is not clear how this equipment would have helped in the case of Nigeria. Only the enormous expense and concerns about privacy are already good reasons to abandon the idea, "he says.

Jim Harper, director of Policy Studies at the Cato Institute Information, agrees that the scanner "is not a magic bullet." "It will be possible to hide explosives in the body. The equipment gives a small margin of safety, but at a heavy cost to personal privacy, "he argues.

To Robert Turner, director of the Center for National Security at the University of Virginia, it is necessary "to balance privacy and modesty with the need to prevent" terrorist attacks. "In a perfect world, we would not like to use body scanners, but perhaps a necessary measure."

### Noncurrent

The experts consulted by mail agree that any new measures taken at airports must be accompanied by structural changes, giving long-term results. "Our enemies today are atypical. Tell a terrorist al-Qaeda if he hijacked a plane and crash it into a large building it will be investigated, tried and put in jail does not work, he knows to be dead before we do anything, "says Turner. "One of the reasons why it is so easy for Al Qaeda to recruit suicide is that the quality of life for millions of young Arabs, is very low. Our job is to identify the goals of these young people and use positive incentives, "he suggests.

Harper, in turn, believes that "an effective fight against terrorism requires a foreign policy that creates fewer terrorists." In your opinion, is to "withdraw our military from the Middle East and South Asia, and stop giving the people of these countries the idea that Americans are trying to manipulate its policies"

### Alert air

The Nigerian Abdulmutallab Umar Farouk, who tried to blow up a plane on the route Amsterdam-Detroit, at Christmas, had confessed in questioning that the terrorist network Al Qaeda has trained for 20 suicide attacks during flights. The disclosure would have motivated the U.S. decision to strengthen controls on flights originating from 16 countries. The U.S. embassy in Khartoum, Sudan, warned yesterday in its website on a threat of attack on a flight from Uganda and urged citizens to take extra security precautions. "We received information indicating that extremists intend to commit an attack on board an Air Uganda from Kampala (capital of Uganda) and Juba (southern Sudan)," it said. Because of the alarm, a flight path that was returned to the source.

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