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Everytime I travel by air I consider refusing to show the ticket clerk my driver's license, and every time I chicken out. I want to get on the plane. I don't want to waste time in a fruitless fight with security personnel, who will probably claim that they lack authority to waive the requirement I that display an official photo ID. In fact, there is no federal law or regulation forcing airlines to demand photo IDS. No law or regulation prohibits a passenger from boarding a plane without one. The FAA has endorsed current airline practices as essential countermeasures against terrorism, but the airlines don't catch terrorists with their ID requirements. They catch passengers using other's people's discount tickets.

Travellers hand over their licenses unknowingly, and in most cases it seems, unresentfully, hoping to reduce the risk of being bombed. Personally I never feel more secure watching my fellow passengers display their government issued photographs to ticket clerks. I assume that terrorists who have access to explosives have access to fake IDs. And when I'm prone to worry about crashing, I worry more about mechanical failures, aging computer systems, and overworked, undertrained traffic controllers than terrorists. If I have an anxiety attack about terrorism, I wonder about the identities of maintenance crews, not passengers.

What really scares me is the prospect of the government - or a private corporation - keeping track of my movements. Surrendering an official identity card in order to board a plane, I don't feel more safe; but I do feel less free. The right to travel includes the opportunity to travel in private. No one

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has any reason to suspect me of dealing in drugs or dragging minors across state lines for illegal purposes. So my trips to wherever are simply not the business of government or the airlines.

Is my fear of government or corporate surveillance a paranoid fantasy? Considering history and statistics, we are all much more likely to be victimized by government snoops than terrorists. We are also more likely to suffer corporate intrusion into our private lives: In fact, our privacy has already been compromised more than we know. Companies compile information about us everytime we use a credit card.

Yet uncomplainingly we give up more privacy and our rights to be free of random searches in exchange for illusory protections from highly unlikely threats. Terrorism works; it leaves us operating out of fear not reason. Now, everytime I travel I know what it means to be scared out of our wits.