

But woven into that entertaining piece, Mr. Casto noted that:

As September 11th made tragically clear, until now airline and airport security has been pretty much a hit-or-miss proposition.

While the screener at the San Diego airport was really on her toes, others are not. Mr. Casto noted that during a long layover in Chicago, there was a

gaggle of screeners who were laughing and apparently having a great time. I doubt they would have noticed if I'd had an A-K 47 under my arm.

Mr. Casto's message is clear, concise, complete and correct. The aviation security workforce must have consistent work standards, because they answer to a vast number of companies with inconsistent work standards. I believe federalizing the force is the surest way to achieve this goal.

When the Federal Government takes over training, supervision, and employment of security screeners, as the "Transportation Security Enhancement Act of 2001" provides, they will be subject to the highest performance standards. In addition, they will be paid decent wages and benefits, which will encourage them to stay on the job and master their jobs.

Our Nation's passengers will then be reassured that the most thorough screening of all passengers has taken place before they board their flights. This system is the best step we can take to prevent the heinous crime of September 11, 2001, from ever happening again.

#### AIRPORT SECURITY SHOULDN'T BE HIT-OR-MISS

I remember the incident in every detail—although I had to check back a bit to find exactly when it happened. It was June of 1998, and I was at the airport in San Diego, Calif., heading home.

I got in line at security. When my turn came, I placed my bag on the conveyor, stepped through the metal detector and reached to retrieve my bag, only to find that one of the security screeners had a firm grasp on it.

"There's something in here," she said, fixing me with the same kind of cold-eyed stare she no doubt would have given bank robber John Dillenger had he turned up in her line.

I resisted an impulse to tell her that the only contraband in my bag was some dirty socks.

"May I take a look?" she asked, delving into my bag before I had a chance to even answer.

"I don't see it," she said, as she pawed through my stuff.

"See What?" I asked.

"The machine showed a letter opener in here."

A letter opener? What the dickens would I be doing with a letter opener? Slowly, a faint memory dawned.

Unzipping my toilet kit, she reached in, fumbled around a bit and triumphantly pulled out a metal letter opener.

She summoned her supervisor, who looked even less amused than she did.

"Listen," I said, "if this is a problem, I'll simply leave the opener here. I don't need it. All I want to do is catch my plane."

I started to walk away.

"Wait," the supervisor said, "you have to fill out a form."

So I had to complete and sign an "Abandoned Property" form, giving my name and flight number, before I hurried on my way.

How in the world had a letter opener found its way into my toilet kit? Actually, the explanation was simple: One day, I lost a screw out of my eyeglasses. I used the letter opener

as a makeshift screwdriver to replace it. And, since I was on my way to the airport at the time, I threw the screwdriver in my toilet kit in case I needed it again.

But that was years before my 1998 California visit.

At the time, I estimated that I had gone through maybe 50 or so airport security checks with the letter opener tucked away in my kit. Nobody said a word about it—until I encountered that eagle-eyed female screener at the San Diego airport.

Since Sept. 11 and the terrorist attacks perpetrated by airline hijackers said to be armed with simple box cutters, I've thought a lot about my old letter opener. And about the amazing number of times I was able to breeze through airport security checkpoints without anyone saying a word about it.

As Sept. 11 made tragically clear, until now airline and airport security has been pretty much a hit-or-miss proposition.

Security checkpoints have been manned by people generally working for whatever company submitted the low bid for the contract. Often, they've been paid minimum wage and given little or no training.

Far more typical than my experience in San Diego was one I encountered when, during a long layover in Chicago, I waltzed through security several times—letter opener and all—and never got a second glance from a gaggle of screeners who were laughing and talking and apparently having a great time. I doubt they would have noticed, if I'd had an AK-47 under my arm.

Congress is debating changes in airline and airport security. The Senate has voted to have security operations taken over by the federal government. The House and President Bush favor a system that would see the federal government supervise and train private-sector employees.

As for me, I think I'd favor tracking down that tough-as-nails screener I encountered out in San Diego and putting her in charge.

#### CONGRATULATING COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA) OF FRESNO COUNTY

### HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2001*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Fresno County for earning national recognition for their exemplary volunteer service in the community. CASA of Fresno County has been named one of California's top honorees for community service.

CASA of Fresno County is a nonprofit organization which advocates for the best interest of abused and neglected children within the Juvenile Court system. Based on the belief that every child is entitled to a safe and permanent home, CASA works in the court system through trained volunteers in collaboration with key agencies, legal counsel and community resources to serve as the child's advocate and voice in the dependency process. CASA advocates are recruited from Fresno County's culturally diverse communities and trained by qualified community professionals, counselors, and educators.

In late 1998, Fresno was one of the four counties awarded a 3-year demonstration project by the Stuart Foundation to focus on infants and toddlers under the age of 3. In collaboration with Fresno County Department of

Children and Families, and other agencies, CASA of Fresno County created an innovative infrastructure of new health and development programs for infants and toddlers and is being cited as a model by the State of California for other counties.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate CASA of Fresno County for receiving national recognition for their exemplary volunteer service in the Fresno community. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing CASA of Fresno County many more years of continued success.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO BLUE SPRINGS SOUTH JAGUAR PRIDE MARCHING BAND

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2001*

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of the Blue Springs South Jaguar Pride Marching Band and the Band Director John Robichaud.

The band, under the leadership and direction of Mr. Robichaud, was selected to participate in the Tournament of Roses Parade on January 1, 2002. Being selected to perform on the national stage is a tremendous honor. Their hard work and dedication will be an excellent representation of the people in the Sixth Congressional District.

All the students, parents, teachers, and administrators at Blue Springs South High School should take pride in this commendable achievement. This outstanding band is deserving of all the accolades it receives.

I commend Ronald Okum, Tournament of Roses President and the rest of the selection committee for selecting the Jaguar Pride Marching Band and once again congratulate Mr. Robichaud and the students of the Blue Springs South Band for their dedication and hard work. You make the sixth district proud.

#### HONORING MR. JOSEPH ROBERTO OF MIDLAND PARK, NJ

### HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2001*

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of Joseph Roberto of Midland Park, NJ. On September 11, Joseph was killed while conducting the nation's economic business in the World Trade Center. As a dedicated family man, intelligent financial analyst, and true American patriot, Joseph Roberto lived his life with a passion. And although he may have been taken early from this life, his children will grow up knowing that their father was a hero to his family, and now a hero to his country.

That Tuesday, Joseph went to work for Keefe, Bruyette and Woods like always. As a vice president and research analyst, he worked hard to provide for his family and create a good life in Midland Park. Like so many Americans that morning, Joseph was dutifully doing his job, however what happened next changed our nation.

Thousands were killed that day, with thousands of stories left to be told by their families.