

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 Dillinger 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.

The void these individuals have left in their communities is vast. Words and medals cannot make up for their absence. But in their deaths, the victims of the World Trade Center attack have come to symbolize all that we love in America. The terrorists attacked these towers because they represented America's democracy, economic prosperity, diversity, and freedom. Joseph embodied these ideals in his work and his life, and for that reason, he was a target of these terrorist attacks.

We may not know the details of Joseph's final moments, but we know what his death has done for our country. From this tragedy, a tremendous pride in our country has emerged. We are stronger, more determined, and more united. Signs in New York City storefronts read: "I LOVE NEW YORK MORE THAN EVER." American flags hang in windows, doorways, fences, and wherever space can be found. A tremendous outpouring of charity donations and blood donations has swept across the Nation. Franklin Delano Roosevelt called this "the warm courage of national unity." With this American courage and unity, we will win our war against the men who terrorized our Nation and stole these lives. We are a nation united, now more than ever. And for this we are tremendously grateful to Joseph Roberto. For a man who loved his country, his death brought his country closer together.

Joseph has the admiration and thanks of an entire Nation. His family can be assured that this Nation will never forget the atrocities of September 11 or the values Joseph died for. Our country has come together. And we now come together to tell Joseph's family they are not alone. America stands with them—now in their hour of grief, and in the days and years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me, the Bergen County community, and our country in honoring Joseph Roberto for his achievements in life and the legacy he leaves. As his children grow in our unified country, we will tell them about their father, an American hero.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF GENERAL JOHN G. COBURN

HON. ERNIE FLETCHER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2001

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that General John G. Coburn is retiring after 37 years of exemplary active military service in the United States Army. He served his country with dignity, honor, courage and integrity.

General Coburn is a native of the great state of Kentucky and a distinguished military graduate of Eastern Michigan University where he was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education in 1962 from Eastern Michigan University and commissioned as a second lieutenant of Infantry. He earned a Master of Arts degree in Political Science and is a graduate of the Industrial College of Armed Forces, Fort McNair and Washington, D.C. General Coburn also has a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Missouri and is licensed to practice law before the Supreme Court, State of Michigan; Supreme Court, State of Kentucky; District of Columbia Court of Appeals; the United

States Court of Military Appeals and the Supreme Court of the United States.

General Coburn is a world-class logistician, who served our nation brilliantly in numerous logistics assignments throughout his career, to include his prior assignment as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Department of Army from 1996 to 1999; Deputy Commanding General, AMC, Alexandria, Virginia and Commanding General, U.S. Army Ordnance Center and School, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. He was also the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany from 1991 to 1992. Prior to that, he served as the Deputy Commanding General, 22d Theater Army Support Command, Saudi Arabia from April 1991 to July 1991, and as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Procurement, U.S. Army Materiel Command from 1989 to 1991. From the jungles of Vietnam to the Sands of Saudi Arabia, to the floors of our nation's depots, General Coburn brought astute judgment, bold leadership and selfless service to our Army.

Other major command assignments of outstanding service include Commander of Materiel Readiness Support Activity, Lexington, Kentucky, from 1987 to 1989; Commander, Division Support Command, 2d Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas, from 1984 to 1986; Commander, 124th Maintenance Battalion, 2d Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas, from 1980 to 1982; Commander, Defense Contract Administration Services Management Area, Defense Logistics Agency, South Bend, Indiana, from 1978 to 1980; and Plant/Depot Commander, Taiwan Materiel Agency, AMC, Taiwan, from 1971 to 1973. After returning from Taiwan, General Coburn attended the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

General Coburn's staff assignments include: Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4 (Logistics), 2d Armored Division, from 1982 to 1983; Executive Officer, Battlefield Systems Directorate, Headquarters, AMC, from 1977 to 1978; Procurement Officer, Procurement and Production Directorate, Headquarters, AMC; Senior Advisor, Training and Personnel, U.S. Army Engineer District-Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 1975 to 1977; Executive Officer, Defense Contract Administration Services Region, Defense Supply Agency, New York, NY, from 1968 to 1971; Assistant G-3 (Operations), II Field Force Vietnam, U.S. Army, Vietnam, from 1967 to 1968; and Special Weapons Platoon Leader, Savanna Army Depot, Illinois, from 1963 to 1964.

General Coburn's military decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Bronze Star with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal, the Southwest Asia Service Medal, and the Kuwait Liberation Medal.

The General is concluding his illustrious career as the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC) from May 1999 to October 2001. General Coburn's extraordinary leadership extended around the globe commanding one of the largest commands in the Army, with over 50,000 military and civilian employees, and activities in 42 states and over a dozen foreign countries. The

AMC missions are intricate and complex, ranging from developing sophisticated weapons systems and cutting edge research to maintaining and distributing spare parts. It is the one place in the Army where technology, acquisition, and logistics are integrated to assure Army readiness. With General Coburn at the helm, AMC led the Army in sustaining the nation's defense industrial base with the right combination of maintenance depots, ordnance plants, arsenals and innovative industry partnerships. General Coburn is known as one of the foremost leaders in transforming the Army. His strategy in building AMC as the conduit for new technologies is making the Army more lethal, lighter and readily deployable thus setting the path for the future.

Mr. Speaker, General Coburn deserves the thanks and praise of the nation that he faithfully served for so long. I know the Members of the House will join me in wishing him, his wife, Janice and their three sons, John, Robert and Matthew, all the best in the years ahead.

CONGRATULATING THE CHOOKASIAN ARMENIAN CONCERT ENSEMBLE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Chookasian Armenian Concert Ensemble on their work to preserve traditional Armenian music. The Chookasian Armenian Concert Ensemble is the only traditional performing Ensemble of Armenian music in the United States.

John Chookasian, a premier clarinetist, is the founder of the Chookasian Armenian Concert Ensemble. He has been playing Armenian folk music for over 35 years. John holds a graduate degree from the University of Nevada in music and education. He also taught Music and Ethnic Studies at U. of N. for 3 years. He and his wife Barbara have made it their life's mission to preserve ancient Armenian music for future generations.

The Chookasian Armenian Concert Ensemble has been performing since 1994. The ensemble performs the classical, folkloric, and troubadour musical works of the 16th to 20th centuries. The main aspiration of the ensemble is to preserve, promote, and perpetuate the music of the Armenian people, as well as to promote intracultural understanding.

In 1999, the President of Armenia, Mr. Robert Kocharian, invited the ensemble to present a series of concerts in Armenia and Karabagh. At this concert series the ensemble was presented with the prestigious "National Gold Medal Award of Armenia," thereby making them the only musical group in the United States to receive such an honor from the Armenian Government.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Chookasian Armenian Concert Ensemble for working to preserve the tradition of Armenian music. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing the Chookasian Armenian Concert Ensemble many more years of continued success.