

Vermelho River in the Amazon Jungles of Brazil." According to Wolfe, the Bororos believed that "there is no such thing as a private self." Instead, they "regard the mind as an open cavity, like a cave or a tunnel or an arcade, if you will, in which the entire village dwells and the jungle grows." Wolfe compared this to the situation faced by his protagonist, Sherman McCoy, who was caught in the middle of a public scandal in the last quarter of the 20th century.

In the 21st century, we now face the prospect of a world in which all of us—not just someone in the midst of scandal—will be forced to live without a private self: with the entire "village" able to obtain access to some of the most personal aspects of our lives.

In the emerging surveillance society of the 21st century, the data mining and information brokerage firms, much like Wolf's Bororo Indians, believe that there is no such thing as a private self. These companies are collecting and selling a vast array of personal information about the American public. For a fee, these companies will tell you someone's Social Security number, their address, phone number, driver's license number, driving record, any criminal record information, court records, insurance claims, divorce records, and even credit and financial information.

Recent press reports indicate that ChoicePoint, an information broker and data mining firm, had allowed a group of Nigerian con artists to get access to names, Social Security numbers, and other personal information about 140,000 Americans, including roughly 1,100 Massachusetts residents. Apparently this is not the first time that ChoicePoint has allowed criminal identity thieves to get access to such information. Two years ago, a similar problem reportedly occurred at the same company.

Unchecked, these companies take advantage of the most valuable possessions that Americans have: their personal identities. Companies like ChoicePoint are playing Russian roulette with the personal information and identities of millions of Americans. If we don't take steps to protect America's consumers soon, it is not a question of whether or not more Americans will lose their privacy—it is question of when will the next ID theft scandal hit. We must take immediate action to protect consumers from more information breaches.

The "Information Protection and Security Act," which I am introducing today in the House, and which Senator NELSON of Florida is introducing in the Senate, would do three basic things:

1. Subject information brokers like ChoicePoint to federal regulation by the Federal Trade Commission, and specifically, require such brokers to comply with a set of new fair information practice rules that the FTC would be required to issue within 6 months of enactment.

2. The FTC rules that the bill mandates will require information brokers to better secure the information in their possession, grant consumers the right to obtain access to and correct information held by the broker, require information brokers to protect information from unauthorized users, and prohibit users of an information broker to obtain the information for impermissible or unlawful purposes.

3. The bill's requirements will be enforceable through the FTC, which would be empowered to bring civil actions to punish and fine violators; the State Attorney's General, who could bring similar actions; and consumers, who would be empowered to bring a private right of action.

My second bill, the "Social Security Number Protection Act," would bring a halt to unregulated commerce in Social Security numbers. This bill would make it a crime for a person to sell or purchase Social Security numbers. Under the bill, the FTC would be given rule-making authority to restrict the sale of Social Security numbers, determine appropriate exemptions, and to enforce civil compliance with the bill's restrictions. The bill would also authorize the States to enforce compliance, and provide for appropriate penalties.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and the Senate to see to it that these two bills are enacted into law.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE CARTER CASTEEL

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carter Casteel for her service to the people of Texas.

Carter Casteel was born in Monahans, Texas. She comes from a family with a tradition of public service; her mother was Monahans city secretary during the community's early founding, and was one of the first women elected to office in West Texas.

Ms. Casteel studied at the University of Texas, where she majored in government and history. She received her Masters from Southwest Texas State University, and moved with her husband and children to New Braunfels.

After a stint as a public school teacher in Comal, she attended law school and began practicing law in 1985. She was elected to the office of Comal County Judge in 1990, and served there until 1999. She was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 2001, and works to represent the Texas Hill country and its interests.

In addition to her public service career, Carter Casteel has found time to run a successful law practice, Casteel and Casteel, with her son. She has also been involved in a wide variety of community organizations, including the Comal County United Way, Communities in Schools, Habitat For Humanity, and the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Committee. She had the honor of being appointed to the Battleship Texas Advisory Board by President George W. Bush, and has served as President of the Comal Independent School District Board of Trustees.

Mr. Speaker, throughout her career, Carter Casteel has been an advocate for education, tax reduction, preservation of natural resources and the community values for which the Hill Country of Texas is known. She has done a great deal of good for her community, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to offer her my thanks.

RECOGNIZING MR. GEORGE HENSEL

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. George Hensel, a recipient of the West San Gabriel Valley Boys and Girls Club Humanitarian Award. This prestigious award is being given to Mr. Hensel to recognize his lifetime achievements and accomplishments.

Mr. Hensel was born and raised in East Los Angeles and served our country honorably as a Merchant Marine from 1942 to 1950. Mr. Hensel has a long history of leadership in the community including: Chairman of the Board of Directors at Beverly Community Hospital; founding President and Board Member Emeritus of Beverly Community Hospital Foundation; Chairman of the Board of Directors at Woodbury University; President and Founder of the California Driving School Association; President and Co-Founder of Driving School Association of the Americans; member of the Board of Directors at Don Bosco Technical Institute; member of the Board of Directors of the Montebello Police Activities League; Chairman of the Montebello Planning Commission; Director of the West San Gabriel Valley Boys and Girls Club; advisory board member of the Salvation Army; Chairman of Assemblyman Jack Fenton's Citizen's Advisory Committee; member of District Attorney Evelle Younger's Citizen's Advisory Committee on crime; President of the East Los Angeles Rotary Club; and President of the Montebello Toastmasters Club. Mr. Hensel remains a Rotarian with 43 years of perfect weekly attendance.

The above community involvement is in addition to Mr. Hensel's significant achievements in his professional and personal life. He has received numerous honors and recognitions culminating in this recognition for his lifetime of accomplishments and community service. His loving family consists of 6 children, 20 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren and 6 great-great grandchildren.

Mr. Hensel's contributions are a shining example of positive community involvement and service. It gives me great pleasure to honor Mr. George Hensel for a lifetime of service, dedication and philanthropic involvement.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RAY MCKENNA

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ray McKenna of East Hartford, a community sports leader, champion, and friend, who passed away Tuesday, March 1, 2005.

A hometown hero, Ray defined integrity, commitment, and generosity of spirit and vision to his family and the East Hartford community. For kids like me growing up in East Hartford, the man from Burnside—Ray