suffer. Thus, violations of this protocol are not just crimes against one individual but against all of humanity.

The Cuba Program was part of a difficult period in our Nation's history, one which many would like to forget. However, we cannot allow the suffering of those brave soldiers to have been in vain. Thus, the unconscionable acts which they were subjected to cannot and must not go unnoticed and they must not go unpunished.

Substantiated by declassified DOD and CIA documents, survivors have been eager to identify and trace the Cuban agents who systematically interrogated them and tortured their fellow Americans. Yet despite their best efforts, a successful resolution of this matter has still not been achieved.

For them and to ensure that the facts about the program are fully uncovered, the Committee on International Relations will be holding a hearing on this issue next week. We thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for his leadership in order to get leads that could get us closer to identification of the Cuban torturers and have the Department of Defense continue their investigation into this new evidence. We hope that this hearing will serve to honor all of those POWs who sacrificed themselves for us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. UNDERWOOD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CAPUANO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXPORTATION OF TECHNOLOGY REGARDING SUPERCOMPUTERS AND ENCRYPTION SOFTWARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, rapid advances in technology have presented challenges to all of us on a number of levels but one of the most profound challenges that our Nation faces is in the area of national security. These rapid advances in technology place new challenges to our folks who are trying to protect our Nation and protect our security interests as they try to figure out how to deal with this new technology. As technology changes basically the old rules do not apply but the challenge that faces us is figuring out what the new rules are. How do we deal with the changes in technology in a way that will protect our national security? The area that I want to talk about this afternoon is in the area of the exportation of certain technology, namely supercomputers or so-called supercomputers, today a lap top almost qualifies as a supercomputer by the old standards, in fact a few of them do, and also the exportation of encryption software, the software that helps encode messages and protect it from outside sources gaining access.

In the old days, the method for protecting national security was, if a new weapon was developed on a horizon that presented a threat to us, one of the things we tried to do was to make sure that nobody else had access to it. If it is a product that is developed in the U.S., we try to severely restrict the exportation of that product.

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That is, in fact, what we have done with encryption software and with supercomputers. We have placed severe restrictions for years on the ability of U.S. companies to export either something that is classified as a supercomputer or encryption software to any place outside the United States, and these restrictions were intended to prevent that technology from getting into the hands of other people.

This has not worked, and I rise today to offer a better solution and to offer a solution that will best protect our national security, and that is the critical point here. It is not my argument that we should export this stuff because it is good commercially and the national security losses are minimal. On the contrary, it is my argument that if we do not allow greater exportation of this technology, our national security will be threatened, and let me explain that.

It is threatened by two realities. One of them is ubiquity. What that means is that things become easily accessible anywhere in the world. It used to be that a supercomputer was a rather large cumbersome series of machines and boxes that were very difficult to put together and even more difficult to transport. That is no longer the case. You can put together a supercomputer now with the chip that is really basically about the size of the tip of my finger; put together that, pull together seven or eight of those chips, and you have a computer capable of something way beyond what any computer was capable of even a decade ago. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, controlling this becomes very, very difficult.

In addition to being small and easily transportable, the other thing that has happened is a lot of other countries have started to catch up in the area of technology. If you want to buy the computer chips that will put together a supercomputer, you do not have to come to the U.S. You have literally hundreds of other options. So we in the U.S. are not able to restrict that. We can restrict our own exports, but that does not stop other countries from having companies develop that product.

It is even more true in the area of encryption software. Encryption software is now produced by over a hundred countries. If you want access to top-of-the-line encryption, you can get it from dozens of other places other than the United States of America. We are powerless to control it.

Now you may argue, well, so what? At least we can do our part. We can control what the U.S. exports and, therefore, protect national security, at least to the best that we are able. But the problem with that is the second key point I would like to make, and that is something that everybody acknowledges from the FBI to the NSA to the most ardent opponents of exporting technology. They all acknowledge that one of the keys to our national security is for the U.S. to maintain its leadership in technology, and the reason for this is obvious.

Technology is critical to our national security. If we are developing the best encryption software, the best computers here in the U.S., then our FBI, our NSA, our national security and Armed Forces units will have access to that information that they will not have if some other country develops it; and if we allow our countries to get ahead of us in the area of both supercomputers and encryption technology, pretty soon nobody will be buying from the U.S. because we will not have the best product. Our industries will die and we will not have access to the best technology.

Now recently, after years, the White House has stepped up and expanded our ability to export both supercomputers and encryption technology. I rise today to make the critical point that that is a good move not just for our industry, not just for jobs in the U.S., which is not an insignificant concern, but it is also a good move for our national security, and I want folks to understand that because I think for too long we have been stuck in thinking that has long since been passed by technology.

We cannot wrap our arms around technology and keep it here in the U.S.; those days are gone. If we want to protect our national security, we need to maintain our leadership in both the development of the best computers in the world and the development of the best encryption software in the world, and the only way to do that is give U.S. companies access to the foreign markets they so desperately need to maintain that leadership.

I am very pleased as a member of the new Democratic Network that the new Democratic Coalition and Caucus have so much to do with pushing this issue, making the White House aware of it,

because I think it is critical to the future of our country both economically and in terms of national security, and I urge that we continue down the sensible path to protecting national security.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A SAD DAY FOR ARMENIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, today is a very sad day for democracy. Today is a very sad day for those of us who are friends of Armenia. Those of us who have been able to watch today's unfolding news have been struck by the horror in the government in Armenia as the prime minister and several lawmakers were struck down by bullets in the middle of their session.

I had the opportunity to meet Prime Minister Sarkisian last year when I visited Armenia and just 2 weeks ago when he walked the halls of this United States Congress to bring the cause of Armenia here to the bastion of democracy, and Prime Minister Sarkisian was struck down and murdered and assassinated today in Armenia. All of us in the United States Congress and all friends of Armenia all over this country, our hearts go out to the families of Prime Minister Sarkisian and all those lawmakers who lost their lives today in Armenia.

For all Armenian Americans today is a very sad day, and I must say for all of us today is a sad day because this kind of senseless act of violence threatens the very foundations of democracy which we hold so dear here and which Armenia is struggling so much to establish in that former Communist country.

Mr. Speaker, our sympathies go out to the families with our condolences.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, as a new Member of Congress this year, I am pleased to be here to represent the 12th Congressional District of New Jersey. Running for Congress is indeed a wonderful experience. It reminds one of what a magnificent place America is, a place full of hard-working, talented people. It reminds you that citizens here truly care about important issues facing our communities throughout the Nation, things like improving our schools and fighting suburban sprawl, protecting Social Security, holding the line on taxes for seniors and middle-class families.

But running for Congress also reminds one of something else, that our country's campaign finance system is broken and needs to be fixed. We all know it. A campaign system where wealthy corporations can donate millions of dollars to political parties has the potential to drown out the voices of ordinary citizens. A campaign system where special interests can spread an unlimited amount of money on attack ads to smear and distort a candidate's record is wrong; a campaign system where we, as elected representatives, have to spend time raising money instead of addressing the issues.

One of the best ways, I believe, that this can be accomplished is through a restructuring of our campaign finance laws. It is one of the essential steps to begin restoring people's faith in government. That is why the first act I undertook after being sworn in as a Representative was to become an original cosponsor of the reintroduction of the Shays-Meehan bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act, and furthermore it is why I voted in favor of the legislation when it came under the consideration of this House.

It appears that this legislation will not pass Congress this year, that we who care about a government that is responsive to the people rather than special interests must not let up. This bipartisan bill is desperately needed to shut down the out-of-control soft money system which undermines the values upon which our democratic system of government is based.

The stakes are high and we must act.

SAVING SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to for the next hour be coordinating a special order on the very important topic of Social Security. In the course of the next hour I am going to be talking about the very critical importance of this program. We are also going to put in perspective something about the present debate waging in this Chamber even as Congress works to conclude this session, and clearly we are in the final weeks of this session.

I also want then to highlight the emerging opportunity that we have in this Congress still this year to take the steps necessary to do something to strengthen Social Security, to prolong the solvency of the program, to push the life of the trust fund out from its present expectation, and these will be the areas that we will be discussing.

I am very pleased that joining me during this hour to discuss this matter will be a number of Members, and we will be pleased to incorporate them into the discussion.

I will begin just by talking about the Social Security program. It is our foremost family protection program. It is truly, when you talk Social Security, a program of all of us for each of us, and it has been that way for 6 decades. I do not think there is much question about what has made Social Security America's most successful Federal program. It comes down to the fact that it helps families in very real ways with risks that they otherwise cannot avoid. We all have risks of life. We may die too soon. We may become ill and unable to work. We may outlive our assets. Maybe we live too long and outlive our assets.

All of these are risks, all of us have them, and yet Social Security steps in and helps mitigate those risks by helping us in very fundamental ways. Let me just outline three of the coverages of the Social Security program.

The first, retirement income. There are millions in this country that every month receive a Social Security check that are in retirement years. This retirement check will continue as long as they live. It will be inflation adjusted to keep pace with rising costs. This program is the primary source of income for more than two-thirds of those on Social Security. It is 90 to 100 percent of the income for one-third on Social Security.

Let me make that clear again. Social Security is most of the income for two-thirds of Social Security's retirement recipients. It is all of the income for one-third of the recipients. You do not have to figure too hard given statistics like that to conclude how vitally important this program is to seniors on retirement depending upon this income.

But that is not what is the best known of the Social Security coverages. It is certainly not the only coverage because Social Security also provides a survivors benefit. Now what is that?

That is coverage that applies when the bread winner dies prematurely leaving dependents at home. Ninety-eight percent, 98 percent of the children in this country are covered under that survivor's protection. If their dad dies, they are going to have some support while the family tries to recover from that devastating tragedy. There, I do not think, is another program that has ever been passed that provides such comprehensive coverage to the children of this country, 98 percent.

The third is disability benefits because if you become disabled and are unable to make an income, what are you going to do? There are an awful lot of people in that category that simply have no other means for support. In fact, the disability benefit provided from Social Security is the only disability protection for three out of four in the workplace today.