we have the responsibility as lawmakers to be as fair and just as possible. Certainly a reminder of God's law would be appropriate as we consider the Nation's laws.

SUPPORT FOR FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we come to the floor to speak to the American public. Sometimes we come to speak to one another.

It is in that spirit of speaking to my fellow Members of Congress that I rise today. Like you, I was horrified when the pictures at the Abu Ghraib prison first came forward, and then the additional admission of abuse, mistreatment, indeed, torture at the hands of people that we were responsible for.

And it seems, Mr. Speaker, that this is not an isolated set of circumstances. Indeed, there are more stories coming out of torture and death of detainees, and of extraordinary rendition, where people the United States is concerned with, we allow them to be transported to other dictatorships where we know that they will be abused.

I have been horrified as the stories start to come out, broadly reported in the press; and from Amnesty International, and the Red Cross. I, like you, my fellow Members of Congress, am horrified that the United States would be lumped into the same categories as countries that we are trying to encourage to honor human rights. Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia look to be countries where we have allowed people or sent them to be tortured.

This took on a decidedly local flavor for me as press accounts came out that a shadow, perhaps illegal dummy, front company, Bayard Foreign Marketing, LLC, in my home town of Portland, Oregon, was used to transport these people.

It appears to have been this company, organized in violation of Oregon law, to hide the true nature and breadth of this extraordinary rendition program. It is important for us as Members of Congress to be clear. Torture is morally wrong. It is not just a quaint idea that some people feel that it is morally wrong, but it is immoral.

Additionally, torture is a bad idea for intelligence purposes. The experts tell us that if you attempt to drown, beat, shock, freeze people, deprive them of sleep long enough, they will admit to almost anything you want them to admit to, but it is not the soundest basis upon which to base our intelligence decisions.

Furthermore, when prisoners are tortured, it taints the case against them; makes it impossible to bring them to justice in a court of law; and, sadly, it puts Americans at risk. The reason that we obey these quaint notions against torture is not just because it is morally wrong but tactically it puts Americans at risk in uniform and not.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about how Congress can sit on the sidelines and let the press and human rights groups do our job. Well, actually, they can only do part of our job. They can get the truth out, and that ought to be something that each Member of Congress ought to be concerned about. But being able to fix abuses, to hold responsible parties accountable for violation of human rights, a United States policy and perhaps law, that is our job.

Mr. Speaker, in the history of this country perhaps a half billion Americans have lived; only 11,571 Americans have been privileged to be Members of Congress. Who do we represent in this matter? Yes, we listen to special interests, those with strong political voices. We listen to the voters. We listen to the press. But at the end of the day, the things that matter most to us, I am convinced, are our family, our friends, the outstanding men and women who work for us here on Capitol Hill, who are almost like family. How can we look them in the eye when such a cloud hangs over America's honor?

I strongly urge each of my colleagues to look deep into their hearts and think about what they are going to do to provide the answer to their friends, their family, their neighbors, their staff about what we are doing to protect America's honor and to protect the abuse of human rights wherever it may be.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today is International Women's Day, and I come before the body this morning to salute our Iraqi women friends. I have with me a group of e-mails that I have received the past couple of days from the Iraqi women that we have been working with; and they are expressing their thanks to our military men and women who have fought so diligently and have worked right alongside with them and with their country to help their country go through successful elections, to recognize the freedom that they have sought and that they have fought for and longed for for 30 years. So it is with great excitement today that they are communicating with us as a free people and as free women.

Not only are they grateful to our military, Mr. Speaker, they are grateful to those of us in the Congressional Iraqi Women's Caucus, from both sides of the aisle here in this body, a group that has come together to walk with them as they walk toward opportunity and hope and freedom.

I would like to express my thanks for the leadership in that caucus to our former colleague, Ms. Dunn, who put a tremendous amount of leadership in this, and to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE), who are continuing to work and lead this group as we seek to help the Iraqi women.

I would like to share with the body some of the e-mails and some of the communication that has been expressed from these women as women and as free people to speak on International Women's Day.

This e-mail says: this is the second year Iraqi women have contributed to this important international gathering as free and independent people. They had a goal of 25 percent representation rights for women in the National Assembly in Iraq. Iraqi women have reached a target beyond that, with 31 percent representation. Spectacular. Spectacular.

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Another, ''Iraqi women are now in the future that we all dreamed of. Iraqi women are heroes. They deserve to be leaders. They deserve to participate in building the bright future for their children. We owe our brave brothers and partners their support and understanding. Together, we all celebrate the International Women's Day.''

And another, ''This day, March 8, is a sign of civilization and democracy. Let us celebrate together.''

Another, ''Your voice is reaching other countries in the Middle East. Our sisters in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Kuwait are also rising. People are speaking out and enjoying democracy. Congratulations to all, celebrating the spirit and courage and contributions of Iraqi women who have added to the vitality, the richness, and the diversity of Iraqi life. In this amazing transformation to democracy in our country, we must recognize women's historic accomplishments and always honor those who have left us behind to carry through.''

Mr. Speaker, I am so encouraged by the voices of freedom that we hear in this budding democracy. I stand today to salute the Iraqi women and to encourage them as they continue to work toward freedom, hope and opportunity in their country.

NO PLAN FOR SOCIAL SECURITY SOLVENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States, despite confusion in the press, does not have a plan to ensure the long-term financial solvency of Social Security. His privatization plan would actually reduce Social Security's income and accelerate