

murders of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture and outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment. That is an exact quote.

However, all of those barbaric acts are exactly what took place in a prison camp in North Vietnam known as the Zoo, seen here in a declassified photo. North Vietnamese POW prison called the Zoo, site of tortures of American POWs by Castro agent. During this period of August 1967 to August 1968, 19 of our courageous servicemen were physically and psychologically tortured by Cuban agents working under orders from Hanoi and Havana.

Assessed to be a psychological experiment to test interrogation methods, the Cuba Program, as the torture project was labeled by our Defense Department and intelligence agencies, was aimed at obtaining absolute compliance and submission to captor demands. It was aimed at converting or turning the POWs and to be used as propaganda by the international Communist effort. It was inhumane. It was incessant. It was barbaric.

Air Force Major James Kasler, who is pictured here in one of the posters, 19 of the U.S. POWs in the Cuban program, Major Kasler said that during one period in June 1968 he was tortured incessantly by a man known as Fernando Vecino Alegret who had been identified as Fidel, the Cuban agent in charge of this exercise in brutality. In a Time magazine report entitled "At Last the Story Can Be Told," after one beating, Kasler's buttocks, lower back and legs hung in shreds. The skin had been entirely whipped away and the area was a bluish, purplish, greenish mass of bloody raw meat. The person he has identified as the possible torturer is this man who is the current Minister of Education in Cuba. He could be one of the agents identified by our POWs as Fidel.

Colonel Jack Bomar, another victim of the Cuba Program, pictured here, has described the beating of a fellow prisoner and Readers Digest printed this eyewitness account for an article they wrote on POWs. It says, The sight of the prisoner stunned Bomar. He stood transfixed trying to make himself believe that human beings could batter one another. The man could barely walk. He was bleeding everywhere. His body was ripped and torn. Fidel, Fernando Vecino Alegret perhaps, smashed a fist into the man's face, driving him against the wall. Then he was brought to the center of the room and made to go down on his knees. Screaming in rage, Fidel took a length of rubber hose from a guard and lashed it as hard as he could into the man's face. The prisoner did not react. He did not cry out or even blink an eye. Again and again a dozen times Fidel smashed the man's face with the hose. He was never released.

This man who stood firm in the face of such brutality, who would not surrender himself to the wishes of his torturer was Air Force pilot Earl Cobeil. Earl Cobeil died in captivity, and he is pictured here. As a result of being tortured by a Castro agent, Earl passed away.

These accounts are but a microcosm of the terrible acts committed against American POWs in Vietnam by Castro agents, acts which are in direct violation of the Geneva Convention on prisoners of war. To violate the provisions enshrined in this document run against the grain of civilized society and undermine the integrity of the international community as a whole. Humanity is one. When one suffers, we all 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.

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.

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.