Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 628, I call up

the resolution (H. Res. 627) deploring the abuse of persons in United

States custody in Iraq, regardless of the circumstances of their

detention, urging the Secretary of the Army to bring to swift justice

any member of the Armed Forces who has violated the Uniform Code of

Military Justice, expressing the deep appreciation of the Nation to the

courageous and honorable members of the Armed Forces who have

selflessly served, or are currently serving, in Operation Iraqi

Freedom, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate

consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of H. Res. 627 is as follows:

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, during the debate on the rule, I think every Member who

was listening to the debate as they listened to a number of speeches

being made over and over, sometimes the same things being said by

different Members, they understand the subject which we are addressing

today, which is the criminal acts of what has been identified so far as

six individuals, with three of them having been recommended under

article 32 of the UCMJ to the court martial convening authority for

general court martial for abuse of prisoners, assault, and dereliction

of duty.

That is one of the purposes of this resolution, for this House to

condemn those activities. Understand that the criminal prosecutions

have not taken place yet, the trials have not been held and that we are

not passing judgment at this point on people who are being focused on

as potential defendants in these cases. But I thought it was important,

Mr. Speaker, to talk about the other people, because the tendency of

the media and the discussion has been to forget about the 300,000

uniformed Americans who are serving our country with bravery, with

compassion, with ingenuity and doing great things, not in their own

communities, but in communities thousands of miles away where the only

reward they may receive is from a kid that they have given a soccer

ball to like hundreds of the 101 Airborne members, or for people whom

they have hooked up a water supply as people have done in all of the

cities throughout central Iraq or children that have been vaccinated by

American medics. The only thanks they are going to get, obviously, is

not going to come from the American press at this point because the

American press is fixated on what you might call the six bad apples who

have been identified to date, and there may be more. We all know that.

But the 300,000 who served honorably, they are not going to get too

much attention here because it is not in keeping with a good sound bite

today if you want to get on television to talk about the good things

that have been done in the country.

My great partner on this Committee on Armed Services, the gentleman

from Missouri (Mr. Skelton), was in full accord with this. We wanted to

make sure that the good people got talked about and that this did not

turn into the action of the demoralization of our fighting forces in

Iraq.

So we wanted to talk about the good things they have done. And this

resolution, and I would commend it to every Democrat and Republican,

from the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Pelosi) and all of the others

who may have had trouble or problems with this resolution, I would

commend it to them to approve and to support and to vote for.

I just wanted to say, Mr. Speaker, I am looking at right now some of

the untold stories; and I wanted to cite an untold story to you, a

couple of them. It is true that there were abuses so far by six people

who have been identified in this Abu Ghraib prison; but while that was

going on, Gunnery Sergeant Jeffrey Bohr of the United States Marine

Corps was awarded the Silver Star posthumously for conspicuous

gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy while serving as

Company Gunnery Sergeant, Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine

Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, 1st Marine Division.

While moving through narrow streets toward the objective, the convoy

took intense small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire. Throughout

this movement, Gunnery Sergeant Bohr delivered accurate effective fires

on the enemy, while encouraging his Marines and supplying critical

information to his company commander. When the lead vehicles of the

convoy reached a dead end and were subjected to heavy enemy fire,

Gunnery Sergeant Bohr continued to boldly engage the enemy while calmly

maneuvering his Marines to safety.

Upon learning of a wounded Marine in a forward vehicle, Gunnery

Sergeant Bohr immediately coordinated medical treatment and evacuation.

Moving to the position of the injured Marine, Gunnery Sergeant Bohr

continued to lay down a high volume of suppressive fire, simultaneously

guiding the medical evacuation vehicle until he was mortally wounded by

enemy fire.

Yes, we had abuses by some six people. We have had apparent abuses by

some six people who are now going through the criminal justice system

of the U.S. Army, which I think our Members will find moves a lot

faster than the domestic justice system. But at the same time, Corporal

Marco Martinez was undertaking actions which led to him being awarded

the second highest award that our government can give for heroism, the

Navy Cross.

So I thought I might take a little bit of this time that was intended

to beat up the U.S. military, to congratulate some of those 300,000

people who have served U.S. so well.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address what the gentlewoman just said

because she has made a mistake. She said that the 3-month-old

investigation has only now come to light. I have in front of me the

news release that I will give to the gentlewoman. As of January 16,

which was 3 days after the soldier came forward and gave to his

commanding officer the evidence that bad things were taking place at

the prison, CENTCOM released a news release to every news agency in the

world stating that an investigation has been initiated into reported

incidents of detainee abuse.

So they announced to the world 3 days after the soldier came forward

in January that an investigation had been started; and General Kimmet

announced to the combined audiences of Fox News, MSNBC and CNN, by my

calculations over 20 million people, on January 16 that an

investigation had been started. Outside of that, nobody was told.

Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I think this is a very

important point. The soldier came forward on January 13 and gave this

evidence to his commanding officer that prisoners were being abused.

CENTCOM announced to the world through their official news release that

they were investigating this 3 days later; and General Kimmet, who was

before an audience of some 20 million people three days later, January

16, announced it was in fact being investigated.

So the statement that the investigation has just now come to light is

not accurate.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that the investigation, there

are now six investigations ongoing, the investigation that was started

has identified some six individuals. Those are all people wearing

uniform.

If the investigation reveals further people who are civilian

contractors, those people can be punished under the laws of the United

States which have been extended to theater.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I say to my good distinguished colleague I invite him to come to our

committee hearing in which we are conducting oversight in this matter

at 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon, and I also remind him that we have now

carried out by those people that we have trusted in uniform in the

Iraqi theater and elsewhere, six investigations now ongoing into this

particular matter, six investigations.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to my colleague that we have

three of the people involved in this who have been bound over to the

court-martial convening authority for general courts martial, that is,

for criminal prosecutorial activity, and to say to my colleague again,

who has told me many times about how much he respects our people in

uniform, that our people in uniform themselves, starting with the

private who reported this, have six investigations ongoing. And I think

part of our job is not just to have oversight, but also to trust to the

honor and integrity of the people who wear the uniform, and we now have

six investigations going forward.

So let us have this hearing tomorrow and see where we go from there,

but

my feeling is we have good, competent, honorable people undertaking

these investigations.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from

Oklahoma (Mr. Cole), who cares so much about America's men and women in

uniform.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

To address the distinguished majority whip, the distinguished

majority whip, like the previous speaker, is wrong. The statement was

put out by the Army on January 15 that this investigation was taking

place, 2 days after the soldier came forward. And 3 days after the

soldier came forward, it was given in General Kimmitt's address to the

combined audiences of Fox News, MSNBC, and CNN. That is not turning a

blind eye.

I will give the gentleman the notice. It was put out on January 14.

He can look at it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr.

Cox).

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say to my friend, you say some knew about

this. The combined audiences of Fox News, MSNBC and CNN heard this in

the daily briefing in January. So your statement that the

administration turned a blind eye to it is not true. They initiated an

investigation, once again initiated by General Sanchez, 3 days after

the soldier came forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume

just to reiterate the same thing that I have been stating, and that is

that 2 days after the soldier in January reported to his superiors that

abuses were taking place, the United States announced to the world in

their press release that we were undertaking an investigation. And a

few days after that, 4 days after the facts came forward, we announced

to the combined audiences of Fox News, MSNBC and CNN, millions of

people, that the investigations were taking place.

The investigations proceeded. We now have three individuals who are

being recommended to the Court-Martial Convening Authority for court-

martial for prisoner abuse, assault, dereliction of duty, and a large

number of people in the chain of command have had their career ended,

not because we found any connection between them and the acts, but

because it was on their watch that these things took place.

I want to say just one thing about Mr. Rumsfeld before I recognize

another speaker, Mr. Speaker. We have 135,000 good, hard-working,

courageous uniformed men and women in theater. They are in contact in

firefights on a daily basis. The job of the Secretary of Defense is to

see to it that we win this war. He assigned to the legitimate,

appropriate departments this investigation and told them to go forward,

which they did, resulting in the criminal prosecution machine being set

in motion under our court-martial authority, and he went back to trying

to win this war. That is the appropriate action for the Secretary of

Defense.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from

California (Mr. Thompson), a great member of the 173rd Airborne in the

Vietnam War.