Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this

resolution. The actions of several U.S. soldiers in Baghdad are

fundamentally inconsistent with our mission in Iraq, American

principles of justice, and the basic tenets of morality. They have

stained our character and damaged our credibility.

I fear there are no words in the English language that can adequately

describe the depth of our disillusionment over the goodwill generated

by millions of Americans and billions of American dollars squandered in

an instant.

But I do know this: out of this tragedy is born opportunity to show

the watching world how we, a Nation founded on the rule of law, conduct

ourselves in the aftermath of this tragedy. What distinguishes us from

the regime that we ended is justice. While this behavior was once

commonplace in Iraq, it is foreign to our national experience and to

our nature, and we will deal with it not by saluting those who

perpetrated those acts, as the former regime did, but by bringing the

perpetrators to justice.

I was fortunate to visit a free Iraq in January. I met with our

soldiers, including some from my home State, New Jersey. I say to each

of our soldiers and service members, do not allow the injustices done by

a few to undermine your faith, for the cause which brought you to Iraq

is right and just. You have freed 24 million people from the clutches

of unspeakable tyranny, and your actions and character are sowing

freedom in a place that has known evil. May God continue to bless all

of those who serve honorably in our Nation's military, and may God

continue to bless America.