Mr. Speaker, I ask that this resolution be less timid

and actually ask for a commission beyond the Department of Defense.

Mr. Speaker, I was absolutely outraged last week when I, along with

the rest of the world, learned that U.S. service members and private

American contractors in Iraq had abused and tortured Iraqi prisoners of

war, and had forced them to commit heinous sexual acts.

War is devastating and terrifying, but even in war there is no place

for actions such as these. The vast majority of soldiers in Iraq are

performing courageously and honorably, upholding the high standards of

the U.S. military. But the abuse inflicted by a few soldiers will

likely be responsible for much ill will around the world. What's worse,

I fear that it will embolden our enemies to commit further acts of

terrorism against the United States.

We must get to the bottom of this scandal, but we must do it in the

right way. H. Res. 627, which will be voted on today, does not

adequately address these abuses because it doesn't go far enough.

Instead of encouraging an investigation through the Department of

Defense, this resolution should call for congressional investigations

to investigate the roles of both service members and private civilian

contractors who may have played a role in the abuse of Iraqi prisoners

of war.

The military should not investigate itself in this matter, because we

don't yet know if the military leadership itself bears some

responsibility for these atrocities.

We also owe an apology to the people of Iraq, and to all the

countries around the world that look to the United States for

leadership and guidance in the area of democracy. This resolution

offers no apology. Instead, it absolves the Congress of blame, claiming

that we weren't informed of the abuses while they were happening. But

the fact that we weren't informed should not stop this body from

offering our sincerest regret that military procedures failed to stop

this kind of abuse from occurring. Are we so arrogant that we cannot

apologize for some of the most heinous acts that member of our military

have ever committed?

This resolution must be amended to get to the bottom of this terrible

scandal. I urge my colleagues to vote against H. Res. 627 unless it is

amended to include congressional investigations and regret for the acts

of those wearing the uniform of the United States military.