Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution and

to express my revulsion and disgust at the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by

a few reprehensible and unrepresentative individuals in our military or

operating as representatives of our government.

The very first time I spoke on this floor, it was to warn Saddam

Hussein and the Iraqi army of the consequences of not treating our

prisoners of war in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. I feel just

as strongly about the prisoners of war that are in the custody of our

military.

This is not an issue I take lightly. My own uncle was a prisoner of

war during World War II. He suffered terrible personal abuse.

Now a few soldiers have brought disgrace upon themselves. And in the

process, they have embarrassed our Nation, its Army, and risked the

lives of our soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, these abuses must be dealt with and the perpetrators

prosecuted and punished. The incident represents a failure of

leadership, clear and simple. Those in the chain of command responsible

for this breakdown must be identified and sanctioned in some way

stronger than simple letters of reprimand.

This resolution and the actions that follow are what makes us

different from other nations, Mr. Speaker. Here in America when

something like this happens, we put it out in front of the world, we

identify the perpetrators, prosecute, and punish them. That is what our

soldiers fight for. That is what 30 soldiers from my own district have

died for.

In America, we do not have gulags. We do not have concentration

camps. And we do not tolerate the mistreatment of those who are

incarcerated. We are a just society built upon the rule of law. But

make no mistake. Our cause in Iraq is just, and we will be successful

in spite of this shameful episode.

Mr. Speaker, the vast majority of our soldiers are honest and upright

and willing to risk their lives to defend and advance the cause of

freedom. I know. I have had the honor of visiting them, and I am quite

sure that they are as disgusted and outraged by the conduct of these

few individuals as we in this House are.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage other Members to vote in support of

this resolution, but also to thank the many soldiers who serve us and

the Iraqi people, while we sanction the few who have violated our

trust.