Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.

Res. 627, a resolution condemning the abuse of Iraqi prisoners, however

I do so with great concern. The mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners by

members of the Armed Forces and civilian U.S. contractors is shameful

and inexcusable. I am outraged that these actions committed by a few

reflect negatively upon our Nation and the many men and women who

continue to serve our Nation with strength, honor and courage. We must

investigate these allegations and take immediate and decisive action to

reestablish our Nation's credibility and regain the trust of the Iraqi

people and the world community.

I support provisions of this resolution that deplore and condemn

these events and urge the Department of Defense to investigate every

report of mistreatment of all prisoners in the custody of the U.S.

military at all levels and locations including Guantanamo and

Afghanistan. We have a breakdown in the chain of command at the highest

level.

We must require heightened accountability of the senior leadership at

the Department of Defense and determine why there was an intelligence

breakdown. We need to know when Secretary Rumsfeld learned of these

events, why he did not take immediate action and why he did not make

this information available to Congress in a timely way. Above all, we

must ensure that events like these never occur again.

Throughout our history, the United States has been a leader

throughout the world and a strong voice for the principles of

democracy, freedom, human rights and justice. The tragic events we are

addressing today have jeopardized our credibility and our relationships

with the people of Iraq and the international community. In his

thoughtful column in Today's New York Times, Thomas Friedman writes,

``I have never known a time in my life when America and its President

were more hated around the world than today.'' It is our responsibility

to restore our Nation's credibility, and I urge my colleagues to

investigate these shocking allegations. I conclude by joining with

other thoughtful individuals in calling upon the Secretary of Defense

to take full responsibility for these human rights atrocities and

fundamental breakdown in command and to act honorably and resign.