Mr. Speaker, I share the revulsion of my colleagues, the

House of Representatives, our friends and allies around the world--

indeed of the entire human race--over the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by

American soldiers . . . or in the presence of American soldiers.

We are obliged to investigate this event; it has given our great

Nation a black eye around the world, particularly in the Middle East

where our efforts have been to help them find democracy.

We are a humanitarian nation and a signatory to the Geneva

Conventions. We depend on the protections the conventions offer to our

own POWs . . . and we may have broken that assurance now. We shouldn't

need to train our soldiers in basic humanity; the other 99.9 percent of

our soldiers know this is inhuman behavior. If not for an American

soldier burdened by conscience we might not know this today.

This is not a reflection of our professional military--it's an

aberration. The action of the soldiers who have candidly come forward--

even at the expense of their own careers--are the example of our

professional military, and of the high standards democracy demands from

those who serve in uniform. The actions of a few have sullied the

reputation of our all-volunteer fighting force, our mission in the

larger Middle East, and the standing of the United States as a

democratic, humanitarian Nation.

There is simply no excuse for this inhuman behavior. We are a

superpower; we should be setting the example, not acting like

barbarians. I hope desperately when the investigation is completed that

it will expose the guilty parties, each and every one, who must be

punished so the world will know that this Nation finds this behavior

aberrant.

I thank Chairman Hunter and Ranking Member Skelton for bringing this

issue before the House of Representatives today. This is very much an

American issue, not a partisan issue. We must demand and expect that

the people--all the people--with any responsibility for this are

punished to show the world that this is not American. And we must

never, ever, put this irrational, inhuman behavior on the young men and

women serving honorably in the uniformed service of the United States.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this Resolution falls far short of the

mark of adequately expressing the concerns I've heard from my Oregon

constituents and that I have myself. Its failure to include a mechanism

to hold Congress accountable and ensure that we do our job is

unacceptable.

While concurring with the sentiment of outrage expressed against

these acts and deploring those responsible, this Resolution is a very

poor substitute for the oversight, fact-finding, and policy

formulations that are the duties of this Congress. H. Res. 627 is

window dressing, after the fact, and I refuse to support it.