Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that I find myself

opposing this resolution. I do so because it is only a half way measure

that attempts to gloss over the scope of the problem regarding the

treatment of prisoners and detainees in Iraq.

First of all the resolution is limited to only the situation in Iraq

when we are given to understand that the problem extends to the

treatment of detainees in Afghanistan and in Guantanamo Bay.

Second, the resolution fails to call on the administration to provide

assurances that it will treat all classes of detainees, prisoners and

enemy combatants to the standards established by the Geneva Convention.

Third, it does not call on the leadership of this Congress to embark

on an investigation of these ``abhorrent'' acts, as President Bush

described this very sad episode that has left an indelible impression

throughout the Arab world.

Fourth, the resolution seems to limit accountability to those in our

Armed Services, principally the enlisted ranks of our Army, and

exculpates those higher-level officers and civilian authorities within

the chain of command.

Fifth, the resolution says nothing about investigating civilian,

private military firms (PMFs) who are working under contract with the

Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). The CPA has relied on PMFs to

perform security functions that are normally performed by U.S. military

personnel, including logistical support, interrogation of prisoners,

convoy security, guarding vital facilities and personnel, and more.

Sixth, the resolution fails to hold Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld

accountable. The day the story broke about the abuses of Iraqi

prisoners at Abu Ghraib Prison Secretary Rumsfeld was briefing the

Senate and made no mention of the problem. I find myself in agreement

with Sen. John McCain of Arizona that there is a lack of communication

between the administration and the Congress when it comes to the issue

of Iraq. Secretary Rumsfeld is responsible for that lack of

communication and this resolution is evidence enough that the

leadership of this Congress is covering for him. I join with others in

calling for the Secretary's resignation.

The Washington Post is right on target when it said: ``The Pentagon

ruled that the United States would no longer be bound by the Geneva

Convention, that Army regulations on the interrogation of prisoners

would not be observed; and that many detainees would be held

incommunicado and without any independent mechanism of review.''

This administration has mastered the art of deniability. No one has

been held accountable. It is time we hold the Secretary of Defense to

account and ask for his resignation.

For these reasons, I cast my vote in opposition to this resolution.