Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my outrage and disappointment

over the crisis in Iraq.

I must start by condemning, in the strongest possible terms, the

brutal decapitation of Nicholas Berg. The act was unconscionable, and I

join all of my colleagues in sending my deepest sympathies to his

family and loved ones.

What kind of climate allows for such unbelievable, gruesome acts?

What kind of climate are we creating with the abuses at Abu Ghraib?

Secretary Rumsfeld has dismissed the Geneva Convention. That sends

the wrong message. That message clearly, however, stuck.

The horrifying photographs of the abuses in Abu Ghraib are symptoms

of a much larger failure of leadership.

Earlier this week, President Bush said that Secretary Rumsfeld is

doing a superb job. Of course, that is the same President who

communicated that the mission in Iraq was accomplished over 12 months

and 500 American lives ago.

Nothing is superb about this situation, and little has been

accomplished. The buck stops with the Commander in Chief, and so does

the responsibility for the disaster we now face.