Mr. Speaker, today in the Committee on Oversight and

Reform, we are going to continue without a doubt the attack on our men

and women in uniform. It is clear after last week's debate in which 79

Members of the House refused to denounce MoveOn.org for their attacks

on the patriotism of General David Petraeus, there are those who intend

to continue to attack the war on any front.

Mr. Speaker, I rise not because I support the war, not because I love

war, not because in fact I have any desire to have this war or any war

last one day longer than absolutely necessary.

Mr. Speaker, unable to effectively portray our men and women in

uniform as guilty of wrongdoing, in spite of the fact that one of our

Members called in fact our marines, marines based at Camp Pendleton,

killers of women and children in cold blood. Those charges for the most

part have already been dismissed.

Our men and women in uniform make mistakes. In the Committee on

Oversight and Reform today, we are going to be talking about not our

men and women in uniform, but men and women who served an average of 10

years in uniform who have joined private contractors in support of our

State Department. Specifically, Mr. Speaker, I am talking about

Blackwater. I am not defending Blackwater. The truth is neither Speaker

Pelosi nor Chairman Waxman know what happened in Iraq in September.

What we do know is that there are investigations going on into the

specific incidents, like so many incidents in a country in which every

day soldiers, sailors and marines die by IEDs and roadside bombs and

other ways of killing our men and women without taking risk to their

own lives.

An incident like that apparently occurred in September, but instead

of waiting until the IG, the FBI, the State Department concluded their

investigations, today, Mr. Speaker, the Government Oversight and Reform

will decide that they are going to go after the facts directly. They

have subpoenaed directly the CEO of that company, not because he was

there, not because he has some special knowledge, but because, Mr.

Speaker, it is all about the headlines. The bodies were not even cold

on that incident before the Committee on Oversight and Reform began to

prepare for today's hearings.

In order to believe that Blackwater is guilty before the evidence is

in, you have to believe the Minister of Interior. Mr. Speaker, you have

to believe the very organization that former Washington, DC, Chief

Ramsey and retired four star General Jim Jones called that organization

that he leads, some 300,000 police, 85 percent of whom are Shia, so

corrupted and so compromised as to be disbanded. In fact, that is

exactly the organization that apparently arrived and apparently is to

be believed that some wrongdoing occurred.

Mr. Speaker, when I went to Iraq the last time or one time, I went

with Chairman Waxman and now Speaker Pelosi, our unit was guarded by

Blackwater. At that time, I didn't hear any objections to the overhead

cover provided by Blackwater. I didn't hear any objections to the EOD

unit that was protecting us against bombs. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the

only time there seems to be a desire to have this type of oversight is

when the headlines would help demean the very effort we are involved in

in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I trust that the American people are in fact more

knowledgeable of what this war is all about. Not that they want this

war, but that they do not want to have the men and women in uniform or

those Americans who under contract go to this combat zone willingly,

most of them after service in that combat zone while in uniform,

demeaned without a fair opportunity for investigation.

Mr. Speaker, I was one of many Members of Congress who asked that

today's hearing be postponed until at least the State Department, the

FBI, and other organizations had an opportunity to do a proper

investigation. I am proud to be a ranking member on the Subcommittee on

Oversight and Reform, but I am ashamed that we in fact are doing trials

rather than oversight. We have never done anything more shameless than

what we are doing today, going after an organization without waiting

for the facts. We

do not oversee Blackwater in the Congress; we oversee the

administration, and we should be looking at their reports, we should be

looking at what they have done, and we should be in fact reforming

anything that is wrong in the administration.

So I trust that today's hearings will be watched by many people, Mr.

Speaker. I trust that Members of this body will view this as what it

is, a witch hunt, because they can't go after our men and women in

uniform.