Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman so much for allowing

this intervention, and I begin by commending my colleagues from

Pennsylvania and Hawaii and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr.

Delahunt).

It is my intention to offer into this discussion The New Yorker

article entitled The Gray Zone by Seymour Hersh, which raises one of

these other incidents that the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr.

Delahunt) has referred to, and that is, the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq

and the ongoing furor that has taken place around the world.

I would like to ask my colleagues in the course of our discussion

this evening whether they feel a need for an investigation conducted

from the outside as the 9/11 Commission has, which

it recently concluded, the Warren Commission in terms of the John F.

Kennedy assassination, because this problem is beginning to tarnish our

Nation's war against terrorism, and without a full and complete and

impartial investigation, we will add another way of undermining our

national moral authority.

I just wanted to point out that it is mentioned in this article that

will be reprinted that, ``Rumsfeld's goal was to get a capability in

place to take on a high-value target, a standup group to hit quickly,'

a former high-level intelligence official told me. `He got all the

agencies together, the CIA and the NSA, to get pre-approval in place.

Just say the code word and go.' The operation had across-the-board

approval from Rumsfeld and from Condoleeza Rice, the national security

adviser. President Bush was informed of the existence of the program,

the former intelligence official said.''

Here, ``Rumsfeld reacted in his usual direct fashion: he authorized

the establishment of a highly secret program that was given blanket

advance approval to kill or capture and, if possible, interrogate `high

value' targets in the Bush administration's war on terror.''

The people, and I conclude with this, ``the people assigned to the

program worked by the book, the former intelligence official told me,''

this is Seymour Hersh. ``They created code words, and recruited, after

careful screening, highly trained commandos and operatives from

America's elite forces, Navy SEALs, the Army's Delta Force, and the

CIA's paramilitary experts. They also asked some basic questions: `Do

the people working the problem have to use aliases? Yes. Do we need

dead drops for the mail? Yes.' No traceability and no budget. And some

special-access programs are never fully briefed to Congress.''

In other words, a deliberate development of a plan not only to commit

these outrageous atrocities that have shocked the world but a way to

avoid congressional scrutiny.

I will insert this article that I referred to earlier at this point

in the Record.

No. This was from the author of the article, Seymour

Hersh, the part that determined that the existence of a program was to

avoid traceability, to have no budget that was reportable. So we did

not have anything to even oversight, and then also that they could

avoid congressional scrutiny and a requirement or obligation for being

briefed to Congress.

Yes, but what I am trying to do is give us the basis of

why there ought to be an investigation. I wish I could vet all of these

statements, assertions, and I have as many questions as the gentleman

probably does.

The problem is that we are now confronted with taking a few

reservists and throwing them into a court-martial situation, when

clearly this problem that has been exposed started with more than a few

privates and corporals and sergeants, determining how they were going

to commit these abuses; that this was sanctioned. This was planned, and

I repeat again, the President was informed of the existence of the

program, a former intelligence official talking to Seymour Hersh said.

This is an award-winning writer on the American government scene for

many years. I need to know more, but I am certainly not going to walk

away from this highly complex information that has been presented to

us.

I do, because they said they were taking people walking

off the streets, taxi drivers, in-laws of somebody who may be more

seriously implicated, and that they were bringing in an expert from

Guantanamo. They do not make them enemy combatants so that these folks

have no rights under the Geneva Conventions whatsoever, and the whole

thing reads like an absolute nightmare. They are naming names and they

are naming strategies. This so-called, what do we call it, the secret

access program.