Mr. President, I rise today, to discuss a matter of

serious concern. On December 9, The Washington Post reported that the

Department of Defense is investigating a video posted on an Aegis-

employee affiliated Web site which contains scenes of violence and

shooting against Iraqi civilians.

An estimated 25,000 private security contractors are currently

working in Iraq, earning anywhere from $550 to $1,500 a day. Many of

them are doing their best to help maintain security for the

reconstruction of Iraq. However, if the events displayed in the video

are accurate, the actions of these few contractors put our troops at

tremendous risk. The video depicts the back window of a PSD, personal

security detail, vehicle. In the video you can hear a machine gun being

fired at cars which are clearly more than 50 meters behind the vehicle.

The cars drift off the road after many shots, leaving one to assume the

driver has been shot dead. During the entire video, the Elvis Presley

song ``Mystery Train'' plays in the background.

This behavior is offensive. The actions of the individuals in the

video put our troops at risk because such incendiary behavior only

increases hatred towards Americans. Whether or not we agree with the

troops' presence in Iraq, we all agree that the safety of our troops is

paramount. Our troops in Iraq who wear uniforms are instant targets for

retaliatory violence.

The U.S. service men and women who deploy to Iraq serve because of a

sense of selfless service and duty. As members of Congress, it is our

duty to conduct oversight into the questionable behavior of the private

security contractors. While our troops continue to be deployed to Iraq

and the security situation remains fragile at best, it is in our best

interest to make sure civilian-contractors do not exacerbate the

situation any further.

Therefore, I will be seeking a congressional inquiry into the

operations and rules of engagement granted to private security

contractors currently operating in Iraq. I will also recommend a review

of the contract awarded to Aegis Specialist Risk Management. If these

events are happening, we must stop them. We must take action so that

our troops and the Iraqi people know that gratuitous violence on the

part of the people we deploy or employ will not be tolerated.