Mr. President, I am unavoidably absent from the

Senate this afternoon, but would like to express my strong support for

S. Res. 356.

The photos and reports of abuse at Abu Ghraib prison that have

emerged over the past week defy description. I condemn, as must all

Americans, these horrific acts. It saddens and shames our country to

see Americans perpetrate these abuses on other human beings. Their

actions do not reflect the principles for which this country stands.

We have fought to liberate Iraq, and to free the Iraqi people from

the murderous rule of Saddam Hussein. We have achieved great things in

Iraq, but

we have much work to do. The sickening images of abuse that have

emerged in the media threaten to undermine much of the good we have

done. These incidents have marred the reputation of our country abroad,

and have made the tasks of the brave Americans fighting and working in

Iraq harder. But I am confident that the vast majority of men and women

working to bring freedom to Iraq will conduct their noble mission with

integrity and distinction.

Toward that end, we need to have all the facts about the abuses at

Abu Ghraib and elsewhere, and we need them immediately. We cannot wait

months for a new commission to issue a report, nor for new photos and

details to dribble out over weeks. The American people need to know, at

once, the abuses committed, punish those guilty of these crimes, and

ensure that they never again occur. We must also ensure that similar

abuses are not occurring elsewhere in detention centers outside Iraq.

Our venture in Iraq is moral, and must be conducted with moral means.

We must ensure that we are treating all prisoners and detainees

humanely and in accordance with U.S. and international laws and

regulations.

Mr. President, as Americans we are defined not just by the way in

which we deal with our friends but by how we treat our enemies. I know

that in many countries around the world, abuse of prisoners is

commonplace and brutal interrogation is the norm, rather than the

exception. But American, a Nation that was founded on the idea of

liberty and justice for all, must hold itself to a higher standard. We

liberate, not torture, and we free, not oppress.

Burned into our minds are terrible images: a hooded man standing on a

box, a prisoner on a leash. These photos represent humanity at its

worst, and represent everything that America is not. We must show the

country and the world another image--that of Americans working with

Iraqis to topple the statute of Saddam Hussein, to free the Iraqi

people--truly represents who we are.