Mr. Speaker, last week, the trial of low-level military

officers involved in the Abu Ghraib prison scandal in Iraq reached a

climactic turning point. Colonel James Pohl, the military judge trying

PFC Private First Class Lyndie England declared a mistrial in the case.

Now this case will have to be tried again from the very beginning.

England's case was thrown out after Private Charles Graner claimed

that the photos of abuse at Abu Ghraib Prison were taken for training

purposes. This claim contradicts England's guilty plea in which she

accepted responsibility for her actions and admitted that she had acted

outside the scope of military orders.

There is no shortage of evidence that England is guilty of having

participated in the abuse of Iraqi prisoners which included subjecting

the prisoners to forced nudity, savage beatings, electric shock and

harassment by dogs. Some prisoners, as a matter of fact, died as a

result of the abuse. Nor is there a question that the abuse of

prisoners violates our American ethical and moral code. Red, the color

of blood, is the color that resulted from the beating in Abu Ghraib

Prison last year. But now yellow is the color of the high-ranking

military and administration officials who are cowering behind junior

soldiers, hoping to duck responsibility for setting up a culture

supporting the use of torture in American-run prisons in Iraq.

The question is, who is responsible for the abuses at Abu Ghraib

Prison? Charles Graner's testimony suggests that the prison abuse

scandal extends much higher than we have previously been told. Yet,

only low-ranking soldiers have been held accountable for these abuses.

Why have prosecutors investigated from the bottom-up instead of going

straight to the source to find out who condoned these abuses? Why is

there such a denial of culpability at the highest levels of the

government?

Mr. Speaker, we must get to the bottom of this scandal because not

only were the events at Abu Ghraib brutally inhuman and contrary to the

democratic ideals of our open government, they also have endangered the

American people. At a time when the United States is courting the

support of the Arab world, the last thing we need to do is engage in

the same atrocious violence as the thugs and terrorists that we are

opposing. The images of American soldiers violating Iraqi prisoners is

no doubt a rallying call for all those who want an excuse to hate and

attack the United States.

Fortunately, there is a better way than this. I have developed a

SMART Security Platform for the 21st Century. SMART is a Sensible,

Multilateral American Response to Terrorism, and it will help

reinvigorate America's foreign policy by focusing on conflict

prevention, on international diplomacy and on multilateralism. SMART

security recognizes security threats and addresses them, but instead of

conducting our policies behind closed doors and through the barrels of

a gun, SMART pursues open diplomacy and regional security arrangements

to achieve our democratic goals.

Indiscriminate violence will not address the threats we face, because

most of the post-September 11 security threats require a softer touch.

That is why SMART security calls for dramatic increases in development

aid and debt relief for the world's poorest countries to reduce the

destitute conditions that give rise to terrorism. And they will

simultaneously increase educational opportunities for the world's

poorest people. These programs will also help counter the image problem

that America has cultivated around the world and particularly in the

Middle East.

Instead of encouraging militaristic policies that give rise to events

such as

those at Abu Ghraib, SMART security encourages security through

diplomacy. Perhaps, if the Bush administration had not been so keen on

going into a misguided and illegal war, we could have utilized

international diplomacy to encourage democracy in Iraq, instead of

fighting a war that has thus far cost the lives of more than 1,600

American soldiers, at least 24,000 Iraqi civilians, and of course,

there are also more than 12,000 American soldiers who have been gravely

wounded as a result of war.

Let us utilize the SMART approach to address the threats we face. I

encourage all of my colleagues to support this important legislation

which I am reintroducing next week.