Mr. Speaker, I was absolutely outraged last week when

along with the rest of the world I learned that U.S. service members

and private American contractors in Iraq had abused and tortured Iraqi

prisoners of war and had forced them to commit heinous sexual acts. War

is devastating, it is terrifying, but even in war there is no place for

actions such as these. The abuse inflicted by a few soldiers is causing

much ill will around the world. What is worse, I feel it will further

embolden our enemies to commit acts of terrorism against the United

States and horrific acts of abuse against our own troops should they be

captured.

But almost equally reprehensible was the response of our Commander in

Chief to the abuses that took place at Abu Ghraib, the prison in Iraq.

Instead of claiming full responsibility for the actions of members of

the United States military, President Bush expressed his regrets that

the abuses had occurred while distancing himself from those abuses. At

another time, President Harry Truman did not try to distance himself

from abuses that occurred during his watch. In his January 1953

farewell address to the American people, President Truman made an

important assertion in that regard, saying, and I quote, ``The

President, whoever he is, has to decide. He can't pass the buck to

anybody. No one else can do the deciding for him. That's his job.''

President Truman is also the person who made famous the quote, ``The

buck stops here.'' President Bush would be well served to take notice

of this quotation which Harry Truman thought was so important that he

kept it as a sign on his desk in the Oval Office.

Mr. Speaker, the buck does not stop with the young woman who was

photographed holding an Iraqi prisoner on a leash. The buck does not

stop with Brigadier General Jannice Karpinski, the U.S. general in

charge of running the prisons in Iraq. The buck does not stop with

Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, one of the highest-ranking military

officers in Iraq. The buck does not even stop with Donald Rumsfeld, the

Secretary of Defense. The buck stops with the Commander in Chief. At

the moment, that happens to be George W. Bush. That is where the buck

stops. Remember what Harry Truman said at his 1953 farewell address. He

said the President cannot pass the buck to anybody.

There has to be a better way, because the Bush doctrine of

unilateralism and passing the buck within his own administration has

been tried and it has failed. It is time for a new national security

strategy, one that emphasizes brains instead of brawn, one that is

consistent with the best American values. I have introduced legislation

to create a SMART security platform for the 21st century, H. Con. Res.

392. SMART stands for ``sensible, multilateral American response to

terrorism.'' SMART treats war as an absolute last resort. It fights

terrorism with stronger intelligence and multilateral partnerships. It

controls the spread of weapons of mass destruction with a renewed

commitment to nonproliferation. And it aggressively invests in the

development of impoverished nations with an emphasis on women's health

and education.

Remember, the buck stops with the Commander in Chief, the President

of the United States. No more passing the buck, Mr. President. Instead,

let us rely on the very best of America, our commitment to peace and

freedom, our compassion for the people of the world and our capacity

for multilateral leadership. Let us be smart. Let us be smart about our

future. SMART security is tough, it is pragmatic, it is patriotic, and

it will keep America safe.