Mr. President, again, we will be voting somewhere around

5:30 p.m. today. We expect formal introduction of the resolution after

more discussions over the course of the next several minutes.

I wish to take this opportunity to comment on the substance of the

resolution that will condemn the abuse of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib

prison and the details of the resolution we will talk about later on

the Senate floor. It all focuses on the fact that this Nation, our

colleagues, this body is shocked, is disturbed, is saddened by the

incidents that have occurred at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. These

acts are deplorable. There is absolutely no excuse for what happened to

those Iraqi prisoners.

The individuals who committed those despicable acts must be and will

be held accountable. Justice must be served in a swift manner, in a

fair manner, and in a transparent manner, and it will be. It is crucial

that we get all the facts out quickly and thoroughly, and that is

underway--never as quickly as people would like, but everyone, I

believe, in their heart of hearts understands the importance of getting

the facts out quickly and thoroughly.

I commend the President of the United States for his efforts to reach

out to the Arab world to address this matter, particularly the

apologies he offered to the victims and their families.

I am sure all Americans share his sentiments which he articulated so

well. The Senate, too, will do its part to ensure the administration

fully investigates the abuses at Abu Ghraib. By investigating the

abuses committed at the prison, we recognize specific individuals are

responsible for specific acts. By doing so, we recognize the vast

majority of men and women in uniform every day promote the values and

the principles we all hold so dear.

I would also like to highlight the work of the Department of Defense.

After receiving a report from a concerned soldier, the Department of

Defense promptly took action to investigate the allegations of abuse.

The first investigation was initiated in January. More investigations

followed and many are still ongoing. The military is examining its

policy, its procedures, and its training with regard to the handling of

prisoners and the management of detention facilities. These are the

right and proper actions to be taken.

We do not yet know the full story. That is frustrating. It is

frustrating for us in this body and for members of the administration.

That investigation is underway. From what people have said, more

disturbing stories and pictures will, in fact, find their way into the

public domain. I have faith the administration will fully investigate

these incidents and will report to us its findings.

In the meantime, the Senate will continue to do its duty. We had

several hearings last week. We will continue to maintain a close watch

on the unfolding situation. The appropriate committees of the Senate

will fulfill their proper oversight roles. The Intelligence Committee

and the Armed Services Committee both conducted hearings last week.

More are planned, and briefings are at this very moment being

scheduled.

Success in our national security policy depends on regular

communication between the executive branch and Congress and ultimately

the American people. I pledge to work with my colleagues and the

administration to ascertain the truth and take action to ensure such

appalling acts will never, ever happen again.

America is a nation governed by the rule of law. We hold accountable

those who break the law. As the President has said, democracy is not

perfect and indeed we make mistakes, but openness is a hallmark of that

democracy, and as a democracy we will investigate and we will correct

those mistakes.

The people of Iraq did not know justice under Saddam. His regime was

born in violence and ruled by fear. Let us take this opportunity to

show the Iraqi people and the world that America protects the rights of

individuals. Let us show the world we can and will administer justice

swiftly, fairly, and openly. We cannot undo the abuse those Iraqi

prisoners suffered, but through our actions now we can show the Iraqi

people the transgressions of a few do not represent America. They do

not represent what we stand for as Americans.

Today the Senate will take up a bipartisan resolution which commends

the noble work of our forces and condemns in the strongest manner

possible the few who have disgraced themselves and brought shame to

their fellow Americans. I urge my colleagues to unanimously pass this

resolution this afternoon. I believe it is imperative that we speak

with one voice, united in strength and united in purpose.

By passing this resolution, this body will show its resolve to pursue

the truth and protect our national security. We will also show the

world America believes such acts as occurred at Abu Ghraib must never

happen again. Our soldiers are risking their lives in Iraq to bring

peace and freedom to a country that has known neither. Our service men

and women have worked tirelessly to build schools, rebuild hospitals,

repair electricity grids and water lines, and to ensure food and water

are available. We have seen innumerable acts of kindness and bravery

from our soldiers on behalf of the Iraqi people. That is who we are and

this resolution acknowledges their service.

We are engaged in a noble cause. We must see it through. The Iraqi

people are depending on us to stay the course and the American people

are depending on us to show courage, resolve, and leadership.