Mr. President, last week, along with a number of my

colleagues, I went up into the room on the fourth floor in the Capitol

where the Defense Department, the State Department, and the CIA come to

brief us on classified information. I sat in a darkened room where we

saw a slide show of the photographs that had been taken of Americans

inflicting abuse on Iraqi prisoners. The pictures were revolting, they

were disgusting, and they left us all with a sense of outrage that this

had gone on, outrage that Americans had been involved in anything such

as this.

I did not look forward to the experience. Indeed, I made the initial

decision not to go. Then I decided: No, if I am going to be involved in

examining what is here, I have to see the evidence, as revolting as it

may be.

The sense of outrage that I and my colleagues felt about this was

shared by all Americans, but in one sector of American society it seems

to be even greater than anyplace else. There are some in this society

who might not be able to guess what that sector is. But I would say the

outrage that has been the strongest has come from those who serve in

the American military.

Duty, honor, country--these are the watch words of the American

military, and they were violated by those who took those actions in the

prison in Baghdad. They did not do their duty. They dishonored the

uniforms they wore as they abused those prisoners, and they brought

disgrace on the country whose Constitution they had taken an oath to

uphold and defend.

The sense of outrage is nationwide, but it is particularly focused

among those who have sworn to uphold duty, honor, and country and saw

their fellows in uniform violate those principles.

I rise to discuss this today because today is the first court-martial

coming as a result of the investigations that have been conducted into

this activity. This morning in Baghdad, Army SPC Jeremy Sivits pled

guilty, was convicted, and sentenced to a 1-year imprisonment,

reduction in rank, and a bad conduct discharge.

Now, there are those in our society who have less faith in the

military, who say: These courts-martial are a part of a coverup; this

is an attempt to gloss over what has happened; one cannot trust the

military to investigate themselves; and we need a whole series of

investigations by outside groups.

I believe the facts are that we will find out more what happened from

the courts-martial than we would find out from any degree of

investigation conducted elsewhere. I offer as a demonstration of the

fact that the military can be trusted to act in matters of this kind

the following chronology of what has happened with respect to this

incident.

We now know that the abuse of the prisoners took place in the last

quarter of 2003. We do not know the exact dates, but sometime toward

the end of that year the alleged detainee abuse occurred. On January

13, 2004, SPC Joseph Darby opened an e-mail thinking he was going to

see pictures that he described as a travelogue; a history of the

performance of a particular unit. Instead, what had been downloaded on

his computer were the photographs that my colleagues and I saw in room

407 of this building.

Specialist Darby was absolutely stunned. What did he do? Here were

his fellow soldiers engaged in activity that was clearly in violation

of everything he had been taught, people he wanted to feel close with

and identified with, people who, perhaps, were his friends. What would

he do? He did his duty, and he provided a CD of the abuse photos to the

Army Criminal Investigation Command, or the CID, on January 13, 2004.

On January 14, the CID began its investigation--no attempt to cover up.

No attempt to hide or turn away from the fact that there was a

potential difficulty. They began the next day, and they notified people

up the chain of command of what they were doing.

On January 16, just 2 days later, Brigadier General Kimmitt announced

that there would be an investigation by

Central Command. It had gone up all that way, that quickly. In just 3

days they were at the top levels of Central Command.

Two days after that, BG Janis Karpinski, who was the commander at Abu

Ghraib prison, was admonished and suspended from her command. She was

relieved just 2 days after this reached the attention of Central

Command.

Additionally, the Abu Ghraib chain of command was suspended, from the

battalion commander, a lieutenant colonel, all the way down. Just 2

days after this was brought to the attention of Central Command, the

entire group was relieved.

Now, on January 19, a combined joint task force requested that

Central Command appoint an investigating officer, and on January 31,

Major General Taguba was appointed to conduct the investigation.

On February 10, the Secretary of the Army tasks the inspector general

to conduct an analysis of the internment detention policies, practices,

and procedures. It goes beyond just the prison: Look at the whole Army

and our procedures to see what can be done to prevent this from

happening again.

On March 12, General Taguba completed his investigation and briefed

the commander of joint task force 7, Lieutenant General Sanchez. Also

on March 12, Lieutenant General Helmly, who was the commander of the

U.S. Army Reserve Command, directed that Command's inspector general to

conduct an assessment of training for Reserve personnel on the issues

of detainee treatment, ethics, and leadership to see if the training

had broken down in a way that would cause this to happen. All of this

was going on--the military acting on its own.

On March 20, the first charges were preferred against six accused and

announced by Brigadier General Kimmitt at a press conference. This is

not something that got discovered by some investigative reporter

digging in behind the scenes. This was something that was announced by

the military after they had done a careful examination and moved in a

way to protect the rights of every individual.

At that announcement, no names or units were identified so that they

would not compromise the due process of those who were being accused.

On April 15, Major General Fay, the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for

Intelligence, appointed an investigative officer to examine the

circumstances with respect to the 205th Military Intelligence Brigade.

That is the group where the commander was relieved within 2 days of

discovering that there was an allegation of a problem.

On May 1, Lieutenant General Sanchez issued a memorandum of reprimand

to six general officers and one letter of admonition to a member of the

800th Military Police Brigade as recommended by Major General Taguba.

This is not something that they passed off to the GIs, the sergeants,

the corporals, and the privates. This is something they took care of at

the general officer level. Six general officers received a memorandum

of reprimand. That is a career-ending experience for a general officer.

Then on May 7, Secretary Rumsfeld announced the independent review

panel headed by former Defense Secretary Jim Schlessinger, including

retired Air Force General Chuck Horner, former Representative Tillie

Fowler, and former Defense Secretary Harold Brown. And then, today, on

May 19, the first court-martial has taken place and Specialist Sivits

was found guilty and sentenced.

The lesson that comes from this list of actions is a lesson that the

world should heed. The lesson for Iraqis and other nations is that this

is how democracies handle their problems. This is how Americans face

the difficulties that arise when there is a breakdown that occurs

within our military. We do not hide it. We do not pretend it did not

happen. We do not strive to find excuses. We act in the way consistent

with the rule of law.

I hope everyone in the world would recognize the difference between

the way we have responded to this and the way al-Qaida has responded to

this. We have responded to it by exercising the rule of law and seeking

those responsible. They have responded by taking an innocent American

civilian, who had nothing whatever to do with any of this, and cutting

off his head, live and in color on international television. That is

the difference between Americans and al-Qaida when faced with a

problem.

So that is the first lesson I hope the world will take from the way

we are handling this. The lesson that the military should take from

this is that the rules are there to be obeyed. The lesson that should

go forward from Specialist Sivits' court-martial, from the six general

officers who got the memorandum of reprimand and from the

investigations that are still going forward is that if the rules are

broken, you end up in Fort Leavenworth. That is the lesson that should

come out of this for the American military, and I believe it is being

received there.

The lesson for the commanders, those who are now responsible and who

have taken over to replace those who were relieved, is this. It comes

from a statement by General Eisenhower, who knew something about

military discipline. He said: ``Areas that are not inspected

deteriorate.''

Let's go back to Specialist Sivits for a moment and find out from his

statements relating to his court-martial what really happened. I am

quoting now from the Washington Post:

I spoke with Secretary Rumsfeld this morning about this lesson, the

lesson of command. It is fine to change the command, but we must

examine what caused the problem and change the procedures. Even though

the rules were there, the procedures broke down. There was not a duty

officer on duty. We have been told that this abuse took place between 2

and 4 in the morning when no one was around. I raised with Secretary

Rumsfeld the importance of seeing to it from now on that the new

commanders of the prison make sure there is a duty officer there all

night long.

Back to Eisenhower's dictum, there should be snap, surprise

inspections. People in the prisons should never know when someone might

drop in, unexpected and unannounced, to see what is going on. Secretary

Rumsfeld concurred. I believe that is the lesson that command should

receive from this experience, and I believe it is the lesson they will

learn and they will follow.

As sorry as this chapter is in our proud military history and as deep

as this stain has become upon America's honor, it is not the first time

we have seen such chapters. It is not the first time we have endured

such stains. I wish I could say it is the last time this will happen,

but even in this morning's news we are hearing that there are more

pictures, that it may have been more widespread than we thought. With

human beings as imperfect as they are, it is inevitable that at some

point in the future someone else will break the rules, violate his

oath, and take actions that will cause all Americans to mourn, as we do

over these actions.

Given that history, that it has happened before and perhaps will

happen again, we should remember what we did as a nation when it

happened before and what we are doing now. We dealt with it. We went

after those who were responsible, discovered who they were, gave them

their full due process, but when they were convicted, they were

punished. They were dealt with. Then we made the changes that were

necessary to see to it that it wouldn't happen again. Then we got past

it.

We have not allowed those past chapters in our history to deter us

from our destiny as a nation. We should do the same thing now. We are

in the process of discovering who the guilty are. We are in the process

of conducting courts- martial. Specialist Sivits is just the first.

Charges have been proffered against others and additional courts-

martial will be forthcoming. We are in the process of making the

changes--not just the change of command but the change in procedures to

see to it that this will not happen again.

As we have done in the past, we must get through this and not let it

deter us from our overall goal of why we are in Iraq. We must not

fixate on this stain on our honor to the point that we become so

muscle-bound that we cannot proceed forward in our mission.

What is our mission? Speakers who have addressed this before me have

made that clear. Our mission is to provide freedom and security for the

people of Iraq. I believe that means freedom and security for the

Middle East generally. I believe that means transforming the world in

which Americans live and an increase of freedom and security for our

Nation as well. These are worthy, indeed noble goals, and we must not

be deterred from seeking them by preoccupation with this particular

outrage.

I close with a conversation I had over the weekend. Like many of us

over the weekend, I went home to Utah and I participated in Armed

Forces Day. It was a poignant Armed Forces Day for a variety of

reasons, because many of the people who were there were families of

those in the military who were there without their family member--that

is, children, husbands, wives, mothers and fathers of Utahns who are

serving in this war and who are not home with their families to enjoy

the delightful spring day at Murray City Park where everyone was having

a picnic and a good time. Set up in that area was a series of flags,

one flag for each individual who had fallen in either Iraq or

Afghanistan. Of course, the majority of flags were American flags, but

I was struck by the number of British flags, Italian flags, Polish

flags, Spanish flags--one I did not recognize, an Ukrainian flag, an

Estonian flag. We are providing the leadership, but many countries in

the world are responding to us as we launch on this mission.

On Armed Forces Day I sat next to a colonel. He was not a Utahn; he

had come to participate in the activities. We visited over lunch. With

the Army, he has been in Kosovo, he has been in Bosnia, he has been in

Afghanistan, he has been in Iraq, and he was on his way back to Iraq.

I said to him: Colonel, tell me what it is like. You have been there,

you have been on the ground. Tell me what it is like. He gave me an

answer we hear a lot. Indeed, it was the first sentence out of his

mouth that comes out the same as many others. He said: Well, things are

not nearly as bad as the U.S. press would have you believe. Things are

really going fairly well in many parts of the country. But we have

problems.

We talked about some of the problems. He made this observation that I

think should keep us thoughtful as we address our mission in Iraq. He

said: You know, whether it is Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, or Iraq, the

same thing is true: Those people are just like us in that all they want

is to have their children be able to walk out of the door and be safe

on the street, to be able to go to school without intimidation and

learn what they need to learn to get a decent job and live a decent

life. That is all they want in Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan, or Iraq--

just like us. That is what we want in America. To bring that to Iraq

and give the people of Iraq that opportunity, with their wives and

their children and their grandchildren, unfortunately requires force of

arms. Americans, British, Italians, Poles, Spaniards, Ukrainians,

Estonians, are willing to risk their lives to bring about that goal. We

must never lose sight of the importance of that mission or of the

sacrifice that has gone into achieving it. We must never turn back

simply because there are those who have put a stain on American honor

by the way they have behaved.

I pay tribute to the Armed Forces. I pay tribute to the chain of

command that is dealing with these challenges. I pay tribute to those

who are willing to face the problems and not back away from them or

cover them up. We must support them in their efforts. We must not smear

the entire establishment because of the actions of a few.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.