Mr. President, there is not an American today who woke up

and did not hear the lead news story, a story which has, frankly,

brought us to a position of embarrassment with the abuses that have

been sadly documented and have been spread across the world relating to

the treatment of Iraqi prisoners.

The word is that the President of the United States is going to

address the Arab nations through their own television network to talk

about his disappointment, and I hope with an apology for what has

occurred.

But we have a responsibility on Capitol Hill. We have a

responsibility in the Senate. I believe we should move, and move

decisively, No. 1, to entertain and pass a resolution on this floor

that makes it clear that what happened in that Iraqi prison is not what

America is all about, and that those responsible for it--from those

whose photographs were taken, all the way up the chain of command--need

to be held accountable for their actions. Nothing less than that should

be tolerated.

Secondly, the Secretary of Defense, Don Rumsfeld, should be appearing

before a committee on Capitol Hill, on a timely basis, as quickly as

possible, to explain exactly what happened. It is absolutely incredible

that the Secretary of Defense had no knowledge of this event, nor of

the investigation that followed.

Finally, let me say this. Many of us believe what happened last week

with the appearance of the Secretary of Defense on Capitol Hill was

extremely troubling. Last Thursday, Secretary of Defense Don Rumsfeld

appeared in a classified briefing on Capitol Hill, telling the Senate

membership the state of affairs in Iraq. It was the same day that this

story was to be aired on ``60 Minutes II,'' the story relating to Iraqi

prisoners.

The fact is, the Secretary testified without even indicating to the

Members of the Senate that this story existed or was about to be

disclosed to the American people. That is unacceptable.

The Secretary of Defense needs to return to Capitol Hill tomorrow to

give another classified briefing to the Members of the Senate, to tell

us exactly what transpired, why he did not disclose this to Members of

the Senate, and why there is this veil of secrecy in this

administration when it comes to one of the most troubling stories that

has emerged since our invasion of Iraq.

I have spoken to our Democratic leader, Tom Daschle. He has been in

conversation and dialogue with Senator Frist, the Republican leader,

and has an agreement that all three things that I have just outlined

will occur: a resolution on the floor relative to the Iraqi prison

scandal; secondly, an appearance by Secretary Rumsfeld in open hearing

before a committee as soon as possible; and, third, a request that the

Secretary come to Congress, on a classified basis, and meet with us

tomorrow, before this week ends, before this Senate leaves, to explain

to us what has happened in this terrible episode.

Those who are responsible for this need to be held accountable--

whether they are the soldiers involved in it and right up the chain of

command to the leadership that failed. If we do not do this, frankly,

we are jeopardizing the security of this country and the safety of our

men and women in uniform, who still continue to struggle in Iraq to

find peace and stability in that country.

We need to move now. We need to move decisively. We need to show the

leadership on Capitol Hill which has failed to this point. The way to

do it is through these three approaches.

I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute through

Senator Breaux's time.

I agree completely with the Senator from Nevada. I have a

feeling of embarrassment and also sadness, sadness for the thousands of

men and women in uniform risking their lives today, serving us so nobly

in Iraq, who are going to be swept into this vortex. We have to make

certain the soldiers who are responsible for this as well as their

leaders in command are brought out and held accountable so that our

fine men and women who are fighting in the military in Iraq do not have

to bear this burden. They are our best and brightest. We owe them the

greatest respect. But let us be honest; what happened here is not

typical of America, certainly not typical of our military. Unless we

are forthright and open in accountability, it is going to sweep all of

them into this veil of blame. That would be unfortunate.