Mr. President, all of us in the Senate, and in the

Government generally, are terribly upset with the events of these last

days and weeks because the shock and awe that we all experienced in the

beginning days has been diminished when compared to what we are seeing

now.

Now we are seeing the ultimate degradation of human conduct.

Unfortunately, some part of it comes from us, from Americans. We are

embarrassed, apologetic, humiliated by what we have seen.

I, like all of my colleagues, had a chance to view the pictures the

Pentagon sent to Congress yesterday. They were sick, perverted images

from the Abu Ghraib prison. Shameful, perverted, degraded images that

made Members feel ill. But we could tell from the images there were

many soldiers present at these scenes. This was not a soldier or two;

there were many. The photographs demonstrated complete disintegration

of discipline. Unfortunately, while it would be a lot easier if this

were just the case of a few bad apples, it indicates a breakdown in

leadership.

I am a World War II veteran. I experienced the stress of being in a

combat zone. I understand the psychological wear and tear. I also know

it is the responsibility of a soldier's leaders all the way to the top

of the chain of command to supervise, to manage as best they can the

conduct of the troops.

Regarding the current case of prison abuse, it is premature to rush

to court-martial individual soldiers before all of the facts are known.

I understand the administration seeks a public, visible court-martial

trial to demonstrate the United States commitment to justice, but

before we simply lay all the blame on the soldiers at the bottom of the

chain of command, we need to understand where the directives were and

what they were when they came down from the top. How clear is it now

that well-dressed men in charge have let the soldiers in uniform down?

The top civilian leadership at the Pentagon has failed. In my view,

replacing Secretary Rumsfeld will change little at the Pentagon if his

discredited team of advisers remain in their high-level position. A

series of bad decisions by the top civilian leadership at the Pentagon

has severely undermined our operations in Iraq. In my view, the

Pentagon's trio of civilian leaders needs to be replaced. I am speaking

specifically of the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, Deputy

Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, and the Under Secretary for Policy, Douglas

Feith. All three of those officials ought to be replaced. They all work

very closely together, and I am sure not one, not even the Secretary

himself, made all of the decisions. The trio's poor planning and

miscalculations have undermined the troops serving on the ground in

Iraq.

We are proud of those who have served so generously and nobly. That

does not mean we cannot have some bad actors, but it also does not mean

those at the top are free of responsibility. Their negligence regarding

reports of prisoner abuses which were alleged to take place as early as

last October is the last straw in a record of missteps and

miscalculations that have compromised the safety and effectiveness of

our military operations.

These civilian leaders have dismissed the views of people in uniform

numerous times. For example, in early 2003, Four Star General Eric

Shinseki disagreed with Secretary Rumsfeld's plans for a light

battlefield force for Iraq. He said--and it was a courageous

statement--that at least 300,000 troops would be needed during the war,

particularly in the aftermath of the war. Now we know that General

Shinseki was right. The security situation in Iraq is deteriorating in

exactly the way he said it would if there were not enough troops.

So how was General Shinseki handled by the trio of civilian leaders

at the Pentagon? He was fired. Fired for telling the truth. It tells us

something about the character of those decisionmakers who said, no, no,

we can get this done in much easier fashion. He was fired for knowing

what he was talking about.

That is just one of the many miscalculations and mistakes made by

this trio at the Pentagon. Despite the urging of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff not to do so, the Pentagon civilian leadership disbanded the

Iraqi army after the invasion. We left 400,000 armed and trained Iraqis

unemployed--I am not trying to give them jobs--and resentful, and now

these men are contributing significantly to the massive security

problems American troops are facing.

The civilian leadership at the Pentagon also ignored postwar plans

drawn up by the Army War College and the State Department Future of

Iraq Project, which predicted most of the security and infrastructure

problems that America faced in the early days of the Iraq occupation.

We have heard plenty of speeches from Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy

Secretary Wolfowitz and Under Secretary Feith. They talk tough about

supporting the soldiers, sailors, marines, air men and women, but in

reality they fail to provide adequately for our U.S. commanders as they

requested in Iraq such things as sufficient interceptor body armor or

adequate protection from Humvees.

I learned that on my trip to Iraq last month when I asked a young

soldier--a captain, as a matter of fact--what it was he needed to

better conduct his soldiers in our Army there. He said: Senator, the

flak jacket you are wearing is the latest. It is the most protective. I

don't understand, he said to me, why we do not have them when I have

seen those in the coalition wearing those vests.

He said to me: You see this rifle? This big, heavy rifle is bigger

than the one I carried in World War II; I carried a carbine. He said:

There are better weapons out there with better sighting mechanisms,

lighter to carry. He said: We do not have them, and I don't understand

why, Senator. He said: We have seen those in coalition hands.

Recently, Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee and Army Chief of

Staff GEN Peter Schoomaker recently told Congress that the Army

currently

only has 2,000 armored Humvees even though it needs at least 5,000 to

adequately protect our troops. And the sight of those vehicles burning

leaves out what happened to those people who were in those vehicles.

When asked why the Army did not have enough of these vehicles,

General Schoomaker said the Pentagon policymakers had not foreseen the

need for these standard fighting vehicles.

Despite their academic credentials, Wolfowitz and Feith horribly

misjudged the post-invasion situation in Iraq, and it has cost American

lives.

Under Secretary Feith dismissed all dissent to his view that U.S.

forces would be greeted as liberators and quickly win the lasting

gratitude of the Iraqi people. Despite the current quagmire, he

continues to cling to his delusional view of the situation.

In addition, before the invasion, these civilian leaders also told

the American people that Iraq would pay for its own reconstruction

through oil revenues. As we now know, not only has that not happened,

but U.S. taxpayers are paying virtually all of the costs of the

reconstruction of Iraq.

We cannot pass a highway bill in this Congress for America, but we

are unloading U.S. taxpayer dollars to rebuild Iraq's highway system.

Why do we have to go to our taxpayers over and over again for billions

of dollars for Iraq? Why does the President need to take another $25

billion that could be used for Medicare, education, and American

highway construction?

The reason is the administration marginalized the international

community before the war, and Pentagon civilian leaders refused to cede

any control of post-invasion Iraq to the international community. As a

result, we have paid more than 80 percent of all of the reconstruction

funds in Iraq.

I want to make it perfectly clear, I do not think we can cut and run.

I think we have a responsibility there that we have developed through

our own decision making and through the fate that war has brought us. So

I do not say cut and run. But I do say it would help us an awful lot if

we were not, at this point in time, arguing to give people who have

been successful in business or in life greater tax breaks when we

desperately need the money.

Furthermore, there is little hope that European allies or

international donors will cough up the over $30 billion that Iraq still

needs for rebuilding, according to World Bank estimates.

U.S. taxpayers will have shelled out almost $200 billion by the end

of 2004. As a result of this unilateralism, we barely cobbled together

a meager coalition of the willing, but our men and women make up over

87 percent of the troops fighting in Iraq.

Secretary Rumsfeld, Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz, and Under Secretary

Feith all have to be replaced. We need new leadership at the Pentagon,

leadership that will listen to the military experts, leadership that

will not cling to discredited ideologies.

Perhaps the best illustration of the ineptitude of this team was

their gross underestimate of the length of the Iraqi operation. They

created false hopes for troops and their families, especially the

reservists, many of whom are now facing more than a year's worth of

duty away from their homes, away from the ability to pay their

mortgages, away from the comfort children need from a father. They

created the false hopes, especially of the reservists, who expected

much shorter battlefield tours of duty.

In February 2003, Secretary Rumsfeld said the war

And he said:

It is well over a year from the beginning of this war, and now our

own generals are publicly questioning whether we can win. We have to

win. We have no choice. But in order to win, we have to make sure our

troops have the tools to do the job with, and that we have sufficient

help from other places. We have to make sure we pursue that mission.

I am not sure the current Pentagon team has the ability to direct our

needs now. We need new leadership. Secretary Rumsfeld, Deputy Secretary

Wolfowitz, and Under Secretary Feith need to resign. And if they do not

do so, then the President would be wise to ask them to go.

I yield the floor.