Mr. President, I was present for the concluding remarks

of the majority leader regarding the atrocities committed in Iraq

against the prisoners there. I certainly share his sentiments. A number

of my colleagues have spoken today from both sides of the aisle

expressing their horror, their outrage, and their deep regret. I join

with them as well.

I also am deeply disturbed as a Senator and as a Member of the Senate

Armed Services Committee at the lack of communication from the military

and the civilian command to those Members of the Senate about these

incidents--in fact, right up to the moment they were disclosed to the

American people through, fortunately, a free and vigilant press.

According to the information I have been able to obtain, a copy of

the most recently referenced classified internal military report, and

other news reports about that and other information, many of these

incidents that have been under investigation occurred last October,

last November--in other words, over half a year ago. They are horrible

events. The report said that Iraqi prisoners had been victims of

sadistic, blatant, and wanton criminal abuses. They were beaten with

broom handles and chairs and threatened with rape. One prisoner was

sodomized with a chemical light stick or with a broomstick. Military

dogs were also used to frighten and intimidate detainees. One graphic

description in the New York Times today talks about the experience of a

particular Iraqi male, the deep humiliation and shame he still feels,

the utter degradation, the sadistic and disgusting abuse of him night

after night by his American captors.

I agree with the remarks of the majority leader that these people

carrying out these terrible deeds were few in number, but tragically

their impact is enormous. They are going to make life a lot more

difficult and a lot more dangerous for the 134,000 incredibly brave,

patriotic Americans who are over there putting their lives on the line

every day and night.

A story in the New York Times gives a sense of how this is affecting

the way the United States is viewed in the Arab world, saying in the

Arab world and beyond, the tormenting of Iraqi prisoners by their

American guards shredded already thin support for Washington's invasion

of Iraq and its vow to install democratic values and respect for human

rights.

The outrage over the abuse shown in pictures flashed across front

pages and television screens drew emotional comparisons, asking how the

American occupation of the country could be distinguished from the way

Saddam Hussein's government oppressed the ordinary Iraqis. This kind of

outrage will lead to more attacks against our forces, greater intensity

of attacks, more bombing and assassination attempts against our forces

and other representatives, more casualties, more men and women from

America dying, shedding blood as a result of this immoral and illegal

misconduct.

The U.S. military, according to this report, first became aware of

these incidents, or some of them, as early as January of this year; in

fact, maybe even sooner than that. It was January 19 that LTG Ricardo

Sanchez, the commander of the joint task force in Iraq, requested that

these incidents of last October, November, and December be

investigated. There was a preliminary report which indicated systemic

problems within the prison brigade and suggested a lack of clear

standards, proficiency, and leadership.

That investigation began then on January 24. It was carried out

through interviews and other investigations of both Iraqi prisoners,

former prisoners, and U.S. military personnel who had witnessed these

incidents.

On February 29, the executive summary was presented to the military

command; on March 19, the final written report. The outbrief to the

appointing authority took place on March 3, 2004. That is 2 months ago,

and actually the 2 months preceding that, various people in the chain

of command were aware of these incidents.

They must have recognized the enormous impact they would have, the

devastating effect they would have upon our situation in that country,

militarily, diplomatically, and in our relations with other countries

throughout

the world. Yet as far as I have been told, not one word--not one word,

literally, was communicated to anyone in the Senate, Democrat or

Republican.

We had, in fact, a briefing last Thursday afternoon, a top-secret

classified briefing, which was attended, as I recall, by about 40 to 45

Members of the Senate with the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of

the Joint Chiefs of Staff. That briefing occurred 2, 3 hours before the

``60 Minutes II'' report which disclosed these incidents and this

report. Not one word--not one word--was mentioned to any of us.

I have been in briefings as a member of the Senate Armed Services

Committee through the last weeks and months where we have asked, time

after time: What is going on? What is the progress? What is the lack of

progress? Where are the problems? What is occurring? Not a word about

this. Not a word, until it occurred, of the eruption of violence, the

intensification of violence, in key areas of Iraq over the last several

weeks, which caused, in April, the highest level of casualties since

the war began. We ask, again and again: What is going on? And we are

told: Everything is fine. We are making great progress.

As early as last August, we were told 95 percent of the country is

peacefully progressing. Everything is going well. And we find out,

through news reports or through the reality of events, that is not the

case.

There is no credibility. The American people are not being told the

facts and the truth. The U.S. Congress is not being told the facts and

the truth. We deserve the facts and the truth.

I do not know who knew what at what point in time up through this

chain of command. But I believe we have the responsibility and the

right to find out. We are going to have, I am told, the opportunity, in

the Senate Armed Services Committee, to meet with Secretary of Defense

Rumsfeld this Friday morning. I certainly--and I know others, too--will

be asking for that sequence of events and asking why it is that we are

not told relevant information, crucial information that affects the

conditions over there, the progress or lack thereof, that then, in

turn, affects the lives, the safety, the well-being of the men and

women who are serving over there heroically, and whose families are

waiting back in my State of Minnesota and across this country,

frantically, anxiously, wondering what their future is going to be,

wondering if they are going to return home alive safely.

We were elected in a democratic process by those men and women, their

families, to be here to look out for them, to ask questions about what

is going on, to be given the information about what is occurring, so we

can participate in decisions that are going to affect U.S. policies

that are going to determine the outcome of their lives--when they will

be home, whether they will come home.

I think the people at various levels who participated in this

investigation--I am not going to call it a cover-up because there was an

ongoing investigation, but, my goodness, for the last 2 months, when it

was completed, and we were not informed, it was not being reported. If

not covered up, it was being hidden from Congress.

I am going to ask those individuals to read or reread the United

States Constitution and refresh their understanding of what it means to

be in a constitutionally established democracy where the executive

branch and the legislative branch have coequal responsibilities.

I certainly would like to work with Members of both sides of the

aisle in regard to the authorization of military----

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 1 minute to

conclude my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I would like to work with Members of both

sides of the aisle to put in place language, in the military

authorization and in any supplemental requests that are going to be

made, that we be given full and necessary disclosure, the same way we

require corporations that are making stock offerings to inform their

investors, the same way we require corporations and those running them

to inform their boards of directors of relevant, critically important

information that has a material bearing on the information that is

being presented so they can make informed decisions. We are getting far

less than that. We are being asked to make informed decisions when we

are not being given the information, we are not being told the truth.

We are having vital, important information withheld. That has to stop.

We need to disclose what has occurred in these incidents.

We need to make sure they never happen again. And we need to make

sure that we in Congress are given the opportunity that we deserve, the

right that we have, to look out on behalf of the American people to

make sure they never occur again.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.