

Secretary of Defense and his aids set up this prison which led this to happen, the inadequate supervision, the whole problem here, this is one which we must thoroughly investigate. And having the perpetrators not of the particular acts but of the efforts that led to these acts investigates themselves is wholly unacceptable.

We were not even allowed because of this automatic submissive majority to offer an amendment to call for that sort of an investigation. I want to stress again, what could be more bizarre than for us to tell the Iraqis that we will teach them how to be democratic, with a small D.

We in particular are telling the Shiites who are in the majority in Iraq, use your majority wisely and prudently. Yes, if you are in the majority you have a right ultimately to make the decision, but please show respect for minority rights. Please encourage openness.

I only hope, Mr. Speaker, that the Iraqis were not watching the debate today because if the Shiites were to emulate the House Republicans in terms of their approach to democracy, then we have very little chance of achieving what we want.

I only hope that people in the leadership of the Shiite movement in Iraq do not take the majority leader of this House as an exemplar of democracy. But it is not simply the inadequate way in which the military has responded to these outrages, and we might never have known if these things were not leaked. The military knew for a long time. They came up here and talked to committees. They misled people when they asked questions about contractors. They left names off lists. The way in which they have handled this was outrageous.

I wish it were an exception. I wish this terrible abuse and these cover ups and this refusal to supervise adequately, I wish it were an exception. But we also had, within the last week or two, the on-again off-again appointment of the Iraqi general in Falujah in which, first of all, we were going to have a war in Falujah. Fortunately, they decided, let us try to minimize the killing. So they appoint an Iraqi general to be in charge.

First we were told he is acceptable to everybody. Then it turned out because of his previous connections to the regime he was unacceptable and a new general comes in.

We have had error after error after error. We have a lack of coordination between the State and Defense Departments. I do not think there has been a major national security operation handled as incompetently as the way this administration has muddled in Iraq in a very long time.

Vietnam ultimately became a terrible set of mistakes, but I do not think in a comparable period Vietnam was as badly handled.

This administration has failed this country in the miserably incompetent way it has handled Iraq.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

#### CONDEMNING TREATMENT OF IRAQI DETAINEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, it is with a mix of anger, sadness, and frustration that I rise in support of the resolution that the House passed earlier today.

Our words can do little to mitigate the damage that has been inflicted upon our Nation, our Armed Forces, and our hopes for better relations with the Islamic world.

Nevertheless, we must offer these words to the Iraqi victims and to the world. All of us have seen the photographs of smiling American military personnel mocking hooded, naked Iraqi prisoners. These images of those degraded are vile. The smiles of those who would degrade are grotesque.

The soldiers in the photos must not become the face of the American-lead occupation in Iraq or of the American GI.

Sixty years ago at the end of World War II, the American soldier was seen as a smiling supplier of chocolate bars. Our men and women in uniform must not become known around the world for degrading and humiliating unarmed, naked detainees.

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I am deeply proud of our military. The vast majority of our men and women in uniform serve with bravery, compassion and honor. Sadly, the barbaric conduct at the Abu Ghraib prison reflects upon all our troops and it is up to all of us, the Congress, the executive branch, the justice system and the military itself to address this blight upon our record. I am glad that several of our senior commanders in Iraq have publicly apologized to the Iraqi people. I also believe that it was important for President Bush to express his personal regret to the Iraqi people and his commitment to a full investigation as he did during two interviews with Arabic language television yesterday.

I have been to Iraq and met with our young men and women who are serving there. The most disturbing aspect of

this reprehensible conduct at the prison is that it undermines and endangers the lives of American soldiers who are diligently working every day in the most difficult conditions. All of the countless acts of good will performed by our soldiers, the rebuilding of hospitals, the opening of schools, the reuniting of families, the building of civic institutions and the foundation of representative government, all of these are undercut by these acts.

Our campaign against terror has also been weakened. The war on terror and the war in Iraq are ultimately wars of ideas. The idea of a civil society under the rule of law, respective of human rights and individual liberties is at war with the idea of a closed society devoid of the right to speak as one chooses, without the free exercise of religion and propagated by indiscriminate and murderous violence against innocent men, women and children. The recent events at Abu Ghraib prison, a place identified with the barbarity of the Saddam Hussein regime, are a major setback in the war of ideas. A key element of this war has been our attempt to convince the Islamic world that America and the West are not out to humiliate and destroy Muslims. The damage to that effort is incalculable and the soldiers who committed these acts have betrayed the bravery, dignity and the sacrifice of their fellow troops.

This resolution is our statement to the world and particularly to Iraq and the Islamic world that the people of the United States are united in their condemnation of the stomach-turning acts of abuse that were perpetrated in our name. But this is only the beginning. We need a thorough investigation to find out both where the breakdown in the chain of command occurred and why Congress was left out of the loop, even though the military has been investigating these incidents for months and the investigation by Major General Antonio Taguba was completed in late February, 2½ months ago. We also need to determine whether the conduct at Abu Ghraib was an isolated set of incidents or whether, as some have suggested, similar acts were committed at other detention facilities in Iraq.

Nearly two centuries ago, Alexis de Toqueville is reputed to have said, "America is great because America is good; if America ceases to be good, she will cease to be great." That was true then. It is still true today. Our greatness has been built upon countless acts of goodness and not even an episode like this can undo that proud history, but it should serve as a reminder that our Nation has succeeded because Americans are strivers. We are always looking to better ourselves, our communities, our country and the community of nations. We now face a great challenge to that perception of goodness and we must all rise to meet that challenge.

## WAR IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the tone that has been exhibited on the floor of the House. We must be mindful of what we say and what we do, because our children are listening. I am gratified that Members have come to the floor to indicate both their disgust and their rejection of the actions of some in the military in Iraq. But allow me to lay out my reasoning for opposing the resolution on the floor of the House that was supposed to be today a call by this Congress, a bipartisan call by this Congress to investigate those incidences.

First of all, let me say that I follow in the tradition of Hubert Humphrey that says, in paraphrase, that we are the agitators to create a more perfect union. We are always seeking to make America better. We are always seeking to allow America to live up to its very special ideals of democracy and the Declaration of Independence that indicates that we all are created equal with certain inalienable rights of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Those actions in Iraq were not necessarily only those of the perpetrators and actors, but it showed the face of America and the face of our military and it was an unjust face. Martin Luther King reminded us that an injustice anywhere is an injustice everywhere. So why do I come to the floor of the House announcing my opposition to the resolution that was on the floor and my "no" vote? Because it was the failure of the Republican leadership that I challenged, failure in betraying the trust of the American people. Those crimes in Iraq were not partisan. They were not Democratic; they were not Republican. They were all of us being shocked and outraged, and collaboratively we should have stood here on the floor of the House in a bipartisan way and laid out a road map for the American people on many instances.

The first one is that it should be a bipartisan, complete and comprehensive investigation. We should investigate whether or not there was a violation of the Geneva Convention for the Committee on International Relations. We should investigate whether JAG officers and others who were interrogating these individuals followed certain rules and certain parameters that would be respectful of the human dignity. I know someone is saying now, look at the tragedies that happened to our civilian hostages and others who we saw glaring across the television screens just a couple of weeks ago. Let me say that we all protested that in outrage. But is it for us to follow suit to those whom we consider uncivilized and to be murderous terrorists? Is that the model that we are to follow? I think not.

And so for this Republican leadership to put on the floor of the House a singular resolution that says that the Secretary of the Army is supposed to investigate this, no Judiciary Committee, no International Relations Committee, no Intelligence Committee, no Government Reform Committee, no committees of jurisdiction, no Homeland Security Committee, when the very fact that the individuals who will face the wrath and the ire of the world will be Americans who are traveling around the world, we must investigate this comprehensively.

Mr. President, I disagree with you. I hope that your apology was forthright in the last hours that I have not been before the television screen. I hope you said something that we could understand. I clearly think that you are to be applauded for going before those in the Arab world. But I think the American people have to understand what happened. I have no apologies for not condemning in totality those men and women who were the perpetrators of, yes, criminal acts and they should be brought to justice. But they did not act alone. The hierarchy, the brass, the individuals who knew about this in November of 2003, who shared it with no one and absolutely no one in America, not even this United States Congress, not the Intelligence Committee.

Where else does the blame lie? Directly at the feet of Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, the man who orchestrated this war and suggested to us that weapons of mass destruction were the cause of going to war in Iraq. He misrepresented and misled the American people then and he has hidden the truth from us now. He does not deserve to hold this office. Neither does Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz.

And so I would ask them in a tone that I hope will be respectful, in order to clean the slate and allow America to go forward and to truly have the kind of dignity and respect the United States military deserves, so that we can build again, so that the American people can be known for what they are, compassionate and loving and believers of democracy, so that our children would understand that we too are fighters for democracy, then it is appropriate, Mr. President, that you ask for Secretary Rumsfeld's resignation, along with Paul Wolfowitz'.

This is not a time for loyalty. This is not a time for partisan politics. Mr. Rumsfeld failed you. He was derelict in his duty. He was aware of this and did not share this with the Congress. He knew it on Thursday of last week when "60 Minutes" showed it on television. What an insult. We could have avoided the controversy and the sadness that has permeated our leadership. The American people have put all of us in the same boat, Democrats, Republicans, Congress Members, House Members, Senate Members, administration.

It is interesting. When they were ready to rise up against William Jefferson Clinton in the impeachment over

discretions in his personal life, everybody was speaking about it in the United States. Everybody was outraged. Where is the outrage now? What a shame and a travesty.

And to the American people, I would say you too have a responsibility to ask the hard questions. In these letters to the President, Secretary Rumsfeld and to the Speaker of the House, I have asked for Secretary Rumsfeld's resignation. That is the honorable thing to do. Or be terminated. And I have asked the Speaker to convene a full body before he leaves to tell us the honest truth.

Mr. Speaker, I ask in a tone of simplicity and humbleness, where are the American people? Where are our voices? It is time now to stand for truth and to stand for those troops who are fighting for us all over the world.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, May 6, 2004.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,

Speaker of the House,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER HASTERT: It has become evident that due to the recent abuses of Iraqi soldiers by members of the U.S. military, that the Congress should get involved in calling for an immediate investigation of these atrocities. An investigation led by Major General Antonio Taguba, reported widespread abuses in the detention of Iraqi prisoners including incidents in which detainees were threatened with a pistol and with military dogs, prisoners were being sodomized with a chemical light and broomstick and soldiers were forcing naked prisoners into compromising positions. Members of Congress were never told the true extent of the abuses taking place; instead we were left to find out the truth when it was revealed to the general public. It is inconceivable that Secretary Rumsfeld would leave both the Executive and Legislative branches of our government in the dark regarding a critical foreign policy issue. His actions clearly go against the dictates and procedures of his position as Secretary of Defense.

Secretary Rumsfeld's failures in managing the war in Iraq go beyond the abuses of Iraqi prisoners. It has become clear that he has no control over the thousands of private contractors and private security companies in Iraq. In fact, the Pentagon has no records as to the number of private individuals who are in Iraq working on behalf of the United States Government. In addition to the extreme danger many of these individuals are being placed in, there are numerous reports that many of these individuals are taking part in highly illegal activities. Indeed, privately contracted individuals are suspected as being involved with the abuses that took place in the Abu Ghraib prison. Another disturbing issue that is just now coming to light is that there are currently fourteen different investigations into prisoner deaths that took place in Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet another indication that Secretary Rumsfeld has known about the severe mistreatment of prisoners and has failed to act.

The severity of Secretary Rumsfeld's actions pose grave consequences for our Nation. Let me be clear, I have always supported the men and women of our Armed Forces. It is my belief that the abuse of prisoners in Iraq has been the work of a small number of disgraceful American soldiers. However, as the Secretary of Defense, he bears the burden of the actions of the Armed Forces that he was sworn to oversee. The grotesque images of U.S. soldiers abusing