

LARSON CALLS FOR BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION INTO PRISONER ABUSES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 6, 2004

LARSON CALLS FOR BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION INTO PRISONER ABUSES

VOTES TO DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY

WASHINGTON, D.C.-U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1) today issued the following statement on the House Resolution regarding the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by U.S. civilian and military personnel. Larson voted for a motion that would have allowed language to be added that would have affirmed the need for a bipartisan Congressional investigation to be conducted immediately. The motion failed by a strict party line vote of 201 to 218.

What this resolution does not say is as important as what it does, said Larson. This resolution abrogates the constitutional responsibilities of Congress. The measure should have included language calling for a full, bipartisan Congressional investigation and hearings into these incidents. We must hold those who are responsible accountable, right up through the chain of command, not simply a handful of personnel at the bottom. We must also examine what the environment was that allowed these abuses to take place.

This administration has a poor track record when it comes to being forthright about its failures and mistakes. The administration has an obligation to level with Congress and the American people on this issue and yet the Congress has been left entirely out of the loop.

The abuse of prisoners at hands of U.S. personnel is deplorable and there is no excuse for it. We must treat any prisoner that is in the custody of the United States as we would expect an American prisoner to be treated. We must also not allow these horrible acts to take away from the many outstanding contributions that the vast majority of our other servicemen and women have made overseas.

###

