

Government Orders

If we, north of the 49th parallel, could have eased off on our unqualified and blind support after things had stabilized and said, "Hey, let us not get too many troops in there because obviously if we get 200,000, that may stabilize things. If we get half a million, then we are starting to set up a situation that we cannot pull back from". This has escalated the stakes beyond reason. That is the sadness I find and that is why I say we did not exercise Pearsonian diplomacy.

We are in the interval between stability and escalation because a President was caught in the mid-term election, for goodness sake. How much that has affected his decision, I do not know. But I certainly think it affected some of the things that Margaret Thatcher said when she was in Paris just 10 days ago. She talked about the brutal things going on in Iraq, things we all sort of knew. One wondered if she was saying this because of Iraq or whether it was because of her own particular political problems?

That may be very unfair, but I will tell you that that is what I thought when I saw her on television talking about Iraq in a most inflammatory way.

There was a time when putting half a million troops into Iraq, people would have said, "Hey, let us work this out and try to come up with something". Earlier I alluded to a *New York Times* story because we are on the precipice of a conflict.

Anyone who watched the the three-part PBS series on the Korean war will agree it was fantastic. It was on how you could miss communications and misjudge your enemy. The Americans soldiers were on the Yalu River in 1952 or 1953, thinking the war was over. It was one of the most interesting documentaries on PBS in a long while. The North Korean captain, the Chinese colonel, and the North Korean corporal, part of the 3,000 up in the hills, saw the Americans sitting on their tanks eating the American Thanksgiving dinner at the Yellow River because General McArthur thought the war was over. Here they had infiltrated the hills and from their cameras we could see this happening in this amazing documentary, just about two days before they came out of the hills. Of course, they chased the Americans and Canadians right back into Seoul. That was a misjudgment in communication in assessing the enemy. This is a misjudgment, too.

• (2310)

According to *The New York Times* of Sunday, September 23, 1990, it was the American Ambassador, April Glaspie, who on July 25, eight days before the invasion urged the Iraq leader, Saddam Hussein to settle his differences with Kuwait, but added:

We have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait.

This is according to an Iraqi document described as a transcript of their conversations. I am reading from *The New York Times*, Sunday edition. This is very authentic because this is what started a subcommittee hearing in the United States before they adjourned for their congressional elections.

I actually tried to phone Lee Hamilton, one of the better American congressman, a Democrat from Indiana, who was a chairman of that subcommittee, to find out the status of this subcommittee. Perhaps they thought it unpatriotic to explore it further, I do not know. Portions of the document, prepared in Arabic by the Iraqi government, was translated and broadcast by ABC News on September 11, and were the basis of accounts by *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* of London. The article states:

The State Department declined to confirm the accuracy of the document, but officials did not dispute Ms Glaspie's essential message.

Then it states:

The administration was following what President Bush acknowledged last week was a flawed policy toward Iraq, a policy built on the premise that the best way to handle Mr. Hussein and moderate his behaviour was through improving relations with Baghdad. That assessment presumed that Iran and Iraq, both exhausted by their eight-year border war, would focus on domestic reconstruction, not foreign adventurism.

As a result, the Bush Administration failed to calibrate its policy to take into account a string of belligerent statements and actions by Mr. Hussein in recent months, including the execution of a British journalist and a threat to use chemical weapons against Israel.

Listen to this, Mr. Speaker:

"We were essentially operating without a policy," said a senior administration official. "The crisis came in a bit of a vacuum, at a time when everyone was focusing on German reunification."

This lady we have seen on PBS over the year because she speaks for the administration quite a bit:

On July the 24, when Margaret D. Tutwiler, the States Department spokeswoman, was asked whether the United States had any commitment to defend Kuwait, she said "We do not have any defence