

with the hook and the sinker. I read *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* every day, and see something of television. In the American press, I saw no evidence of anything very different from President Bush's agenda, not just in the editorials, which I think were overwhelming, but most notably in the coverage and perhaps even more importantly in the interpretation of this coverage. They never went beyond it.

Sure, there was some wonderful reporting in the months before the war. There were wonderful stories about preparedness and the coalition, and our military strategy, and our weapons, and stories about the embargo. Not very many people seemed to be asking whether the embargo should exist at all because there was another way to have gone about resolving the problem. Nobody questioned Bush's description and so we never obtained, Congress didn't obtain, the American people didn't obtain the information needed to challenge the President on the subject of a war, which I believe could have been avoided.

The period was very complex. There certainly was no shortage of villains and incompetents. Saddam Hussein had more than a surplus of that on his side of it. He was incredibly clumsy in the way he handled this challenge. Had he been smarter it is conceivable that he would have beaten back the Bush agenda. He listened to his friends rather than listening to those people in Iraq who have had some experience with the outside world. I think that Saddam hunkered down in the crisis and listened to those upon whom he felt he could most readily depend. They were his relatives, the people who had been with him from the very beginning. And what happened was that he fell into a trap, a victim of his own savage world view.

But what about the blunders that were committed from January to August during this long period when there was an effort to work out the problems between Kuwait and Iraq. I think these were legitimate questions. The Emir of Kuwait, said that for all practical purposes Saddam was seeking to destroy the sovereignty of Kuwait. I have not seen any evidence to corroborate that. What we do now know is that there was a significant dispute over oil prices and the role that Kuwait was playing in manipulating those prices. I suspect now, in retrospect, that Kuwait's role was exaggerated, but it did have a significant role notwithstanding.