

did succeed within this last war with the Iraqis in doing what we have been more or less doing since 1971, and that is replacing the British as the power in the Gulf.

So it's been a good war. I mean we're lucky it's been a good war. How bad a war can it be when 125 or 130 Americans are killed? It doesn't sound so good if you happen to be the mother of one of them, but if you're not it doesn't seem like much of a price to pay. But I don't think that was fore-ordained. It could have gone a lot differently. I think there are many of us who really did believe it was going to be a little tougher than it turned out to be. But it turned out to be pretty easy and the only people who really suffered in all of this were the Iraqis and in some considerable measure the Kuwaitis. We and all the participants on our side of the alliance came out looking pretty good.

And so in a sense, I guess the press is on firm ground because like all the American public generally, it went with the winner. Maybe -- and I think that there was a touch of it in some of the talks that we had this morning in both the morning session and the afternoon session -- maybe the press was feeling some sort of crisis of confidence. I have been trying to evaluate this for a long time. Maybe there is some residual feeling that like the army, the press itself thinks we overstepped in Vietnam. Maybe we did intrude ourselves. I think that much of the press has been playing a little heavily in making history rather than just reporting it. And maybe after Vietnam and after Watergate and after Irangate and after a whole range of incidents in which, in my judgment, we really did our duty brilliantly, (I mean the kinds of thing that makes us proud to be journalists, that is providing the information for the American public and its leadership to make decisions) maybe we kind of lost our sense of ourselves. But something happened in this, and I believe we really did a lousy job in bringing this information to the people of the United States in order for them to make a valid well-informed decision about the war. I think we ought to be ashamed of ourselves!