**EXCERPTS FROM DAY AFTER' PANEL DISCUSSION. 1983. *Boston Globe (Pre-1997 Fulltext),* Nov 22.**

Following are excerpts from a panel discussion televised by ABC Sunday night following the presentation of "The Day After." The members of the panel were: Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State; Elie Wiesel, philosopher, theologian and author on the Holocaust; William F. Buckley Jr., conservative author and columnist and publisher of the National Review; Carl Sagan, astronomer and author; Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, national security adviser to President Gerald Ford and chairman of President Ronald Reagan's bipartisancommission on the MX missile, and former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. The moderator was ABC's Ted Koppel, who began the discussion by interviewing Secretary of State George P. Schultz.

KOPPEL: Mr. Secretary, if I put to you the question that Scrooge put to the Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come, the future as we have just viewed it tonight, is that the future as it will be or only the future as it may be?

SHULTZ: Neither. That is not the future at all. The film is a vivid and dramatic portrayal of the fact that nuclear war is simply not acceptable. And that fact, and the realization of it, has been the basis for the policy of the United States for decades now. . . . The only reason that we have nuclear weapons, as President Reagan said in Japan recently, is to see to it that they aren't used. We have to provide a balance so that others who have nuclear weapons, particularly the Soviet Union, realize that what could happen to us could happen to them and would happen to them. And under those circumstances,neither we nor they will use these weapons. . . .

The point that I'm trying to make here is that in addition to having this policy of balance and deterrence we have a policy of reduction. And in President Reagan's efforts to deal with this problem, reduction of nuclear weapons has been at the top of his list. Reduction all the way down to the point of zero. . . . The movie certainly dramatizes the unacceptability of nuclear warfare. And from my standpoint, it says to those who have criticized the President for seeking reductions that really that's the sensible course to take. . . . . . . a militant cause'

BUCKLEY: Well, I think, unhappily, the Secretary of State misses the point. The whole point of this movie is to launch an enterprise that seeks to debilitate the United States. . . . The guy who wrote it says, I would like to see people starting to question the value of defending this country with a nuclear arsenal.' That is his motive and people who have seen the film, who have sought to debilitate American defenses, have gathered around it. It's become a militant cause. . . .

I'm delighted to hear the Secretary of State say such calm and lucid and cogent things, but that's unrelated to the effort of this film. . . . If the Soviet Union knows that a first strike is going to mean the extinction of the Soviet Union, then there won't be a first strike. . . . I'd like to focus on this business of stabilization, because I think we have moved away from stabilization. There's a line in this movie, they're hearing all this bad news about all the threats that are happening, the Germans are moving and the Russians are moving, and then the girl says, Well, we did have a crisis in 1962 and we overcame that didn't we?' There isn't anybody there who says, Yes, and we also had a considerable deterrent quality in 1962 which was unambiguous.' Question: Are we moving toward an ambiguity in our deterrent forces?

SAGAN: I think in this country we've been sleepwalking during the last 38 years and passed this problem without really coming to grips with how dire and compelling it is, and I think ABC should be congratulated for spurring what I hope will be a yearlong debate on this issue. But it's my unhappy duty to point out that the reality is much worse than what has been portrayed in this movie, and this new, emerging reality has significant policy implications. The nuclear winter that will follow even a small nuclear war, especially if cities are targeted, as they almost certainly would be, involves a pall of dust and smoke which would reduce the temperatures not just in the northern midlatitudes, but pretty much globally to subfreezing temperatures for months. In addition . . . the radiation from radioactivity is much more than we've been told before.The overall consequences

Agriculture will be wiped out, and it's very clear that beyond the one or two billion people who would be killed directly in a major nuclear war . . . the overall consequences would be much more dire and the biologists who've been studying this think there is a real possibility of the extinction of the human species from such a war. . . . There is a kind of threshold. It's fuzzy, but it's somewhere around 1000 strategic weapons at which the nuclear winter could be triggered. If that's the case, it seems to me that the only prudent policy is to get well below that threshold so that no concatenation of computer failure and communications malfunctions and madness in high office could kill everybody on the planet. That seems to be elementary planetary hygiene as well as elementary patriotism.

KISSINGER: I think that this film presents a very simple-minded notion of the nuclear problem. It deals with the most obvious question that a general nuclear war aimed at cities is a disaster and a catastrophe. I wrote a book on the subject 30 years ago, when the notion of general nuclear war first arose. The problem of our period, the problem we have to grapple with, is how to avoid such a war, how to preserve freedom while seeking to avoid such a war, how to create a military establishment that reduces the dangers of such a war, what arms control policies are compatible with this policy, how we handle crises. Those are serious questions. To engage in an orgy of demonstrating how terrible the casualties of a nuclear war are and translating into pictures the statistics that have been known for three decades, and then to have Mr. Sagan say it's even worse than this, I would say: What are we to do about this? Are we supposed to make policy by scaring ourselves to death or is somebody going to make some proposals of where we are supposed to go? And if people don't make that, then I do not believe we are making any contribution.

That's my objection to this film. It took this most simple- minded problem that everybody will agree upon. There's nobody in this room that disagrees with the fact that this must not happen. It's how to avoid it that we should be discussing. . . . From the point of view of strategic doctrine or of military strategy, I have been writing for 30 years that these are weapons in search of a doctrine. So I don't want to defend any particular level of forces. The fact, however, is (that achieving nuclear stability\* requires us to analyze the design of our forces and design them in such a manner that there is a minimum incentive for first strike by either side. It requires that we analyze what is likely to cause crisis. And it requires that we do not scare ourselves to death. Because if the Soviet Union gets the idea that the United States has morally disarmed itself and psychologically disarmed itself, then the precise consequences we're describing here, will happen. Our problem is to avoid unilateral disarmanent and at the same time to develop a policy which eliminates the danger of nuclear war. This is the challenge we face.

MCNAMARA: I think much can be done, Mr. Koppel. Much that we're not doing - and I want to start by emphasizing, I'm not talking about the Reagan Administration, I'm talking about several different Administrations, but most of all I'm talking about the American people. I do not believe the American people understand the world we live in. I do not believe that they understand the full risk that we face. There are 40,000 nuclear warheads in the inventories of the US and the Soviet Union today, with the destruction power roughly a million times that of the Hiroshima bomb. I don't know arms experts and I doubt if anyone in this room believes that in the next 10 to 15 years we can reduce that number by more than half. And we're still going to be living then, in a world 15 years from now, with 20,000 nuclear weapons, and, frankly, I think it's very unlikely to get that low, but just assume that. . . .Reducing the risk

We need to stress introducing stability in the forces. To avoid temptation to either side to pre-empt and, most of all, we need to introduce steps to reduce the risk that those weapons will be used. . . . There is a commonality of interest between the Soviets and the US to avoid the use of these weapons. That's what that film shows. I totally disagree with those who say it's a disservice to the nation to show the film. Not at all. It's stimulating discussion on exactly the issue we ought to be discussing. . . . It's not enough to reduce numbers. We must increase stability. As long as we have more warheads than they have launchers, they fear we may use those warheads to destroy their launchers and destroy their society. We must begin to introduce stability.

Henry has suggested, I have suggested, we move to reducing the ratio of warheads to launchers. This sounds technical. It's not. It simply means increasing the safety of both societies. If we both move that way, we're both better off. There are 15 different actions I can suggest to you. . . . We must be more daring. We must be more imaginative as a society. Not just as a government, as a society, to reduce this risk. And we must negotiate, we must drag the Soviets into negotiating in our common interest. . . . We're going to live for decades in a world of tension and with tens of thousands of warheads, a few hundred of which can cause nuclear winter or destroy civilization. We must learn how to avoid their use. Nobody that I have ever talked to knows how to stop a nuclear war once it's started. Then for God's sake, don't ever start one.

SCOWCROFT: It may be unthinkable, but deterrence is a very ambiguous notion. It cannot be demonstrated unless it fails, in which case you knew it was not there. Otherwise, it can not be demonstrated. We have, probably, very different ideas about deterrence than does the Soviet Union. I think we tend to think that nuclear weapons have done away with wars, an instrument of national policy; that it is insane, that the mere existence of nuclear weapons means that nuclear war cannot happen. . . . I'm talking about a US-Soviet nuclear exchange, like the movie. The Soviet Union, however, both as a result of its history of repeated invasion and the extent to which ideology still motivates its belief that it is surrounded by hostile states, probably wants nuclear war no more than does the United States - but I think realistically anticipates that it could happen. And if it could happen, then they must do their best to prepare for it. And I think that it is that that is a central issue of deterrence, and that is: We must have a military posture which the Soviets, whatever they think about deterrence, whatever they think about the nature of nuclear weapons, can never imagine that to resort to them makes sense. . . . Behavior in a crisis

I don't think, fundamentally, we're talking about a deliberate decision to launch nuclear war. We're talking about behavior in a crisis, where each side is estimating both the posture and the will of the other side, in which case miscalculations can make all the difference between peace and war. And it is in that guise that we must insure that the Soviet Union can never miscalculate. . . . In some respects, the lower the numbers, the more unstable the situation and the more the encouragement for other powers to acquire nuclear weapons. . . . I think that the two truths are that we are in a nuclear age and, secondly, we do have a fundamental antagonism with the Soviet Union which we may be able to ameliorate but which for the foreseeable future is not going to end. Now, the question is what are we going to do about it, and I agree with Bob McNamara that we are not going to get rid of nuclear weapons. The important thing, as the President's commission on strategic forces underlined, is to improve the stability, to integrate our weapon systems program and our arms control to reduce the chances that in a crisis, either side will resort to nuclear weapons, feeling it can gain an advantage.

WIESEL: Not being a nuclear specialist in any way, I'm scared. I'm scaredbecause I know that what is imaginable can happen. I know that the impossible is possible. I've seen the film and while I was watching it, I had a strange feeling that I had seen it before. Except once upon a time, it happened to my people. And now it happens to all people. And suddenly I said to myself, maybe the whole world strangely has turned Jewish. Everybody lives now facing the unknown. We are all, in a way, helpless. They are talking about nuclear arms, about the bomb with a capital B, the kind of divinity in itself. Unless those who know militarily what it means, we readers, writers, people, we don't know what it all means. Then I hear about 1000 bombs, megatons, I don't have that kind of imagination. To me it's an abstraction. What to me all this means is that the human species may come to an end. That millions of children may die simply because one person somewhere - and I'm not so much afraid of the big powers - I'm afraid of the small nations. If not now, maybe 10 years from now, or 20 or 50. A Khomeini will get hold of nuclear weapons. He won't hesitate. He won't have a discussion such as the one we have here. . . .

It's true that pacifism in the absolute sense would be dangerous. We cannot yield our world to dictatorship. We cannot yield our Western society, our democracy, to a totalitarian regime that would have alone, exclusively, a nuclear superiority. It would be foolish. On the other hand, I also know that if we have thousands and more thousands and more thousands of weapons, one day they will explode, hence my ambivalence. Hence my fear. I do not see, realistically, a way out. I don't know what could be done.

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