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Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, former U.S. Chief of Naval Operations
Paul Nitze, former Pentagon representative to U.S. SALT delegation

"WHAT DO WE WANT FROM SALT II?"

Guests:

Subject:

FIRING LINE

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HOST: WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.
Guests: Amiral Elmo Zumwalt, former U.S. Chief of Naval Operations
Paul Nitze, former Pentagon representative to U.S. SALT delegation
Subject: "WHAT DO WE WANT FROM SALT II?"
Panelists: Robert Kuttner
           John Marks
           Herbert Stupp

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MR. BUCKLEY: Mr. Nixon's recent visit to the Soviet Union, for all the fanfare surrounding it, was somehow unconsummated. Specifically, he did not come back with SALT II in his pocket; that is to say, with a document that carried forward from the agreements of 1972 a plan for the continuing reduction in the strategic arms of the United States and the Soviet Union. There are many versions running loose as to why this is so. One says that the Soviet bargainers were simply too tough for our side to accept; another, more political, is that we became suddenly too tough for reasons, according to one version, related to our military requirements, or for reasons, according to another version, unrelated to our military requirements, namely the paralysis Watergate has visited on the President. If he had come back with any agreement, so this version goes, the hawks would have found it too soft, the doves too tough. What isn't clear is what it is that we should ideally achieve in the next phase of our SALT deliberations.

Quite unexpectedly, just before Mr. Nixon went to Russia, a critical figure in the SALT picture resigned his office. Mr. Paul Henry Nitze was the Pentagon's representative to the U.S. delegation handling SALT. He spoke only very briefly on his resignation and rather enigmatically about his withdrawal, but seemed to be saying that domestic American considerations had got in the way of a focused concentration on American military requirements. Mr. Nitze, an investment banker by profession, has for years been involved in the defense establishment, including as secretary of the Navy for President Lyndon Johnson, before that as director of policy planning for the State Department, and subsequently as deputy secretary of defense in the last years of Mr. Johnson.

Until a few weeks ago Elmo Russell Zumwalt was the chief of Naval Operations, the youngest in American history. He was appointed by President Nixon and, in due course, revolutionized the Navy. He has said of himself that some people think of him as a drooling-fang militarist; others as a bleeding-heart liberal. It is his nightmare that he has succeeded in creating a successful, integrated, modern, non-sexist Navy, trained to lose all future wars.

I should like to begin by asking Mr. Nitze: Is it your opinion that President Nixon cannot negotiate a desirable SALT II because he is president or because the Russians are Communists, or a combination of the two?

MR. NITZE: I'd say it was a combination of the two. In the first place, the Russians are very difficult to negotiate with. I think it takes great clarity and, really, almost perfect coordination on the part of U.S. negotiators at various levels to achieve the type of arms control agreements which would be useful to the United States. Furthermore it seems to me that those who have been responsible, in a position of responsibility, for the security of the United States, particularly the secretaries of defense, have been more deeply interested in achieving balanced and effective arms control agreements than anyone else in the U.S. government. They want to relieve the defense threat to the United States.

Now, the Russians have been obdurate. They are difficult to negotiate with, but one of the things that they take into account is what they call the correlation of forces. And I think they do, in looking at the correlation of forces, estimate what the strength, the internal political strength of the United States is, and I think it is without doubt that the Watergate affair has weakened the presidency and therefore has made it more difficult for us to achieve the kind of agreements which we really should have.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, now, translated into the kind of impact your analysis would have on the strategy planners in the Soviet Union, it would run how? Would it run as follows, that any agreement they made with President Nixon would likely be repudiated by his successor who could be anticipated to be more hawkish than he, or might they not reason to the contrary, namely that the weakness of Mr. Nixon is a weakness most likely exploitable by the American left and that, under the circumstances, any concessions made to Mr. Nixon at this point could...
be maximized in dealing with a future administration?

MR. NITZE: No, I think it is other than that. I think the Soviet strategy, by and large, would be to try to make a series of piecemeal agreements and avoid making a comprehensive, long-term, balanced, and equal agreement which the United States has sought and which would be to the interest of the United States.

Now, I don't think that the Soviets believe that Mr. Nixon would enter into a comprehensive agreement. 'They believe the Congress would not ratify or that would be upset by his successors. I think rather they feel that it is not necessary for them to negotiate the kind of an agreement which would be to the interest of the United States.

MR. BUCKLEY: Because their interests lie in what? In dealing with a successor who is himself demoralized by the trauma of Mr. Nixon's deposition and, under the circumstances, would be greedier for something ostensibly--

MR. NITZE: No, I think that misses the point.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, that's the--

MR. NITZE: At least it misses the point that I was trying to make.

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes. Well, would you explain why I missed the point?

MR. NITZE: Because as I said earlier, I think it is to the interests of the United States to negotiate a comprehensive, effective, and balanced, long-term agreement controlling strategic arms. I think it is to the Soviet interests not to do that, but to negotiate a series of piecemeal agreements which will not have the effect of really relieving the defense problem of the United States. I think they feel that Mr. Nixon was not in a position, really, to support the type of agreement which is in the United States' interests, that it was to his interest to maintain the appearance of detente and that therefore he would go along with partial agreements rather than the Soviets' being forced to address themselves to a comprehensive, long-term agreement.

MR. BUCKLEY: When you speak of their being forced, you're referring to their being forced in the context of negotiating arms control agreements, and simply in that context of negotiating arms control agreements with the Soviet Union, however, the possibility of success in that does depend upon a great many other things outside the negotiations.

MR. BUCKLEY: Which you, of course, felt free to attempt to coordinate, even though you couldn't yourself describe them.

MR. NITZE: No, that was not the task of the delegation.

MR. BUCKLEY: I see, I see.

MR. NITZE: That really is the task of the President and the Secretary of State and the National Security Council.

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes. Well, let me ask you, Admiral Zumwalt, if I may. The emphasis has been on the word strategic arms limitations and, yet, you are, I guess, at this point the most conspicuous critic, at least of naval disarmament. Do you share the view that the strategic arms limitations are not the same as is strategic in character and naval disarmament that is strategic in character?

ADM. ZUMWALT: No, I think they're all part of the same general problem. I would point out, Bill, that the primary reason that there's been more publicity concerning my views with regard to the naval balance than with regard to the strategic balance is the result of the fact that it was possible to speak on it directly and not on the other. While delicate negotiations were going on in the strategic field, not only the limitation field, but also the nuclear test limitation, I was always afraid there would not be public discussion of it. We're now at a phase where it is feasible.

MR. BUCKLEY: As I understand it, it is extremely difficult, for instance, in facing up to concrete situations that normally would require reliance on tactical resources, to proceed without some reference to your strategic cover. Is that correct? So that they would come back from SALT II and present you with a situation that would make any hypothetical tactical challenge an easy one to cope with or one that would make it impossible to cope with. Is that correct?

ADM. ZUMWALT: The formulation that I like is that in the strategic field it has gotten increasingly more dangerous for either side to consider the use of strategic weapons; and that the advantage that the United States had for many years in the strategic field has been eroded and is in the process of being overtaken and the Soviets are en route to strategic superiority. In that environment it becomes even more worrisome that we are in the non-strategic field in an era where we have fallen behind the Soviet Union with regard to our maritime capability. Behind in this sense--we have a much tougher naval mission than they do because we've got to use the seas. They merely have to cut our sea lines. The odds are that we cannot do our job, the odds are that they can do theirs, in a conventional war.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, when the negotiators went out to negotiate SALT II, their mandate, as you understand it, was what? To effect a harmonious and symmetrical reduction of such a kind as would not affect your tactical resources?

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think that their mission was a very clear one and a proper one. I think the United States was faced with a situation which has only half of our gross national product, essential equivalence. In other words, we were offering them a very good thing--equivalence with ourselves in the strategic field, although they couldn't afford it, in the strict sense, in order to offer anything to us. And that task was given to a group of very professional negotiators and I think it's a shame that the subsequent course of events in this country has not made it possible for them to complete their assignments.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, using the terminology of Mr. Nitze, the long-term versus the piecemeal, you would classify SALT I as which of the two, piecemeal or long-run?

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think that SALT I was clearly the best piecemeal effort we could get. Do you agree with that?

MR. NITZE: Well, just to expand on that. SALT I dealt primarily with the control of defensive strategic weapons, ABMs--

MR. BUCKLEY: Sure.

MR. NITZE: --and that was a long-run treaty. It was a treaty of indefinite duration, so that half the problem was successfully handled during SALT I, the ABM defensive part of it, on a long-term basis. The interim agreement was supposed to buy enough time under favorable conditions for us to duplicate that in the offensive field and negotiate a long-term, comprehensive offensive agreement which would parallel the ABM treaty.

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think that one important additional point there is that we had an advantage over the Soviets in the defensive area and, therefore, they were willing to accept a long-term solution which involved parity.

MR. BUCKLEY: You mean because our ABM technology was better than theirs.

ADM. ZUMWALT: That's right.

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes.

ADM. ZUMWALT: On the offensive side, where it was not nearly so clear that we had that kind of an advantage, we were not able to get that kind of a deal.

MR. BUCKLEY: Are you, in situations like this, working with a model in mind,
a paradigm? If there were a plenipotentiary who suddenly found himself in
total charge of the Soviet and the American arsenals, is it obvious what we
would want that plenipotentiary to do?
MR. NITZE: I think so.
MR. BUCKLEY: Is it? Would you describe roughly what would be the ideal
situation?
MR. NITZE: I think the ideal situation would be one, first of all, which
would carry out what Admiral Zumwalt has said, and that is essential equiva-
lence between the two sides in the capability of their strategic forces.
Secondly, that those forces--
MR. BUCKLEY: Could you give an illustration?
MR. NITZE: Well, that the numbers of launchers on both sides might be equal,
that the MIRV throw-weight might be equal, that the destructive capability
of the overall forces might be equal.
MR. BUCKLEY: In quality or in balance in some way with quantity or--
MR. NITZE: Taking into account both quantity and quality.
MR. BUCKLEY: Yes. Now equal is defined as at any level or equal at a level
that is greater than that of the third ranking nuclear power?
MR. NITZE: I was going to make a second point.
MR. BUCKLEY: Yes.
MR. NITZE: And the second point was that the limitations should be so designed
as to increase the stability of the relationship between them; in other words,
to reduce any possible temptation to initiate a nuclear war in a time of
crisis. And thirdly, that the bases should be laid for reducing the resources
put into the strategic effort of both sides.
MR. BUCKLEY: You carry on with your point about reductions, it would be better, for instan-
instance, if there were reductions to a mutually agreed ceiling than if the
U.S. were to have to build up to the larger numbers, the larger capability
of individual missiles which the Soviet side now, or is about to have.
MR. BUCKLEY: In other words, rather subtract from the preponderant power than
add to the subordinate power.
MR. NITZE: Exactly.
MR. BUCKLEY: Yes. But now, there comes presumably a level at which shia is
impossible for you sink, stay, below the offensive potential of China?
MR. NITZE: I think that's quite right.
MR. BUCKLEY: Yes.
MR. NITZE: I think there is a minimum level below which one should not go, that
is if one goes too low, that you might find yourself in an impasse, in a situa-
tion only would be better to have both sides to come down to something approximating the levels
which we now plan to have rather than for the United States, in order to main-
tain equivalence, to go up to the levels that the Soviet Union is about to have.
MR. BUCKLEY: But are you suggesting that we are left with no alternative than
to do that, absent this agreement?
MR. NITZE: I wouldn't say that we have no alternative but I would say that it
is important, I believe, that there be parity, there be essential equivalence,
roughly equal on both sides. And I don't see how one can do that unless either
the Soviet side comes down or we go up.
MR. BUCKLEY: And what do you consider the principal sticking point at this
moment? What is it that the Soviet Union wants most not to give up which
we want most for it to give up?
ADM. ZUMWALT: I would say it's the option to have strategic superiority that
they want not to give up.
MR. BUCKLEY: Do you agree?
MR. NITZE: Yes.
MR. BUCKLEY: And this strategic superiority, is it to you, as a military man,
interpretable as something that is simply a reflection of ideological maohismo
or is it a part of a highly mediated military strategy, the effect of which could be the neutralization of American policy?
ADM. ZUMWALT: I think it's the latter. I think it goes back to what Mr.
Nitzes suggested was their basic view of the correlation of forces. I think
they see in the SALT negotiations, as their concept of what they should achieve, a situation in which they are permitted to maintain--they are permitted to maintain that gradual shift of strategic balance in their favor as part of that shifting correlation of forces that insures that the irreversibility of detente is their kind of
detente, not the kind that any American would like to see.
MR. NITZE: Well, do you believe that the Soviet planners, in making their
reckonings, intelligently inform themselves about American public mood and
about possible emotional lurches in American policy, or are they so unaccus-
tomed to a phenomenon of that kind that they tend to disregard it?
MR. NITZE: They see in the SALT negotiations, as their concept of what they should
achieve, a situation in which they are permitted to maintain this gradual
shift of strategic balance in their favor as part of that shifting correlation
of forces that insures that the irreversibility of detente is their kind of
detente, not the kind that any American would like to see.
MR. NITZE: I think that's quite right.
MR. BUCKLEY: But are you suggesting that we are left with no alternative than
to that change in the correlation of forces before another bite.
MR. BUCKLEY: Well, they don't then, so far as we know, see anything on the
American political horizon to be frightened by in the sense that, for instance,
they might have been frightened by the direction that Harry Truman's speeches
began taking in 1946 and 1947?
ADM. ZUMWALT: Perhaps the inscrutable occidental mind might frighten them a
bit.
MR. NITZE: I don't get the impression that they're frightened. I get the
impression that they are cautious.
MR. BUCKLEY: Yes.
MR. NITZE: Which, you know, if we were advising them, I would advise them the
same way, that when there is a movement which they consider to be in their
direction, in their favor in the correlation of forces in the world, then one
should play down any boasting thereof or exacerbation of it or public exacer-
bation of it.

In the days when they really did have concerns as to the relationship of strategic power between the Soviet Union and ourselves, in those days Mr. Khrushchev used to boast of the power of his nuclear weapons. You remember--

MR. NITZE: --he used to say, "Three of our weapons could destroy the United Kingdom; we could burn down the olive groves of Greece," and things of that type.

MR. BUCKLEY: That was during the missile gap, right?

MR. NITZE: Now, that was afterwards, just before the Cuban missile crisis, as I remember. After that, when they really addressed themselves to reversing the inferiority which they then had--

MR. BUCKLEY: They were very quiet about it.

MR. NITZE: They've been very quiet about it.

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes. Well, let me ask you this, now that you're no longer constrained, not that you were ever terribly constrained, by your formal offices, is there anything, in your opinion, that the Soviet Union might do in Europe, short of marching into Paris, that would significantly mobilize America back into the old spirit of containment? Or is our experience in Vietnam--has that permanently emasculated us in respect of what we used to call the cold war confrontation and so on?

ADM. ZUMWALT: My view is that the Soviets perceive that the linkage between conventional forces and strategic nuclear forces is so close with regard to our NATO alliance that that's the worst possible place for them to have a confrontation and has the least likelihood of payoff. I think, therefore, they're much likelier to concentrate on further improvements, as they look at improvements, in the Middle East and in South Asia and in the western Pacific area, with priority going to the Middle East because of the fact that they recognize so clearly that that's the Jugular of the Free World, reliant as we are on its oil.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, suppose--and I hope you don't mind my making these situations concrete, because I think it's easier to explain these things correctly. Suppose you set up some sort of fake government in Iraq, which I shouldn't think would be the hardest thing to do, which government pleaded, invoked the Brezhnev doctrine and asked for Soviet military help. In your judgment if we were to say today that that would not be tolerated, would we have to say so convincingly in that part of the world?

ADM. ZUMWALT: In my judgment the answer to that is that we do not have the conventional military capability to back up our demand that they behave themselves in that area. We might very well make the demand.

MR. NITZE: That's true. That is involved in a crisis of that kind something that is or is not considered in the SALT context, or is it too particular?

MR. NITZE: No, that kind of thing isn't considered in the SALT context at all. Frankly, I think your example is a highly unlikely example, but you were advancing it. I take it, only as an example. But to go back to the SALT context, both sides have tried to isolate the SALT negotiations to the best of their ability from all the outside political crises of the moment. For instance, during the Cambodian crisis, it was mentioned only once and very minutely. It did not impinge upon any of our negotiations. I can think of no immediate tactical thing which was permitted, really, to interfere with the seriousness of the negotiations between both sides.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, assuming a success, then, at the strategic level, would we be in a position to maintain the peace of the world as we understand it, our tactical reserves? Assuming a total success in SALT negotiations--

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think that's right.

MR. BUCKLEY: How is this if you are primarily concerned, am I correct?

ADM. ZUMWALT: It's crude to make this parallelism, but in a sense the strategic business becomes like poison gas. If you achieve true essential equivalence, both sides are, I think, truly deterred from the use, and then one has to consider whether policy gets enforced at lower levels. And if national interests require it to be done, particularly when you are that country which is dedicated to the preservation of a stable world order and community, one has to be sure that you have the military capability to back up a pacific foreign policy, and it's that aspect of the problem that has caused me great concern.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, with the emphasis that you put on aircraft carriers--of which we have how many? Twenty-five?

ADM. ZUMWALT: No, we had 24 just five years ago. We're down to 15 and we're headed for a lower number.

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes, and the Soviet Union has had none, right?

ADM. ZUMWALT: They launched, about a year ago, their first--

MR. BUCKLEY: Their first. Do they have plans to launch a second?

ADM. ZUMWALT: They've started the construction of a second and, in my judgment, will have a larger number of aircraft carriers than we do in your, hopefully, long lifetime.

MR. BUCKLEY: So it looks as though they have belatedly recognized the importance of the aircraft carrier.

ADM. ZUMWALT: I would state it this way, Bill. They came from behind and they did those things first that needed to be done first.

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes, yes.

ADM. ZUMWALT: First submarines, a massive submarine fleet, three times the size of our own, now two and a half times. They next got naval aircraft with cruise missiles on them and surface ships with cruise missiles on them. Having done that and having achieved a credible capability to cut our sea lines, they are now working on the last part of the acquisition of maritime power, the capability to project it overseas and for that they must have aircraft carriers.

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes, but they must also, I take it, have a doctrine, mustn't they? If we agree that nuclear arms are going to become, as poison gas became by mutual agreement, unusable then the purpose--

MR. NITZE: That's our objective, getting equal--

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes, that's our objective, but assuming that we achieve this--

MR. NITZE: --not necessarily theirs.

MR. BUCKLEY: Not necessarily theirs.

Assuming that we achieve this but we then nevertheless see them continuing to use resources scarcer to them than to us to build up a tremendous tactical capability, it is presumably in order to further a doctrine. I gave an example of that involving Yugoslavia and something to that effect in the Middle East, giving to the Communist leadership, which have been published in the Western press, although he doesn't publicly say this, and that is that, "Look, fellows, we need their technology. We need their agriculture. You're going to hear, therefore, talk of detente. Meanwhile we're building all of the military hardware we need so that by the Eighties we'll be in a position to turn this thing around and you will then see a much more aggressive foreign policy."

MR. BUCKLEY: I am assuming for the maintenance of the military capability in their direction through the use of detente and the acquisition of greater military capability, now, whether or not his successors ever decide to exercise that option depends upon whether or not we in the United States do share our space that we maintain the military capability we need. At the present time we're not doing it.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, it goes beyond maintaining the military capability, doesn't
it? We certainly had the military capability to win the Vietnamese war, and didn't use it. It's a combination of the two, isn't it?

ADM. ZUMWALT: Of course.

MR. BUCKLEY: Now, is it--I'm sure it's your private concern, Mr. Nitze--I don't know whether it was ever your professional concern when you were directly engaged with SALT to try to think forward to concrete problems and how we would solve them. Is there an American doctrine based upon military thinking on the basis of which we could effectively protect the independence of the Persian Gulf nations in a military situation described by the Admiral? What would we do?

MR. NITZE: You correct me if I'm wrong, but my view is that the Persian Gulf is about as difficult a position geographically in which to apply U.S. countering military power as to Soviet military power in that area as you can--

MR. BUCKLEY: All the more enticing to them.

MR. NITZE: Therefore all the more enticing to them. However, there is another question involved and that is what is the value to the USSR of dominating, let's say, Iran?

MR. BUCKLEY: Huge.

MR. NITZE: Well, versus the damage to the West of their taking it. I think it would then be in the West's interest to--

ADM. ZUMWALT: An outcome which, quite apart from all that it has done in the underdeveloped world and in the Free World to hurt, has increased the net income to the Soviet Union for their oil by a billion dollars.

MR. BUCKLEY: But isn't it that we should have the foundations for a pulling together of all those countries and peoples equally threatened.

MR. NITZE: We'd be in real trouble, but there are things that have to do with will--

MR. BUCKLEY: You mean, we might boycott the use of oil?

MR. NITZE: We'd be in real trouble, but there are things that have to do with will--

MR. BUCKLEY: Why?

MR. NITZE: Indeed--of the things that led up to Watergate.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, however, practically all of the trends that we have discussed were detectable before the Scotch tape was left on the door of Watergate, right? And at that point Mr. Nixon was not suffering from his present embarrassment, and yet we were headed in that direction. So is it because Mr. Nixon is himself an inadequate leader, or is it because he's got a Congress that he can't face, or is it because the American people are failing to give the kind of sustenance required for an effective counter-policy?

MR. NITZE: Frankly, I didn't think that things were going as badly then as they have been going in the last year. I believe there has been a material change in the evolution of things during the period since Watergate.

ADM. ZUMWALT: But if you put it on your graph, you would show a pretty direct line going down from 1967 on, wouldn't you?

ADM. ZUMWALT: That's correct, insofar as the maritime capability is concerned.

MR. BUCKLEY: Is it accelerated by Watergate or not? If anything, it's blipping up a little, isn't it?

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think that I would agree with Paul Nitze that there was no reason not to be optimistic about the trend of events as we saw during the first four years of the Nixon Administration--those developments that were likely to have improved our domestic tranquility by withdrawal from the war effort on terms generally favorable to the United States and as we reoriented our defense budgets to a level with which we could live over the long haul. Now, that means would have happened in the second administration, absent Watergate, was that we would have seen a gathering around and a consensus that we had, at the very least, to spend somewhat more in the conventional field than the other superpower which has half of our gross national product. We are not--

MR. BUCKLEY: But aren't we in fact spending a little more?

ADM. ZUMWALT: No, we're not. I think the--

MR. BUCKLEY: You mean, you count the dollars--

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think the intelligence community's calculation is that if we calculate what it costs the Russians in our economy to build what they're building, they're spending more than we are.

MR. NITZE: I think the intelligence community's calculation is that if we calculate what it costs the Russians in our economy to build what they're building, they're spending more than we are.

ADM. ZUMWALT: This nation with just half of our gross national product. Therefore, by anybody's analysis, it's inevitable that they will overtake us, if they haven't already, and my studies convince me that in the maritime area they have already a greater probability that they can carry out their mission than we have should we carry out ours.

MR. BUCKLEY: And you do not relate this to Watergate, except thus speculatively. You feel that if Mr. Nixon were not so preoccupied with Watergate, it may very well be that he would be directing public attention to this march of events, even to his role in them.

ADM. ZUMWALT: More than that.

MR. BUCKLEY: Because, as you say, the graph began pre-Watergate.

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think I feel we've seen a great lessening in the amount of attention that anyone in the White House gives to defense issues, foreign policy issues, any issue except survival.

MR. BUCKLEY: Do you think it has to do in part with a general feeling in America that which that we are called upon to save is not all that valuable? To wit, ourselves.

MR. NITZE: I was referring not just to the questions of defense production and the defense budgets in the United States. I was talking about the point that I made earlier that the political health of the United States, it seems to me, has deteriorated during the last year as a result of Watergate. I think there's less confidence by the youth, by the public, in the institutions of government than there was a year ago. I think this is a bad thing. I think, too, you-know-foreign policy really is a reflection of domestic policy, and arms control policy and defense policy are a reflection of your foreign policy.

MR. BUCKLEY: But isn't exactly what we want a lack of confidence in the institutions of government? It's a reflection of the fact--Admiral Zumwalt in particular--we ought to have very little confidence in the institutions of government to which we give $75 billion or $80 billion a year and all of a sudden find ourselves approaching nightmare.

MR. NITZE: No, I think it's essential that we have a government that merits
confidence. I think it's always necessary to be skeptical of government.

MR. BUCKLEY: Yes.

MR. NITZE: But it's a different thing than having a government which merits confidence. I think the United States has often had, during most of its life, governments which merit confidence.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, you're saying then the American people have in fact lost confidence in Nixon but in the presidency, in Congress--

MR. NITZE: No, in Nixon as president.

MR. BUCKLEY: But all the graphs show that in fact there is a decline in American confidence in institutions.

MR. NITZE: I think this has flowed in part from--

MR. BUCKLEY: From the mess.

MR. NITZE: From the mess, that's right; and I think in part it has flowed from the fact that Congress has been slow to act. Now, I'm quite sympathetic with the fact that the Congress should lean over backwards to see to it that it is not subject to the attack of having moved too fast, but still this has been a long period where I believe the public has not had the impression that the Congress is prepared to bite the bullet in any expeditious way.

MR. BUCKLEY: Do you agree with that, Admiral Zumwalt?

ADM. ZUMWALT: I do.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, is there an obvious prescription, short of leadership?

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think the prescription is to get on with the constitutional processes.

MR. BUCKLEY: I was afraid you'd say that. (laughter) We're all in favor of constitutional processes, but meanwhile isn't it your guess that not one out of 100 Americans are apprehensive about your major apprehension as described today? And whatever you say about Watergate, we've still got the Reader's Digest, and why doesn't the Reader's Digest spread the news? In fact nobody seems to pay any attention to it. That's one of the reasons they pay no attention to it because they feel as long as Mr. Nixon is President one thing we're not going to lose out to is the Communists, point number one; and point number two, no matter what Mr. Nixon's treatment of the problem has been, in the last couple of years sobering up with a race of men all of whom have voluntarily submitted to a prefrontal lobotomy and that all of this stuff that you quote from Brezhnev and so on is mere cant. It's just the hangover talk from people who feel that their whole thinking he might be tempted to cut a more generous deal with the Russians to make substantive contributions toward a less dangerous world.

ADM. ZUMWALT: Well, I think you probably would be as apt to judge at the American mood as I. I think that the concern that I feel, having just come from the Congress, to the extent to which the legitimate concern of government have come to a standstill as a result of the overwhelming concern about Watergate within the government, at the top. And I feel very worried about the fact that not only is policy not really dealt with unless it's Watergate related but any elements of policy which do get attention are--

MR. BUCKLEY: Affected.

ADM. ZUMWALT: --are affected by Watergate considerations. It's therefore very important for this country to get it all behind us. The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence.

MR. BUCKLEY: Mr. John Marks is the co-author of the best-selling book, The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence.

ADM. ZUMWALT: Well, you may have, they may have. I think they probably were helpful in the negotiations which Dr. Kissinger succeeded in bringing to a conclusion over there. If you're out of North Vietnam, you may have continued to help strengthen the eventual military position of the North Vietnamese so that the North Vietnamese, at a time when they might consider to be the right time, could make survival very difficult for the South Vietnamese.

MR. BUCKLEY: Mr. John Marks is the co-author of the best-selling book, The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence.

ADM. ZUMWALT: No, I don't concede that at all. For example, in my own case, as director of arms control back in 1962 for the Pentagon I worked very vigorously for the test-ban treaty and I have continued to support subsequent arms control agreements, such as the non-proliferation pact and the hotline and SALT 1. I think the military has a proper concern about the security of this country and I think the military has a professional competence to advise civilian authority about the relative merits of individual arms control proposals. And I think that in contrast to the conventional wisdom around town that considerable progress toward

MR. NITZE: Given your view that the Soviets have not really ceased to be a revolutionary power--and I gather your view is also that what made detente possible was a temporary juxtaposition of interests in strategic accommodation and political stabilization, couldn't it be said that detente had just about gone as far as it could go, apart from Nixon's weakness?

MR. NITZE: The word detente has so many meanings that it's hard to be precise about it. My own view would be that under all but the most horrible circumstances we should maintain contact with the Soviet Union, should be negotiating with the Soviet Union, should be talking with the Soviet Union. That's quite a different thing than the impression that I think has been given to the American public about detente. I think the American public has had the view that somehow or other this has indicated a more basic change in Soviet strategy and tactics than I see, and I think that's what Admiral Zumwalt was referring to, that it's very hard, when you look at individual steps, to see where the Soviet Union has taken a step where the Soviet Union is really different than what it might have taken if it were looking primarily to the improvement of its own situation. I don't see these actions they've taken of making substantive contributions toward a less dangerous world.

MR. BUCKLEY: They may have, they may have. I think they probably were helpful in the negotiations which Dr. Kissinger succeeded in bringing to a conclusion over there. If you're out of North Vietnam, you may have continued to help strengthen the eventual military position of the North Vietnamese so that the North Vietnamese, at a time when they might consider to be the right time, could make survival very difficult for the South Vietnamese.

ADM. ZUMWALT: Mr. John Marks is the co-author of the best-selling book, The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence.

MR. MARKS: Admiral Zumwalt, Secretary Kissinger, right after the recent talks in Moscow, made a statement that the military of America has been restrained if there were to be any progress in the strategic arms field. Secretary of Defense Schlesinger said that there was no problem with our military but Secretary Kissinger didn't issue any retractions. Is it not the case that our military has a vested interest in bigger and more expensive weapons systems?

ADM. ZUMWALT: No, I don't concede that at all. For example, in my own case, as director of arms control back in 1962 for the Pentagon I worked very vigorously for the test-ban treaty and I have continued to support subsequent arms control agreements, such as the non-proliferation pact and the hotline and SALT 1. I think the military has a proper concern about the security of this country and I think the military has a professional competence to advise civilian authority about the relative merits of individual arms control proposals. And I think that in contrast to the conventional wisdom around town that considerable progress toward

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he's been at a position of policy in the civilian side of the hierarchy, on the the proper role of the military-civilian interphase.

MR. NITZE: I might just comment. I think, Mr. Marks, was your quotation from Dr. Kissinger correct? My recollection was that what he said was that the military establishments of both sides need to be convinced of the value of restraint, rather than saying that the military establishments have to be restrained; because I think, unarguably, that the military establishment in the United States is clearly under the direction of the President and within the control set by the Congress. I know of no secretary of defense, I know of no JCS body which has not responded to a valid order of the President. This is our tradition and it's a deep tradition. It is certainly possible for the President to make a decision and have it executed by the secretary of defense and the JCS even if they don't agree with it. What I think Admiral Zumwalt was referring to is that by statute the JCS are the military advisers, not only to the secretary of defense and to the President, but also to the Congress, and I'm sure that the intent of that statute was that the military be in a position to give their best and honest advice to the Secretary of Defense, the President, and the Congress. Now the impression that I get now is that it is being implied, at least, by Dr. Kissinger, that the military should not give their best and honest advice, but they should mold their opinions to his views. And this I disapprove of.

MR. BUCKLEY: Did he actually say anything like that?

MR. NITZE: I said "implied." I think it was implied.

MR. BUCKLEY: Implied, yes.

MR. NITZE: --in the quotation that I gave.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, my impression of--

MR. NITZE: Why is it necessary otherwise to convince? You've got the right to overrule and they have frequently been overruled.

MR. BUCKLEY: Well, I think my impression of that is that Mr. Kissinger feels that he is doing the best he can with foreign policy, but I would be extremely surprised if he ever suggested that he wants to be other than informed by the military, concerning which he is, of course, technically ignorant. But it may very well be that by that offhand remark in which he talked about their military and our military, he gave the wrong impression. He told me today that he was sorry he had made that remark, which suggests that he didn't anticipate the way it would be understood.

MR. NITZE: I think that's a perfectly valid point and I accept that. I'm sorry I took it at face value--

MR. BUCKLEY: Sure.

MR. NITZE: --but I'm sure you're right that he regretted it afterwards.

MR. BUCKLEY: Mr. Herbert Stupp is an officer of Young Americans for Freedom and a graduate student at St. John's University in New York. Mr. Stupp.

MR. STUPP: In his book, The World Restored, and in three articles published in 1969, Henry Kissinger made two arguments that I think Admiral Zumwalt and Mr. Nitze would agree were very realistic. The first was that a status quo nation in a revolutionary era is at a powerful disadvantage; that is, if they don't win, they lose. The second is that any nation committed to peace as an end in itself is at the mercy of any other nation willing to risk war. I'd like to know both of your views, since we're at best pursuing a status quo policy and since allegedly we're pursuing a policy of peace as an end in itself, if without a dramatic reversal in that policy the United States will be able to survive in the future?

MR. BUCKLEY: We have two minutes exactly.

MR. NITZE: On the last part of your question, with respect to a country that pursues peace as an absolute end--

MR. STUPP: Yes.

MR. NITZE: --there I would agree entirely with what Henry Kissinger said in his book, and I'm sure he would today. He would not say that peace is an absolute end. He would say certainly, if one wants to survive as a nation with some degree of sovereignty, one has to face up to the fact that you can imagine circumstances where a nation would fight in its own defense. With respect to the other part of your question, with respect to a status quo nation and its disadvantages, it has not been my impression that the United States really has been a status quo nation. Granted, we have been a status quo nation territorially, we have no territorial ambitions, but I think we have made a most positive contribution toward the world structure, at least in the non-Communist part of the world, during the period from 1946 up until the present.

ADM. ZUMWALT: My answer is that I agree with Paul Nitze.

MR. BUCKLEY: On both of those points?

ADM. ZUMWALT: Right.

MR. BUCKLEY: You have no territorial ambitions?

ADM. ZUMWALT: Right.

MR. BUCKLEY: I don't know. I'd kind of like to take over Albania. (laughter)

Of course, isn't it true that there is no such thing as a status quo nation almost by definition? There is such a thing as a nation that seeks to freeze history, but there has never been, so far as I know, a nation that has succeeded in doing so, has there?

MR. NITZE: I don't think so.

MR. BUCKLEY: Certainly not among the superpowers.

ADM. ZUMWALT: I think our mission has been to try to maintain the right of people to free determination as opposed to the Soviet mission, which is to pervert that right into what they call the socialist order.

MR. BUCKLEY: Thank you, Admiral Zumwalt; thank you very much, Mr. Nitze.

MR. NITZE: Thank you, Mr. Buckley.

MR. BUCKLEY: Gentlemen of the panel, thank you all.