

McGovern, who briefed seven US presidents, gives a frightening dose of reality for the direction the world is heading.

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In-depth Report: Nuclear War

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A retired CIA expert on Russia and rare voice of reason coming from the bowels of the American deep state, Ray McGovern joins host Robert Scheer on another edition of the Scheer Intelligence podcast. With world peace, nuclear weapon prudence and film critique on the agenda, McGovern and Scheer delve into a host of relevant issues stemming from the war in Ukraine and the history behind it. From Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer," to CNN's strange truthful [broadcast](#) on Ukraine's counteroffensive, the old boys from the Bronx prod each other's encyclopedic minds to try and make sense of the state of the world.

While mixed opinions over the atomic bomb film fill the first segment of the episode, the conversation seems to always make its way back to the importance of potential nuclear war on the horizon. As McGovern said, “I spent six decades, count them, six decades following Soviet and now Russian policy. Most of that time professionally and now... really just as intently and I have never, never had so much fear that we are on the cusp of a nuclear catastrophe.”

McGovern, an adviser to seven presidents, also dives into the motivations and ramifications of such reckless foreign policy decisions, made by people who supposedly check all the qualification boxes:

“Sullivan, Blinken, Nuland... They have the reins of power and they’re telling Biden what to do. They have a sense of unreality that they can prevail. That was very clear at their first major foreign policy adventure, where the Chinese were kind enough to come to Anchorage, Alaska and they were treated like the British imperialists treated the Chinese on the Yangtze River two centuries ago!”

In the end, it is the citizens back home as well as the soldiers on the front lines who get dealt a bad hand from these decisions. McGovern points out the bleak realities of what these aid packages to countries like Ukraine really mean to all parties involved. The most sinister part being how it happens in front of people without them even knowing and that is by design, courtesy of McGovern's famously coined military, industrial, congressional, intelligence, media, academia, think tank (MICIMATT) complex.

"We don't have a well-informed citizenry. If we did, our well-informed citizenry would be talking about opportunity costs. What does one F-35 that doesn't really fly real well in the dark or in bad weather, what does it cost? \$200 million? What can we do with that \$200 million in our school district? In our reaching out to people who are poor in one of those state."

Transcript

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Robert Scheer Hi, this is Robert Scheer with another edition of Scheer Intelligence, and it's a title once given to me by an NPR producer, but I'll live with it, sounds a little egotistical. And then I always say the intelligence comes from my guests, and that's almost always the case in this case. My guest is Ray McGovern. And, you know, I don't often go back to people, I should, I've gone back to you a few times now because of Russia and controversy, the invasion, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, all of these issues. But I want to explain and I want to get in a little bit, this is actually, today is the 78th anniversary of our dropping the bomb on Nagasaki. And then Hiroshima, of course, was two days previous and I do want to talk about a lot of serious things, but I want to really start with objectivity. Objectivity. And Ray McGovern has now joined me. I've known him a long time in the as being controversial. And in fact, he's actually attacked for being more of a Putin apologist or I don't know if that makes you left or right, since Putin is the guy the U.S. backed against Gorbachev and he was Yeltsin's protege and he was supposed to be a good conservative. But I guess a conservative in Russia ends up being a nationalist. And you don't like that.

But nonetheless, somehow Ray McGovern, who I first encountered his work and everything when he was working for the CIA, our trajectories actually been very different. And one of my arguments is, you know, yes, objectivity is important, certainly for journalists, certainly for people who want to represent the public interest is not easy to attain. And nowadays we use these slogans of disinformation and fake news as a way of disparaging anybody that disagrees with the government or the current government was the Trump government. You are allowed to disagree. And, you know, so there's it's very difficult, but I want to stress the people bring their own perspective. Lawrence Ferlinghetti once said, "Keep an open mind, but not so open that your brains fall out." And what he meant is we all have a core of experience, belief, philosophy, religion, whatever. And I like talking to you, Ray, because we actually come from, in the context of the Bronx, where we both grew up, and you're a much younger guy. I'm 87, you're I'm an old coot. You're a young guy of 84. But when I look at our lives, there on, you went to Fordham University. Guess that was about, I don't know, I guess a mile from where I grew up in the Bronx. I went to city College, very different. And in fact, some of your listeners on your website, what is your website called? Ray McGovern?

Ray McGovern RayMcGovern.com

Scheer Ray McGovern dot com. I really took umbrage because they said I was anti Catholic because I made some remarks about Fordham. And it is true, I am my mother was Jewish, I was very sensitive. And there were, at that time, some people Catholic who thought we had something to do with the Jews being responsible for killing their Lord or something. And there was tension, ethnic tension and religious tension. And then my father was a German Protestant. So I said, only a half of me was responsible and, you know, you get this insane hostility, which you grew up with also. Religious, ethnic and everything else, and we all are affected by it. And my only point was actually when you were going to Fordham and you graduated, I believe that the time in a missile crisis, right? You were Phi Beta Kappa, one of them really smart guys and graduated '61, was it? Kennedy was president. Yeah. And then you got a master's degree in Russian studies in '62. And I want to point this out to you. And then you went into the military and you were there, and then they let you out early so you could go work for the CIA,.

McGovern Correct.

Scheer Okay. And so you were really went into the national security establishment, the very thing that Eisenhower had just warned us about. Right. Eisenhower, in his farewell address while you were still in college, warned us about the military industrial complex. But you joined it, right? You joined it. And it's funny because these days here now, people are questioning your patriotism and so forth. I, on the other hand, was this kind of antiwar character over at City College and had lots of doubts about this. I thought, you know, Eisenhower was great when he called out the military industrial complex and that it should be looked at critically and examined. You were the other way. So why don't we begin with that? Because you there are people who try to dismiss you now, try to marginalize you. Oh, Ray's old or Ray, you know, what does he know? Well, you know a great deal. You advised how many presidents on personally.

McGovern You know, worked under seven. And I wrote the president's daily brief, three of them.

Scheer Which three?

McGovern Nixon, Ford and Reagan.

Scheer So these are three presidents that you actually were responsible for the daily briefing of those three presidents on, you know, on the most serious matters, right?

McGovern That's correct. I was one of about five.

Scheer Yeah. And you were there at the center of power. Right. And they trusted you. You had all the clearances. You were, right?

McGovern Yeah. They trusted me enough to allow me to do that in person. One on one. So the first Reagan term, '81 to '85, I was sort of a special gift because my superiors, Bobby Gates in the first instance and then Bill Casey. Well, put it simply, they saw a Soviet under every rock.

Scheer This was at the CIA.

McGovern Yeah. Yeah. They were my bosses, nominally at least. And, you know, they go down to Nicaragua. And Casey would say, Bobby, you see that Soviet under that rock? Mr.

Casey, there are three of them. Can you see three of them? Casey said you will run my analysis. And he did. Okay. So that's the kind of people that were advising Reagan at the very top. My approach was to Reagan's chief advisors: H.W. Bush, Secretary Shultz, Secretary Weinberger, the chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Jack Vessey, and then a slew of national security advisers, some of whom ended up in prison. But I briefed them with a team mate every other day, early in the morning. Generally speaking, Reagan himself preferred to sleep in. And so he was briefed by the same characters that we briefed at about 11:30 when he was fully awake.

Scheer So I just want to remind people, because right now America is establishment military influence. If you watch CNN, I just watched, on your recommendation, a program today where they're very gloomy about what was happening with the counter offensive in the Ukraine and then people from the military industrial complex who now are retired and so they act like journalists and telling Anderson [Cooper] that, well, yes, but it might get better or it should get better and so forth. But there's a feeling we have the good war. You know, here are the heroic Ukrainians fighting against the evil Russians. And I just want to remind people that during the Cold War, we always thought we had the good war. And Vietnam is a very good example. Jack Kennedy, President Kennedy actually is the person most responsible for getting it going. And that's where I got in trouble with your readers who thought I was being anti-Catholic. The American Catholic Church, not the pope. Pope John actually was raising some fundamental questions with his *Pacem in terris* about the waging a war and the need for peace. But there was no question about the virtue of our Vietnamese, even though Diem, who was in charge of South Vietnam, had come out of a Marino seminary and the United States and had been picked by the American military establishment. But with the whole narrative was obviously we weren't even fighting Vietnam, we were fighting the communists, and they were mostly led by Mao and the Chinese and everything. And everybody forgets that that war, which we were supposed to be on the side of virtue. And you had Tom Dooley, Navy lieutenant doctor who wrote a book about the necessity of fighting for these people. Very popular, that the mood was really very supportive of the Diem administration until the US basically killed Diem, they hunted him down and he died in a sewer in Saigon trying to hide or what happened it's all quite mysterious. And so why don't you take us back? Because at that time you were on the war making side, right?

McGovern Well, Robert, I wouldn't put it that way, actually. Let me go back to where you started, our common heritage in the Bronx. I, too, was from an immigrant family, and mine was Irish. We were pretty secluded, parochial, if you will, provincial, if you will. I had a first rate education, but it was not the kind of broad exposure to the world that you had at City College. Among other things, I remember there in 1948, the Jews finally got their own country. And there was there was great rejoicing throughout the production everywhere else of New York. But nobody told me that there are already people there, called the Palestinians. And I had to learn later what that was all about. Okay. So it was a little provincial. When you come to serving your country. You mention John Kennedy. Well, he made that inaugural speech when I was a senior at Fordham. And you know what he said, Ask not what your country can do for you, what you might be able to do for your country. Now, believe it or not, Robert, you could believe this. Maybe others can't. But that didn't sound corny at that time, that sounded real. And there was a real threat from Russia. I mean, they did have missiles. They were challenging us and Germany and Berlin and finally in Cuba. So when I took a political science course at Fordham in my senior year, it was a graduate course. And I talked about this new national security apparatus that had been put

together after the war by the National Security Act 1947, and it included the CIA. What was the CIA all about? It was about telling the president the truth, what was going on in the world with what Truman called untainted, not biased information that he would get from the State Department or for the Defense Department. Tell me like it is. Now, I was a Russian specialist. That's why they let me out of the army earlier. This year I paid off the army and I was able to do my last one and a half years of active duty at the CIA. And that was okay. The same government. There was a real Russian threat there. And I had the privilege of being able to tell our policymakers that, for example, the rift, the conflict between Russia and China was extremely real. Okay. Don't listen to all this troglodyte. Ah they're both commies, for God's sake, don't trust them. It was real. What does that mean? That meant when I became chief of the Soviet foreign policy branch. We will tell Nixon and Kissinger. Look, they hate each other. You can exploit that. There are 40 divisions, Soviet divisions on the Chinese border, for God's sake. Chinese really can have a nicer relationship with you guys. What do you think? Well, they went off to Beijing. You know the rest of this story. Now, I had a particularly interesting...

Scheer Well for people listening to this who don't know the rest of the story, because after all, you know, we don't teach much of this. We should remember the whole justification for the Cold War and certainly for Vietnam was that there was a monolithic communism that was supra nationalist because they read Marx or Lenin and they would never care about being Chinese or Russian or Vietnamese, and therefore they would act in sync and betray the interests of their own people for some kind of pseudo religion called communism. And it turned out to be utter nonsense. And there were some smart people who knew it at the time, but the policy still was constructed by people who pretended that was real. And then, much to the amazement of the American people, even though we were fighting because nobody could defend going to war in Vietnam with all of, you know, dropping more bombs that had been dropped on Germany during World War Two on this tiny area of Vietnam. And this people didn't even have an air force. They all argument was no was stopping the Chinese communist from stopping the Russian communists. And then, amazingly enough, this cold warrior, Richard Nixon, who made a career out of, oh, it is a communist and underwriting good. By the way, one of the people who went after Oppenheimer and there's this popular movie now, Oppenheimer and the making of the bomb. You know, suddenly Nixon is over there with Mao Zedong, now everybody says, now you can't talk to Putin. Putin's a monster. Putin's another Hitler. My God, Putin is enlightened compared to Mao in the and the view of America. First of all, he's not a communist, but he's actually broken very severely with communism. But here was Nixon went with Mao Zedong, the guy who was described as the bloodiest dictator maybe in the history of the world by some people in the CIA, and the Defense Department. Certainly that was the conventional wisdom. Suddenly, Nixon and Kissinger are over there, just as Kissinger was quite recently. And they say, hey, you know, maybe they were basing it in part on McGovern. But I want to say, to be fair. Richard Nixon wrote an article in Foreign Affairs magazine before he was president saying there was room to negotiate with China and there was actually a movement in that direction. But nonetheless, this incredible thing. Now, if an American president, Donald Trump, said you might want to talk to Putin and cut a deal, everybody say, no, that's it, you're a traitor. Right. And there was Nixon when... and you were in the middle of that. You knew about that?

McGovern I was. And when Kissinger came to us, my Soviet foreign policy branch, and said, we're going to have these negotiations for limiting strategic arms. You think the Russians are really interested in doing that? Well, I named three people from my branch to go with

the delegation in Helsinki or Vienna, and then one down in the bowels of the CIA to report on what the military developments were. And we reported back. We said, yeah, the Russians are really interested. And they said, Why? Well, number one, they don't want to spend their selves into oblivion. But number two, they're afraid of the Chinese. There is this triangular relationship now, and they don't want the Chinese to steal a march on them and develop good relations with you. Well. Kissinger went to Beijing in 1971. Nixon goes in early in 1972, and all of a sudden we see a lot of leeway, a lot of flexibility in the Soviet negotiation position on limiting offensive and defensive missile and nuclear arms. So long story short, I got to go to Moscow in May of 1972 for the signing of this incredible treaty that was the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty. Just just to spell out very briefly, it was really simple. We were we were building scads of offensive missiles and defensive missiles. There was no end to the competition. Finally, as people said, well, hey, look, let's create a kind of a balance of terror. If there are no anti ballistic missiles, neither side can think that they could make a first strike on the other without suffering an immediate and devastating response. That's what they did. That was the ABM Treaty was all about limiting the number of ABM sites you could have first to two and then to one. And so they went ahead and now Kissinger says to me, "Are the Russians gonna cheat?" I said, "I don't know." "Well, how soon could you tell me?" So I went back to the people that run all the satellites and all that other stuff. You know, you can do that when you're in a position with some some important. So you say, How long is it? Seven, ten days. Go back 7 to 10 days, sir. All right. I think we should go ahead on that basis doveryay, no proveryay, trust but verify. Did the Russians cheat? Yes, they cheated. Did we find out? Yes, within seven days. Yes. Where was it? In Siberia. God awful place. But they built this incredible radar that could only be for ABM usage. And Reagan called them on it. That's the way we used to do things in those days. Right. We'd say show them the pictures we showed on the pictures, they said no, no, it's not an ABM site. So finally, Gorbachev comes in. Reagan is gone. G.W. Bush is in place and it's all right it's an ABM, site we'll tear it down. And he does. I'm just saying here that it's possible to talk to people. It's possible to trust and verify. And when you get around a table, it's often possible to work out deals that never would have seemed possible, been seen as possible before you sat down at the table. That's what's missing today, of course. There's no trust. There's no trust. You can verify anything. There's just no trust. That's really dangerous situation. You mentioned Oppenheimer. We can talk about that later.

Scheer Talk about it now, go ahead.

McGovern I saw it yesterday. You know, I'm not a real big moviegoer, but I was terribly disappointed. For God's sake, you know. Here's this really bright, youngish, white male, just tortured. All right. I sympathize with that.

Scheer You're talking about Oppenheimer now.

McGovern Yeah, Oppenheimer. You know, here's the victim of... Well, what that what about those tens of thousands of Japanese? There was only one key moment in that film that was not brought out in any real detail.

Scheer Well, well, let me just point out, those tens of thousands of Japanese I mean, the figures, I think they go much higher. You know.

McGovern They do, hundreds of thousands. Yeah.

Scheer But the interesting thing is and I'm quite positive about the movie, so we can have a lively discussion. I think it was, it's a classic, I do. But we could disagree about that. But the fact of the matter is we're having this discussion on the, you know, the United States government, which is supposed to be the center of civilization, we're the only ones who have ever used these weapons. We not only created them, but we didn't just set it off in the ocean and kill some fish or a lot of fish. You know, there were a lot of things. Eisenhower didn't feel the need to drop the bomb. He's expressed that. The movie does go into some of the tension, but there were plenty of people who said you should not use it. And the war was, in effect, although the movie's pretty light on that, really, all the Japanese wanted was some language saying they can have an emperor, that there really wasn't much of a sticking point. And other reason was they didn't want the Russians to come in and the Russians supposed to come in, I believe it was 90 days after that or whatever it was some period of time after the defeat of the Germans, and they would have been, you know, part of the occupying force. So there was a need for that. But I think the point of the movie is the power of these weapons. And of course, they're far more dangerous now. And I want to get into that because this, we're almost giddy or oblivious to the fact that we're on the cusp of nuclear war now. I want to get to that. And that's why I think the movie is very powerful. But I want to ask you a question. There's a character in the movie, Edward Teller. And it's not the way I remember Edward Teller. I interviewed Edward Teller that quite a bit of contact with him. Edward Teller, the father of the H-bomb. He's the guy there. He looks sinister. And then at during the test, he's got some kind of grease to protect him on his face and his glasses and so forth. But everybody forgets and here I'm actually resting my computer on a book to make it go higher that I wrote called *With Enough Shovels*. You probably remember this. You know, Reagan, Bush, a nuclear war, dig a hole, cover it with a couple of doors, and then throw three feet of dirt on top. It's the dirt that does it. If there are enough shovels to go around, everybody's going to make it. That was from T.K. Jones, deputy undersecretary of defense for Strategic and Theater nuclear forces. Well, we are even in a worse place now, because at that time there was active discussion and other people mentioned the book. Remember, I interviewed Hans Bethe, who was in charge of theoretical research at Los Alamos, the Making the Bomb. A lot of those people spoke out and said, this is madness. Star wars is madness you can't find. You're not hearing that now. And in fact, you wrote a column recently talking about, you know, the possibility of both the Russians using it, if they're into a corner, are using it. So something that we had come during the worst days of the Cold War, see, is absolute madness. We now think now maybe you can do it right. Where are we on this issue now? And I think Reagan should be remembered positively as the person who accepted Gorbachev despite Reagan's rhetoric about those monsters. I know I interviewed him at some length, but the fact of the matter is he and Gorbachev both agreed these weapons could not be used and we should get rid of them, at least make big advances in getting rid of them. That's now, if you said that now, that would be heresy. So let's talk a little bit about the nuclear dimension, Nagasaki and so forth.

McGovern Well, Reagan, of course, did conclude the INF Treaty, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, which destroy, I emphasize, destroyed a whole class of medium range and intermediate range nuclear missiles and warheads stationed already already deployed in Europe. On both sides, Russian side it was SS 20's. The US side it was Pershing twos, destroyed. Scott Ritter, my good friend, as one of those people who went up and inspected one of those places, made sure that doveryay, no proveryay, that we could monitor, that we could prove that these things were being destroyed, so you're right about Reagan. Just getting back to Oppenheimer for a second, Bob, I tend to think in two terms here. I think, I mentioned this little vignette where President Truman and Jimmy Byrnes were together

there, and they invited Oppenheimer.

Scheer Byrnes, the secretary of state.

McGovern Yeah. Now where was he from? He is from the great state of Georgia. And what did you share with Harry Truman? Bias prejudice to the core. Truman himself very seldom referred to African-Americans with anything other than the N-word. Okay. People don't look like us are much easier to kill. Japanese Yellow Peril. What the Japanese had done to us at Pearl Harbor and all that kind of stuff. It made it easy for Truman and Byrnes all alone, against the advice of Eisenhower, against the advice of MacArthur, against the advice of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs at the time. Although there was no Joint Chiefs policy, all these top, top military groups, look, it's not needed. But as you Bob very pointed out, the Japanese, we knew from intercepting their messages, their coded messages and translating them that they would give up as soon as we said, all right, you could keep your damn emperor. We won't string them up. You won't have any power, but you can keep. They would quit on the spot. Now, why the hell do we do that? Well, number one, we had this bomb, right? Number two, we could use it against people that don't look like us. All right. And number three, there's this anti-communism that had really, really been very firmly implanted. Instead of saying to the Russians, Hey, we're about to jointly conquer Japan, let's do a deal here. Let's talk about this. We think that you're entitled to something from what you've done. Now, let's let's deal with this instead of that. There's this urge, there's this compulsion to make sure we got in there before the before the Russians, and that we demonstrated to these commies that we had this weapon that they'll never get that we could use again if we so please.

Scheer You know, it's so difficult, you know, for people to grasp all this. You know what I mean? We've forgotten, first of all, I mean, the very idea that we're kind of giddy, you have people say, oh, the the Russians stuff wouldn't work, or we they might use tactical and Medvedev, the guy who had run Russia, I guess, with Putin's tutelage and now he's the head of their national security talked about actually they put weapons in Belarus. He's talked about maybe using them. And the fact of the matter is, you know, if they get desperate, we've called them all war criminals. So if they think they're going to go to some Nuremberg and they're going to face the death penalty, you know, that's that's not how you begin negotiations. You know, we had a very dark view of Mao, but Nixon went there and made nice, you know, and so did Kissinger to negotiate. Aren't you afraid? I mean, I don't want to just get into rhetoric here. I have never been this frightened and I've covered this issue not from the inside viewpoint that you have, but I spent a lot of time. I actually spent hours talking to people in the Defense Department everywhere. There were quite a bit of time when I worked for the L.A. Times wrote that book. I have never been as scared as now because back then, you know, Ronald Reagan knew, he said he said, yes, we wouldn't do that. But those monsters have a different feeling about life and so forth. But no one defended even Edward Teller would not say it's, you know, hey, yeah, let's have a nuclear war. It was you know, everybody understood that was the end of anything like civilization. Now we've lost that, haven't we? And we're talking on a day remember Nagasaki? And you're absolutely correct that the movie in that respect, the movie, a conscious decision was made not to show the devastation of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. No question about it. And, you know, I think I don't think it was done out of racism. I think it was done that a recognition that movie audiences are impervious to that. They've seen it. So, okay, it's a picture. And I think one theatrical device when he showed a white scientist suddenly having what the bomb does to their faces and imploding, you know, the and so forth, I thought that

was a device. But nonetheless, where are we now on this nuclear question? It's very much in play with Russia right now. We haven't talked about that CNN report. It seems as if the new technology and the training of the Ukrainians is not working. And I don't know what's going to happen. You have the idea that I've seen reference that maybe the Biden administration to hold on to power might do a wag the dog scenarios. I mean, so let's talk about that. What is the danger of nuclear war now? What might be the point? How do you see the Biden administration? I was accused the last time of interrupting too much and talking too much, which I am always accused of. So please, Ray, just take it from there.

McGovern Well, Irish and Jewish from the Bronx do tend to talk a lot. Let me just have another sentence on Oppenheimer. The audience is left with the erroneous impression that thousands or hundreds of thousands of U.S. lives would have been lost in invading Japan had we not detonated these bombs. That is criminally wrong. Okay. There is only one little thing in there that suggests that Oppenheimer himself. Now, I know that was necessary. Well. Oh, yeah, it wasn't necessary. So why did they do it? Now, I don't pierce the moviemakers of racism. I accuse Truman. I accuse Jimmy Byrnes just like I accuse William Westmoreland, who pretty much said the Oriental doesn't put the same value on life. I mean, hello. That's pure and simple racism. Whatever comes out of the state of South Carolina, where Westmoreland was, as well as came as well as Jimmy Byrnes. Now, getting to the question of now. Robert, you're a lot older than I am.

Scheer I got the point.

McGovern 3 years.

Scheer I'm in pretty good shape, though, right? Don't push me. If we were to meet there somewhere on the Grand Concourse or somewhere, you know, I wouldn't get out of your way. I think I could handle you.

McGovern You probably could. I'm three years younger than you. But what I would say is that I spent six decades, count them, six decades following Soviet and now Russian policy. Most of that time professionally now since, well, the last few decades really just as intently. And I have never, never had so much fears that we are on the cusp of a nuclear catastrophe. Why? Because the people advising Joe Biden. And Joe Biden is compos mentis or not, I don't know. But the people advising him are calling the shots. They have a lot to lose if Ukraine goes shoop! Now, I hate to tell you this, but Ukraine is going to shoop! Russia is winning. And whoever advised, well actually probably the CIA director advise the president to say Russia has already lost. Okay. Hello. So what happens to the CIA director? He gets promoted to be a cabinet officer. A really, a stupid thing in and of itself. Anyhow. There's a degree of unreality here. Biden up up in, he was in Maine campaigning a lot of rhetoric. And then he met at a small home. Someone was there and reported. What does he say? Who can shape the whole world at this stage in life? Not the president. And not me, not me. But the President of United States can. Who else but the President of the United States? I'm going to do it. Madeleine Albright was right. She talked about us being essential, exceptional, indispensable, even. We're going to do it now. That's unreal. Did these guys tell him that? They must tell them that because they get promoted to the cabinet. Bill Burns himself just a couple of weeks later, said Russia has already lost. And the the defeat, the weakness of the Russian army has been laid bare for all to see. Well, that's 180 degrees away from the real situation. So just last night, CNN had an honest report. Ukrainians are losing. They're taking a real bashing. They're not going to win anytime soon. Maybe they can last until next year, but that even is doubtful. Woah, the same CNN that was saying two

weeks ago this could be a great counteroffensive? Just watch this. General emerging. What do you think we're going to win? General so-and-so? Oh, yeah. We'll take back Crimea. It's all B.S. And the problem is they're going to have to try to figure out some way to rejigger the narrative here so that Americans won't say, well, wait a sec, I thought we were winning. I thought the Ukrainians were winning. They're not? And we have to decide, well, how do we handle this? Now, the media is so malleable that they probably won't have any trouble persuading Americans. Oh, this was all good. We tried. We said that we gave Ukraine 98% of what they needed and I guess they just couldn't handle it. That's the way it's going to come down. Meanwhile, meanwhile, hundreds, hundreds of Ukrainian young men and some old men like me are perishing every day that the U.S. and the Ukrainians and NATO don't say, well, look, let's stop this. Let's stop this carnage. Let's talk.

Scheer So I want to cut to the chase here on the moral question, because there will be people listening to this right now and they will take the high moral ground. They will say that McGovern and that really dangerous guy Scheer, they don't care about the freedom of Ukrainians. They don't care about their rights. They don't care about the moral question. And they just want to give up. And we have a poll now that shows most Americans or not by a big majority, but a majority, don't want to give more aid. We're now starting to see Ukraine is another one of those forever wars and so forth. But at the core of it is that the Biden administration, the Democrats, were able to establish in the mass media there the soft power world that they represent virtue. This is, again, the old American exceptionalism and that anyone else's nationalism is illegitimate, dangerous to the world if it conflicts with us. I think if we look back at our lives in this country. Ray McGovern that's been the issue. It was the issue even in getting a peace agreement or getting out of the war with Japan and not dropping the bomb because, okay, let them have their emperor. No, they're war criminals, they have to be... It's happening now with Russia. There's no Russian side to this. The fact is, the area that they're now fortified and I'm projecting might have probably has the evidence would have, show that those people probably voted against the current government in Ukraine, did not want this short break and so forth speak mostly Russian have a connection with Russia. Certainly people in Crimea, there's no complexity. We're now pushing Russia because we want to get to China and we're very angry with China. We don't have any respect for Chinese nationalism. We don't know that, you know, maybe they've had experience with us, know we can provoke them with Taiwan. We can exacerbate that. So I want to ask you, as a person who lived deep within this military industrial establishment, you have an insight that I certainly don't have because these are more, I've interviewed a lot of these people they're smart. They probably got higher test scores than I did. You know, they probably know how to, you know, can justify their expertise in terms of the languages they speak. So what how do they consistently get it so wrong? Why do they not know, for example? Well, let's just take China. Why are they not know that Chinese nationalism is it now, what these communists in China are really talking about? This is nationalism. Why isn't this multi-polar world acceptable to them? Why do they insist? And here we are in the day when we killed so many Japanese, we're the only ones. This is the greatest act, I think, of terrorism, if by that you mean using civilians to make a point and their deaths. Certainly what we did at Hiroshima and Nagasaki is the greatest act of terrorism. Why do they still have this arrogance that they got it right and that they represent human values for everybody in the world? You lived with these people. You broke bread with them. You talked to them. Why are we these oddballs now having this discussion? Why don't your colleagues that are on CNN, you know, turned into journalists, why don't they see it? I mean, actually, that discussion today that I watched, you sent the tape and the reporter forget his name, but he was very good in his 7 minutes who's been

covering the war. But, you know, the attitude was, first of all, the we, they talked about, well, we may have splits now where maybe, you know, you're not a journalist, they just assume, Anderson, you might want to talk about him a little bit. Just assumes he represents the U.S. government and that represents virtue. How do they maintain this?

McGovern Well, let's see. I call Anderson Cooper. I call him Hans Christian Anderson Cooper, because he tells all the fairy tales that he's told to tell on CNN.

Scheer He's a bright guy. But you lived with these people. I'm trying to get a different you know, I could say things like that, too, but I didn't go to the cafeteria with these people, the journalists, as well as the people inside the CIA. But you did you.

McGovern No, no. Bob, the big difference here is you didn't go to cafeteria with these people at City College, and there was no one at Fordham to go to the cafeteria with the high shoes, with the claim to exceptionalism that these guys and now you know about Vietnam, You know a lot about Vietnam. You've interviewed these guys. It's the same best and brightest that knew what was best for our country. No way could prevail over those.

Scheer David Halberstam, the great New York Times reporter, wrote that book, *The Best and the Brightest*.

McGovern So they go to City College. They go to a Fordham, where'd they go? You know, where they went with the ivy mental walls, with all that kind of stuff to say, brood saint, brood of cats that's running our policy. Sullivan, Blinken, Nuland. I mean, hello. It's just really, really they have the reins of power and they're telling bleak. They're telling Biden what to do. You know, they have a sense of unreality that they can prevail. That was that was very clear at their first major foreign policy adventure, where the Chinese were kind enough to come to Anchorage and Alaska. They were treated like the British imperialists treated the Chinese on the Yangtze River two centuries ago. Okay. So what I'm saying here is that these guys are delusional. Okay, that's dangerous. Okay. But the other thing is they have a personal stake in this. Personal stake. Okay. Look at Joe Biden and Hunter Biden now. Look at Blinken, who was demonstrably responsible for rallying up 51 intelligence managers to say the Biden laptop bore all the earmarks of a Russian disinformation operation lie completely. Okay. So that and you got who's the other guy? Well, Sullivan was responsible for Russian hacking. A lie from day one. Now, curiously enough, Russian hacking was divulged to be a lie under testimony by the head of CrowdStrike, the cyber firm that was supposed to investigate this. He testified before Adam Schiff's committee, House Intelligence Committee, on the 5th of December 2017, and said there is no technical evidence that anyone hacked the Democratic National Committee. No one, not the Russians, not anyone else. No technical evidence. What happened to that transcript? Adam Schiff kept it secret for two and a half years. Finally somebody told Trump, Hey, you're the president. You can get that release. And it was released. When was it released? May 10th, 2020. Okay. What is it? It's May 9th, 2023. That I think makes three years. Okay. Why is it the Americans still believe there was Russian hacking that that helped Trump with the election? Because their New York Times, The Washington Post has kept that secret even since it was released to the public on May 10th, 2020. So shifted it for two and a half years. The New York Times, everybody else for three more years. And so you get people like Amanpour interviewing the Russian ambassador to London just a day or two ago, and she says, ah, why did you why did you interfere? Mess up in our in our election 2016. I know you were going to say that, you know, let's go on to the whole. So the media is the problem here. Now, the good news is today or last night, actually, Anderson Cooper decided to tell the truth because no longer...

Well, because he was allowed to. My experience with Anderson Cooper. Okay. Here it is, May 4th, I think, 2006. I'm at a big think tank where Donald Rumsfeld is speaking in Atlanta. Okay. I get up and ask the first question. Okay. I embarrass him by quoting back to himself about where he knew, he knew weapons of mass destruction were and how he knew that there were ties between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. And by inference, Saddam Hussein was in part responsible for 9/11. I nail on those two things now, as I'm walking and it's on, look at look at old woman's version of that when he was when he was going straight. Okay, now what? My point is, I'm going out into the auditorium. Nobody's looking at me. It was a very wealthy male, Southern defense oriented think tank. And I get a call. Hello, Mr. McGovern, this is Anderson Cooper. Oh, hey, Anderson. How are you? Now I find out you're causing quite a stir down here. We have your live on CNN and also on C-SPAN. Tell me and I just have to look at my program tonight, but I have a question for you first. Sure. Anderson, weren't you afraid? Now, I was pretty much, you know, I was in a state, so I said, Well, that's a normal question. I said, no, Anderson, you know, I had I had prepared for this. I knew that if I ever had a shot, then I thought,.

Scheer Wait a second.

McGovern Anderson, it was the heir to a fortune. Anderson is that pretty boy on CNN. And I said, Anderson, look, it was a real high. Let me tell you, prepare real questions. Ask them for real people. You'll find it's a real high. And he said, yeah, Mr. McGovern I'll have my people get in touch with your people for tonight. I said, No, no, don't do that, Anderson. Why not? I don't have any people. No people. Just give me a call. I get on this program that night, 3 hours later. What is it? Off with Mr. McGovern, weren't you afraid? As though everyone should be afraid, as Anderson Cooper has been afraid. So now he's not afraid to tell the truth. That's a good sign. Maybe Americans will come out.

Scheer For people who didn't watch that CNN, why don't you summarize what happened? Because it was...

McGovern It was Jim Sciutto, one of their big reporters, and Anderson interviewing him. And he and then later comes on General Hertling, who has been saying that Ukraine is, of course, going to win. And then who else? Well, that was Hertling and Sciutto.

Scheer August 8th, last night, right?

McGovern Yeah, just just last night. And people are kind enough to call my attention to these things. I don't watch CNN, okay? Well, it's really quite amazing. I had this some of the transcript here. Yeah, here it is. Sciutto. Jim Sciutto, you know, he's the big CNN military reporter. It says, look, the losses have been tremendous in Ukraine and Western military sources and Western political sources just told us that this is really, really serious. They're not going to be able to do much. Then Lieutenant General Mark Pershing doesn't disagree. And he says now this is why the defensive is failing. Bah, bah, bah bah. The Russians, you know what the Russians did? They had it from October to build these three, three, three rings of defense, two anti-tank rings and big holes in the Russian lines. My God, mines, eight months they had to do that. And so it's really a formal one saying, well, did somebody tell the Ukrainian army that this was what they would have to do? It's just really great to watch to watch the U.S. urging the Ukrainians to spend their last Ukrainian on this completely unacceptable carnage and just die, die, die. It's just really a very disappointing....

Scheer I tried it before, but I do want to do it now because, yes, you explain this, that these

are careerists and they go to Ivy League schools and so forth. And I'm not going to disagree with some of that. However, a former General Eisenhower, President Eisenhower, maybe with the urging of his was he the head of the University of Pennsylvania, his brother... Huh?

McGovern Johns Hopkins, I think.

Scheer Anyway, he gave that incredible speech very similar to the farewell address of another general term, President George Washington. And no one ever refers to his farewell speech, but warned us about the pretense the imposters of pretended patriotism. It actually was George Washington who warned us about that emerging military industrial complex. But Eisenhower was really clear. And I wonder whether that's not more responsible than the careerism of Ivy League successful people, that a lot of money is being made for this. And this is NATO expansion. Also, all of these narrow governments now buy stuff from the Pentagon. You know, India was getting military stuff from Russia that's going to go even if they're not in Natal or don't ever be brought in. But NATO is now replace the U.N. as the major thing. And it's a military alliance and it's aimed at now China and Russia and this military industrial complex that you work for. Maybe that's a good way to wrap this all up, because the more things change, the more they're the same, it seems to me. And the real winners of this whole thing are the people who benefit from an incredible increase in the military budget at a time when we thought, we're going to have an earpiece. You work for president. The first President Bush, somebody I interviewed before he was president, he had been head of the CIA, but our ambassador to China. And he thought you could cut the military by 30, 40% right away. Donald Rumsfeld believed that when he went in to be editor of the Defense Department under the second Bush. Now, there's no such talk, this talk. And here is a time when we're seeing the effect of global warming, climate change. Instead of talking about cutting back on wasteful destruction and building a military, we are demanding that once, you know, neutral countries, Scandinavian or even Germany that said they wouldn't go down the road, we're demanding that they rearm and they rearm with ordnance that is consistent with the US Defense Department. Right. And this is Eisenhower's nightmare become reality and no one seems to even talk about it. This is the real winner here, is the military industrial complex.

McGovern Well, we need to talk about it, Robert. And we do. When Eisenhower warned about the accretion of power of the what he called the military industrial complex. He said there was only one antidote for that, and that was a well-informed citizenry. We ain't got that, okay? We don't have a well-informed citizenry. If we did, our well-informed citizenry would be talking about opportunity costs. You know, what does one F-35? That doesn't really fly real well in the dark or in bad weather. What does it cost? \$200 million? What can we do with that \$200 million in our school district in our reaching out to people who are poor in one of those states? Okay. What can we do? That's a that's a that's an opportunity cost now. The mother of all opportunity costs is Ukraine. Ukraine has diverted all attention from. Global warming. It's actually stoked global warming. The US military is the biggest offender in some respects. And, you know, it's deprived any any real chance, deprived all of us from doing what is absolutely essential, absolutely necessary that is working together. U.S., China, Russia to combat this long term problem. Now, you and I probably don't have to worry about something like, you know, we all have children, we have grandchildren, for God's sake, don't these well-heeled people have grandchildren? Maybe they think they can stay inside their well gated communities. They can't. Okay, so there's lots to this. What's going to happen now is that the military industrial complex, which I call the MICIMATT, let me spell that out for you. All right. Military, industrial, congressional, intelligence, media,

academia, think tank complex. They all play an essential role. But the reason I say media, as if in all caps is because media is the linchpin. If you can't have the media cooperating on this, you're not able to do it. And who does? The media? Who is it owned by? The rest of the MICIMATT. Okay. So that's one thing now. What's going to happen when Ukraine loses? Okay. What's going to happen? Let's say we avoid nuclear war. Let's pray for that. Okay. The previous president of Russia said, you guys in the West, you ought to pray that it doesn't come to a nuclear war, because if you steal parts of Russian territory, it's inevitable. That's going to happen. He said that. Did Putin say it. No, Medvedev is the bad cop. Putin is the more reserved cop. Okay. What would they do it? Yes, they would do it for God's sake. Do the people advising Biden know this? I don't know. That's what makes it so volatile. Last thing on this. How does Putin look at the people running on foreign policy and our military? He has said so. He was asked in October at this discussion club, Mr. President, the United States is taking on China now as well as taking on Russia and Ukraine. What do you make of that? And Putin said, well, you know, initially I thought there was some subtle plan or subtle logic to this, but I no longer think so. I think that crazy, crazy was the word he used. It can only be explained, said Putin, by arrogance and a feeling of impunity. Period. End quote. Now, I happen to agree with that. But it doesn't matter what I think. It does matter what Putin thinks.

Scheer What is the Russian word for crazy?

McGovern Crazy, sumasshedshiy. Sum, is your mind, shed in which you're walking out. So you're walking out of your mind. Oh, no, you're walking out. You're walking out of your mind. Sumasshedshiy. Okay. And you know, they don't use those words blithely. As I say. You could agree with that as I do. But one of the implications, for God sake, and that's why after 60 decades, not 60 decades plus three, that you've been watching this situation, Robert, it's after 60 years. I'm more afraid that it will come to a nuclear exchange than ever before. And it won't be it won't be unless the Russians think they're losing. We told President Biden this on the 26th of January 2023. We said, look, Mr. Biden, you can't have it both ways. You can't avoid World War III and inflict a significant defeat on Russia. You have to have one. But if you have if you're going to have them both, if Russia loses, I don't think Russia is going to lose. But even if there's only a 5% chance that their backs would be put up against the world to that degree. You know, I like to think that my grandchildren can live in a in a country that finally will address climate change and be able to survive. So this nice earth that we live on can be still livable.

Scheer But, you know, we again, I've been promising myself to try to keep this under an hour, but we're a minute, 2 seconds away from violating that. But. At this point, and I looked at the comments, when I've done things with you before and people will say so you, basically Ray McGovern just made an argument that we must always give in to the Russians because they have nuclear weapons. And yet and when we think about what kind of peace could come here, we're in an impasse because you have the U.S. and Ukrainian position not an inch, right then used to say that about NATO expansion would not expand. But now no. Now they were even saying Crimea must be returned and no part of Ukraine. And then they put that down and you have, you know, much of what used to be called the Western world supporting that. And Russia saying they would not accept that. What is the path of peace here?

McGovern Well, a good parallel, Robert, is the Cuban Missile crisis. I think I've shared with you earlier on that I was a second lieutenant Army infantry at Fort Benning in November, early November 1962, and there were no weapons in the Army Infantry Training Center at

Fort Benning in October, early October 1962. Where were they? They were at Key West. They were ready to go into Cuba. That was the Cuban Missile Crisis. Okay. It was real. Do I think that Kennedy should have said, oh, okay, okay, Nikita Khrushchev, this is pretty good gamble you made. I'm not going to disturb these medium and intermediate range ballistic missiles that could reach Washington in 7 minutes and Omaha in 10 minutes, you can keep them, just please don't use them. No, I don't think that. I think Kennedy did the right thing. Now, did Kennedy break the law? Yes. Kennedy broke the law. What was it? Well, he instituted a blockade and you prevented the greater range ballistic missiles from getting to Cuba. Now, blockade, that's illegal. He calls it a quarantine, but that doesn't make it legal. What else did he do that? He assembled that force in Key West. Now, they might have been part of that if I entered active duty a little earlier and he threatened nuclear war. Now you're not supposed to do that, U.N. Charter says you're not supposed to do that. Did he do it? Yes, was he right in doing it? I believe he was right. So what am I saying, That he violated the law and that's okay? Yeah, Because when you feel an existential threat to you, which is what I believe Kennedy felt with these missiles within, you know, seven, 10 minutes of key points in the United States, then if you can, you act forcefully. Now, what's the parallel? We have missile sites in Romania and Poland that Russia cannot be sure what's in those missile capsules. Okay. They could be cruise missiles. That means 10 minutes to Moscow. They could be eventually hypersonic missiles. And that means five minutes to Moscow. Okay. Do Americans know that? They don't know it, but it's it's the truth. Okay. So here's Putin looking at these things and well, we don't know how to find out what's in those things. We can't we can't find out what's in those things. But we know they come in capsules that accommodate cruise missiles and other kinds of missiles. So it's a danger, a danger to Moscow, a danger to our ICBM fleet in the western part of Russia. So what what does Putin do? Now, this is almost certainly something your audience doesn't know. He calls up that is the Kremlin calls up the White House on the 30th of December 2021. Mr. Putin would like to talk to Mr. [Biden]. Now, wait a second. Our negotiators as agree. I mean.

Scheer I missed a scene here.

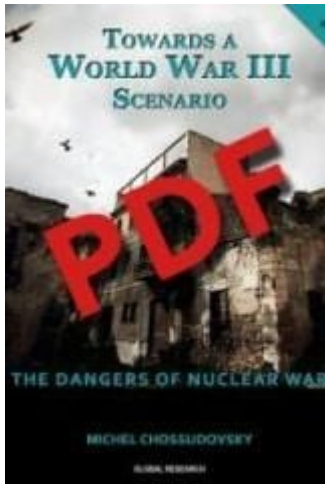
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Ray McGovern works with Tell the Word, a publishing arm of the ecumenical Church of the Saviour in inner-city Washington. During his 27-year C.I.A. career he supervised intelligence analysis as Chief of Soviet Foreign Policy Branch, as editor/briefer of the President's Daily Brief, as a member of the Production Review Staff, and as chair of National Intelligence Estimates. In retirement he co-founded Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS).

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