



C-SPAN

Attn: Mr. Brian Lamb

O-WJ

Dear Mr. Lamb:

I have followed, as closely as I could, the discussions of the McNamara book. And I have heard much of concepts of apology and remorse, etc. but there are at best a secondary aspect as to what I see involved. In context I see Mr. McNamara behaving in a "rationalists" mode as is essentially his normal practice. Your comment re his saying "I have never watched C-SPAN" & tho doesn't watch T.V. are quite characteristic.

To get to my own perspective, I wish to focus on the most intensive comment I heard in your 2 hour Booknotes. Specifically his reference to the "Appendix: The Nuclear Risks of the 1960s and Their Lessons for the Twenty-First Century". This Chapter - focusing on the relationships of future Policy decisions and the risk of the use of nuclear weapons is his major focus and virtual obsession. This has been true for the last several years since he left Govt.

If I haven't over-reacted to what I heard, he was stressing this to you at one point in your program. Yet, based in part on standard TV interviews, he had admitted and expected, to

be forced to expound on-part history or an apologia. If you don't know McNamara, you might gather from Mr. ~~McNamara~~^{Pressman}'s observation re: interaction at the World Bank, that McNamara doesn't suffer fools lightly. He expressed his gratitude to you for allowing him to make his "Appendix thoughts" a part of the discussion.

The real intended audience for this book is found in current and future policymakers. This principal was used by R. Nixon in his own publications usually sent to the top 100 policy types prior to public availability.

There is a futile (?) hope that comments from the prior administrations may help keep similar mistakes occurring later. This focus is possibly more dear to me because I have been actively associated with some control efforts for nearly 3 decades and fully appreciate that this may well have been the first part of the book written.

In that Chapter (P338) he makes 3 points quite clear. Also see the footnote pag. 341 re the Wilson Center, dated April 5, 1994 and the sentence (and paragraph same page) that caused it.

For most of the 3 decade period I stressed the absurdity of Deterrence, calling MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) really MAS (Mutually Assured Suicide) - To make an obvious point. No missiles were ever aimed at "Missile Silos" since they would be empty long before any warheads would arrive. This has been and still is, true i.e. missiles are aimed at cities and no one (regardless of what is said currently) has any inspection of target coordinates on either side. The current Admin. (Sec. Perry's assertions notwithstanding) is preaching a hopeful prospect not a measurable fact in saying "aiming has been altered".

McNamara, P345, asserts a recommendation of "No First Use" with Kennedy + Johnson. And finally the 3 options on P346 are crucial to the future. I expect, from my own studies of policy makers, that option 1 (of the 3) is most likely to be maintained. McNamara, or anyone including myself, hope for option 3. But option 1 exists and as time passes will grow again as history as is normal, repeats itself. Furthermore, the last sentence in the book, a Sakharov quote, followed by "He was right" (over)

is the true threat of this book.

To conclude, it is the nature of most people to think int of themselves, and of a limited "nearby". In this case the result is your caller / receiver response to the publication.

But McNamara's hope is to provoke the few, who can get past their own self importance (e.g. "my opinion", "my reaction", etc) to consider the reality that policy makers of the 21st Cent. must learn not to rely on personal presumption. This book does illustrate that the War in Viet Nam was constrained by fear of Nuclear Response. That dominated everything.

Re - the money - it will go to the P. S. Halliwell Foundation, which is focused, appropriately, on National Policy objectives mainly prevention of Nuclear War.

Appreciate your Reading this
if you do.

