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Interview with Daryl Kimball

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Summary:

In this interview, Daryl Kimball reflects on his career in nuclear disarmament advocacy and the evolving challenges of arms control. He emphasizes the importance of persistence and adaptability in the face of setbacks, while also acknowledging successes like the reduction in nuclear weapons testing and arms control treaties. Kimball discusses the role of the Arms Control Association (ACA) in shaping nuclear policy through both analysis and advocacy. He also highlights the impact of civil society on nuclear disarmament and the complex relationship between government policies and the goals of nuclear abolition.This document summary was generated by an artificial intelligence language model and was reviewed by a Wilson Center staff member.

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Michal Onderco: Thank you very much for being part of this project. My first question to respondents is always: how did you become interested in nuclear weapons?

Daryl Kimball: Well, my political coming of age period was in the early 1980s. And I was growing up in Oxford, Ohio. A college town, where Miami University is. And I had two very politically engaged parents. My father is a retired peace and military historian at Miami University, focused on American history and foreign policy, and taught courses on the Cold War and nuclear weapons. My mother has been a longtime community and political activist. And she was by the late 70s, early 80s, involved in grassroots organizing for the Nuclear Freeze campaign. She went county to county with another organizer in 1980-81. So our dinner table conversations were about this, I was very aware of the dangers of nuclear weapons, concerned as millions of other Americans were about the nuclear arms race, the Reagan administration's unhelpful anti-arms control disarmament policies. And so that's how I got involved. But I did not pursue that through my studies in college. I was more generally interested in comparative politics, concerned about Latin American democratization developments, another key issue of the time. And so I went off immediately from college, or I graduated from Miami University, where I was a student activist working on anti-apartheid divestment campaigns. I organized the United Campuses To Prevent Nuclear War chapter. But I went off to graduate school to study comparative politics, and I became a little disillusioned with this. For various reasons, decided to leave the Ph. D. program, I learned about the Herbert Scoville Peace Fellowship Program in the spring of 89. Applied, was a finalist, got chosen, and then I decided to take the leap away from graduate school at Tulane University and came here to Washington. And I had an opportunity to work at Physicians for Social Responsibility, which was one of the key nuclear disarmament organizations through the 80s, on a project relating to the health and environmental impacts of nuclear weapons production and testing. And so that led to the Washington phase of my career.

Michal Onderco: Have you ever left Washington?

Daryl Kimball: I've been living in Washington since August 1989.

Michal Onderco: And many people in this field find the progress or the impact that is possible to be done in this field somewhat disillusioning. And there are a few people who sort of switch careers and go to different fields. What made you not switch careers?

Daryl Kimball: Well, I would put it this way. I think, if we look at.... and I'm a historian by training, if we look at the arc of the nuclear disarmament movement through time, there are periods of trial and tribulation, setbacks, and then there are times of progress. And a lot of this depends on global developments and events beyond the control of individuals and movements. But at times citizen movements, scientists, professionals, politicians, can make a difference and shift direction. So, I've been involved in this field long enough, going back to my days as a concerned high school student, high school graduate, to see that progress does not occur on a straight line. And that it's an enormous challenge that requires persistence, and adapting strategies, and tactics for the particular objective you're trying to achieve, and the times that you're living in. So, I mean, it's that awareness. And also, I would say my deep commitment to the subject that has kept me in working in this field. I think I also have been quite fortunate in that I have been in three major positions since 1990, where I've been able

to succeed. Part of this is because of the fact that I do come from a privileged, middle class, background, being male, I think that helped earlier in my career. But yes, I can see how a lot of people become discouraged. But progress is not achieved on a Twitter like timeline. I mean, these things take time. And so, one needs to be able to stick with it, and recognize that some victories are years, if not decades, long in the making. And one of the things I would just say is that one other reason why I think I've stuck around in the field for all this time is that in my early professional days, arrived here in Washington, as the Cold War was ending. It wasn't quite over when I started. And I was here in my first 5, 10 years to see a number of just dramatic changes taking place, some of which were due to civil society efforts, which I was a part of. And so that was incredibly inspiring, and energizing. And I now know that progress does not always occur in a straight line going forward. But that, I think, has given me a sense of what is possible.

Michal Onderco: If you look at the world from the vantage point of today, what the role do you think, in your view, do nuclear weapons have in the world today?

Daryl Kimball: Well, I mean, from the perspective of the governments that have nuclear weapons, they are a source of prestige. I mean, each country views nuclear weapons differently, but in general prestige. The five original nuclear weapon states, I think, see nuclear weapons as essentially defensive weapons of last resort. Primarily to deter the use of nuclear weapons against themselves, their allies, etc. But, as we know, some of them also reserve the right to use nuclear weapons to respond to non-nuclear threats and to use nuclear weapons first. And I think that those are the main purposes that those governments perceive nuclear weapons for. But we also have to recognize that nuclear weapons are perceived by non-nuclear weapon states and people within the nuclear armed countries, that don't share the establishment vision of nuclear weapons. And I would count myself as one of those people, and I think they see nuclear weapons as a much greater liability than an asset. Non-nuclear weapon states, generally speaking, do not see nuclear weapons as defending their national interests or national interest, but see them as a, a potentially grave threat to their very existence, their health, their livelihood, etc. And so ,my own view is that, yes, nuclear weapons exist, they're being used by the nuclear armed states through strategies of deterrence of various forms. But those strategies are inherently risky and they're not sustainable . We need to move away from nuclear deterrence strategies, and we need to, in the meantime, reduce the role of the number of nuclear weapons that exist. And make sure that there is not uncontrolled nuclear competition that increases the risk of nuclear war. And so that is what arms control and disarmament is designed to do as we move towards the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.

Michal Onderco: I'll get to that towards the end. So ,some people say that the nuclear weapons are dangerous, and that we need to work towards the abolition. But that at the end of the day, they do help to mitigate conflicts between great powers. And so that they have, at the end of the day, some sort of a stabilizing function in world politics. And just yesterday I interviewed someone who went on very long about that. And there are others who say: ‘’no, nuclear weapons are fundamentally destabilizing in world politics.’’ And I've interviewed people like that as well. Which of the camps do you fall into?

Daryl Kimball: I would say, primarily, the latter. But we can't talk about nuclear weapons and the role they play in the abstract, we do have to look at particular geographic situations, particular countries in particular historical periods of time. So, I mean, I would push back against these broad generalizations, right? I think anyone who understands anything about nuclear weapons, understands that they are inherently risky. The real question is: on balance, are the risks worth the supposed benefits? And I think that as we move further and further into the nuclear age, the supposed benefits become, I think, a little bit more illusory. I think whatever benefit they might have, with respect to deterring nuclear first use, is much more limited than many proponents of nuclear weapons might suggest. You know, deterring aggression, what kind of aggression are we talking about? And so, this has been true, and it's apparent to… people think about this deeply for decades. The only reason why nuclear weapons might need to exist is because other nuclear weapon states have nuclear weapons. So, if that's the case, as Ronald Reagan concluded in 1985, if that's what nuclear weapons are good for, why not get rid all of them? So that's where I am.

I think the other thing, and maybe this is not really part of your project, but as we look at the Russian invasion of Ukraine, this is a very interesting real-world laboratory to better understand what the role of nuclear deterrence is, what it isn't, what are the risks, what the limitations are, how the role of nuclear deterrence relates to conventional deterrence. So, I think we're all going to have to, with some hindsight, look back at this period, and try to find out a little bit more, because this is a real a test of a lot of these theories.

Michal Onderco: You've mentioned already that you sort of started working in this field in 1981. And so, you've sort of seen a lot of things happening. And many people talk about the big successes towards the end of the Cold War, the INF Treaty. If you look at the period since the end of the Cold War, what do you see as the biggest failure in the field?

Daryl Kimball: Are you going to get to the biggest success?

Michal Onderco: I'm going to get to the biggest success.

Daryl Kimball: Because you can't talk about the failure unless you also talk about the success.

Michal Onderco: So ,let's start with the biggest success. What do you think was the biggest success in the field since the end of the Cold War?

Daryl Kimball: Well, let me let's talk about it in terms of the decade after the end of the Cold War, because there are periods of relative success and failure. So, some of the most important things since 1989, 90, were the easing of East-West relations, the recognition that there's a potential relationship based upon cooperation and mutual interests rather than perpetual antagonism, which led to some crucial openings in the nuclear arms control disarmament field. You mentioned the INF Treaty, which I think helped usher in the end of the Cold War. The START I treaty, which had already been negotiated by the late 80s, came about immediately after the Soviet Union broke apart and Russia became a successor state. The other, I think, underappreciated huge success was the end of nuclear weapons testing by the five original nuclear weapon states. That story is one that I was very much a part of when

I started working here in Washington. It was a result of decades of work by activists, governments, diplomats, scientists to try to end all types of nuclear testing after the LTBT of 1963. But in particular, the independence movement in Kazakhstan and the anti-nuclear movement led to the shutdown of the Soviet test site Semipalatinsk, which forced Gorbachev to declare a temporary Soviet moratorium, which many US legislators responded to with nuclear test moratorium legislation in October of 1991. Civil society organizations like Physicians for Social Responsibility where I was, worked extremely hard through grassroots lobbying, direct lobbying, to build support for that… that legislation was passed by the Congress over the objections of President George H.W. Bush, and it became law. It led to the permanent end of US nuclear testing. President Bill Clinton had to decide in 1993 whether to extend or not, there was a campaign to get him to extend, he did, and that lead to the CTBT talks, etc, etc. So that was a huge success.

I mean, so today, we have fewer U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons as a result of these and other arms control and reduction agreements. And we have no nuclear weapons tests explosions, even by the crazy North Koreans at the moment, knock on wood. The other thing that happened, that has been underappreciated, which came out of the environmental movement in the United States was… and nuclear deterrence acolytes are going to disagree with this, was the shutdown of the US nuclear weapons production process. This came about as a result of concerns beginning after Chernobyl in the US about the environmental contamination, and occupational health and safety at the US nuclear weapons production plants. So, this led to shut down of Rocky Flats, Savannah River, Hanford, the Fernald plant near my hometown of Oxford, Ohio. This is one reason why I got involved in all this. And so, by the early 1990s, the United States was not in a position to produce more nuclear weapons. So this contributed to the end of the arms race also.

So, I would say those are some of the major developments. I mean, there's also important things like the indefinite extension of the NPT, and the agreements produced in the final conference document, which committed the nuclear armed states and others to make specific advances on the Article VI nuclear disarmament commitments. And I think after that zenith of progress by 1996-97, that's when we start seeing backsliding, and failures. Maybe it's the next question on your list.

Michal Onderco: Well, I do want to get to failures. But since we started talking about the successes, to what degree do you think that the successes can be ascribed to the pressure from civil society?

Daryl Kimball: Well, I think all of the things that I just mentioned, would not have happened, if not for smart, sustained, and very substantial citizen pressure from a lot of different quarters. And a lot of this began in the early 1980s, quite frankly, and you can't trace anything in this field unless you go back to some of the historical origins. That's not to say that these things were only the result of citizen pressure, but I think they were a huge factor. In my own organizing and advocacy work on the nuclear test ban, I can tell you that there are many things that happened… changing the course of events three to four degrees in the right direction made a 100% difference in the final outcome, because some of these issues are determined by a very specific decision and a very specific point in time. And because these decisions are highly debated, one needs to utilize all the tools, all the pressure tactics that one could possibly have. So, you have to have good leadership, you have to have the right people in office

who are who are susceptible to this pressure, you have to have the, quote-unquote, right conditions internationally to support these decisions, … but the citizen pressure was absolutely key.

Michal Onderco: So we started talking about the biggest failures. So what do you think were the main failures since the end of the Cold War?

Daryl Kimball: Well, I think one of the things that, and it's not a failure but it's a factor, is that the fact that the Cold War ended, that nuclear test explosions ended for all intents and purposes… I mean, the Indians, the Pakistanis conducted tests in '98, and the North Koreans in the 2000s, beginning in 2006. It led the public to believe that the nuclear threat had dissipated, so attention went elsewhere. So, the type of citizen pressure that we saw in the 80s and early 90s, just was no longer available. Now, is that a failure? I don't think it is a failure so much as it's a reality. And there are some people in my field who beat themselves up about the failures of the civil society, organizations, and movements to sustain this kind of energy level. Well, if you understand social movements, and what affects them, I mean, that just really wasn't even a serious possibility given global events. The other failure was that, I think, the leaders of the United States and Russia in particular, did not seize upon the gains in the mid to late 90s, to extend them even further with respect to nuclear weapons reductions, with respect to bringing other nuclear armed states into the nuclear disarmament process. Some of this, of course, was the result of, the outcome of a few hanging chads in the Florida election of 2000. And who knows how history might have been different on climate change and nuclear weapons if Al Gore had been elected. But Bush comes in, he argues that we don't need nuclear arms control. I took the reins here at ACA is the executive director in September of 2001. And I actually, at the time, had people telling me: ''you should change the name of the Arms Control Association, because the Bush administration is so…

Michal Onderco: Not interested.

Daryl Kimball: "Not interested in arms control. It could be the Non-Proliferation Association.'' I said: no, thank you. Arms control is here to stay, and non-proliferation is part of arms control, and disarmament is part of arms control.'' And so anyway, my point is that leadership matters, and the leadership did not build upon the gains of the 90s and solidify. So what happened, the Clinton administration did not follow up with Salt II agreement. Some of that was due to the fact that Republicans in Congress wanted to extract some concessions, the Russians wanted assurances about the future course of the US strategic missile defense program. The Bush administration pulled out of the ABM Treaty, which I think was a catastrophic blow, especially if we look on back on this from the perspective of 20 years. What we had done in 20 years since the ABM Treaty was blown apart. We've deployed 50 strategic interceptors, which don't work very well. And as a result, the Russians are permanently paranoid about US ballistic missile defense capabilities even though we don't really have them. We don't have a strategic ballistic missile defense against North Korean missiles either. So that was a big mistake, among others by the W. Bush. administration. I mean, the other failure, I think was not building upon and implementing the Agreed Framework with North Korea. Some people blame the North Koreans entirely for this, I think the blame goes both ways. But that was a major failure that then opened the door for the North Koreans to accelerate their program, eventually conduct a nuclear test explosion, and we've been going through fits and starts with them 20 years since then. So that was a strategic error. Another strategic error, I think that hurt the global nuclear arms control enterprise

was the invasion of Iraq, on the basis of cherry picked claims about WMD in Iraq. And what that did, I would say, it was a major distraction from the real proliferation issues of the time: North Korea, Iran's program which was beginning to get rolling, with its enrichment program by the mid-2000s. And it meant that the Bush administration was trying to set aside the need to negotiate further nuclear arms control agreements with the Russians. It was Joe Biden, ironically, who was insisting that there should be a treaty with the Russians, which led to the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty. So, during this period, attention is shifting. Leaders are not pursuing new initiatives that build upon past gains. And then there's one more thing I will mention that was a major disaster, which was the Senate defeat of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, October 13 1999. I still have PTSD scars over this thing, because I was at the time, the executive director of the Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers, , a consortium of 17 organizations, including ACA at the time. And it was my job to try to organize civil society efforts to support ratification. But what happened was, the Clinton administration was not gearing up a public education and lobbying campaign of the Senate in 98, 99. Thethen chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and maybe the Majority Leader of the Senate, Joe Biden, and…. Senator from Maine, I'm blanking on his name, agreed with Republicans to hold the limited debate hearings and a vote. At a time when the Senate was not prepared, and the votes were not there. And our coalition knew that,. We were telling the senators that, we were telling the administration. And yet somebody, and I think it was Joe Biden, agreed to do it. I think, for political purposes in the the year 2000. So the treaty was defeated, and that that has set back efforts to get the CTBT ratified by the United States and achieve its entry into force. Despite that, I mean, that treaty, I would argue, has ultimately been a major success, because it has succeeded in doing what it was designed to do, which was to end nuclear test explosions, whether it's formally entered into force or not. Anyway, so those are some of the… I mean, I just, this is all off the top of my head. Those are some of the major setbacks from that period and we're still living with some of these failures today.

Michal Onderco: If you look at the setbacks, and feel free to pick any of them, who do you think is to blame for them? Would you blame the politicians on the hill? Would you blame the civil society for not keeping the fire? Would you blame the administration for not prioritizing these things? Who would you blame for this?

Daryl Kimball: Well, my theory of change in my study of history tells me that… I mean, there are many factors that produce outcomes. I mean, causality has no one particular source. That said, if we look at each of these setbacks, there's a particular set of factors, and people, and events that lead to each one. So I mean, there's plenty of… I'm not trying to evade your question, it's just that I kind of reject the premise of the question, which is you can't just put your finger on one or another source. But I mean, sometimes what I would say is, is that the factors that shape events in the arms control and nuclear non-proliferation field, or the social justice field, or the legal field, and sometimes they hinge upon the outcome of an election that has nothing to do with that issue. So sometimes there factors are outside the control of civil society or one particular leader. But I think where I would put most blamewhen it comes to the nuclear weapons issue, which is an issue that is of national-international importance, is primarily, it's with national leaders who are responsible for what does or does not happen, and the people who work for them. So if we're going to put primary responsibility on somebody, it would be on those individuals.

Michal Onderco: Is there something that the civil society could have done differently? So you mentioned that you were being involved in successful efforts leading towards the INF Treaty. Is there something that could have been done to, for example, push the CTBT through? Or to avoid any of the of the setbacks that you mentioned?

Daryl Kimball: Yeah, I think there are. I mean, looking back with 20/20, hindsight, even less than 20/20 hindsight, there a lot of things that civil society as a whole could have, should have been doing in the late 90s, 2000s, and the 2010s. I think, one of the most important lessons of the 80s and 90s to me, was that civil society was most successful when the collection of organizations that make up civil society, working as much as possible in collaboration on a core set of objectives. Rather than pursuing 12 individual campaigns, not communicating with one another. Because there's no one organization in this field, or in the movement that has the capacity to move the numbers of people, or the numbers of politicians, that one needs to get something over the finish line.

It requires a degree of alignment that is hard to achieve. And that depends largely on the leaders of the organizations, putting aside as much as possible: ego, institutional prerogatives and needs to try to find ways to work together. We saw this for brief but important moments with the June 12, 1982 rally for jobs, peace and justice and a nuclear weapons freeze. We saw this at later points in support of an anti-nuclear weapons testing. Efforts to push the Chemical Weapons Convention over the finish line in 1997. But I think what happened after 1999 were the organizations that still existed at that time that worked on nuclear weapons issues became gradually more their interest became more diffuse: issues related to preventing nuclear terrorism, issues related to nuclear material security, issues related to war and peace became of greater interest than the nuclear arms race. And this, of course, parallels what's happening with the public. I mean, 9/11 happens, there's a war in Iraq. So this means that the nuclear disarmament movement is becoming more diffuse. So it just meant that it was harder to pull people together around specific objectives. And then you also had additional nuclear challenges erupting that were not US-Russian nuclear disarmament related things. The Iraq war, North Korea, Iran. So could we have overcome that? I'm not sure. The other thing that happened was, I think as time went on, as the membership roles of some of the major membership organizations in the movement began to shrink, such as UCS, PSR, Women's Actions for New Directions, their budgets, their staff began to shrink. And they also were searching for support based upon their advocacy on other issues. So they have the staff that becomes more interested in these non-nuclear issues. Nothing wrong with that, because there are lots of good causes. But this this phenomenon made individual private philanthropic institutions more important for sustaining the work in this field. The MacArthur Foundation's, the W. Alton Jones's, the Ploughshares Fund, which is a relatively small organization, the Ford Foundation. And those institutions by 2005, many of them had begun to shift their interest elsewhere. So, for instance, in the month after I arrived with executive director at ACA, which was at the end of August 2001, a couple things happen that were really tough. 9/11 happened, which is horrible all by itself, but also meant that the entire international security debate shifted away from nuclear weapons issues, among other things, to preventing terrorism. And the W. Alton Jones Foundation, which was at the time the biggest funder for nuclear arms control disarmament, non-proliferation organizations, decided to dissolve. So, 1/3 of the Arms Control Association's budget was going to be gone within a year. So that was a factor… the Ford Foundation by 2005 pulled out of the field. So, this this meant that there were fewer people available, there's less capacity to move things

forward. And that has an effect to this day with the MacArthur Foundation suddenly deciding to pull out of the field last year.

Michal Onderco: I have recently spoken with someone who said that if they had a billion dollars lying around, they wouldn't invest it in nuclear arms control.

Daryl Kimball: Because…?

Michal Onderco: Because the field has been so ineffectual in delivering change. Well…

Daryl Kimball: I would tell that person: you don't understand what it takes to affect change. You can't create a startup company without an investment. You can't sustain a movement without an investment of people, intellectual investment, financial investment, etc. And if we look at the long arc of the nuclear disarmament movement, I mean, what I think is clear is that it has been a remarkable success in that we have far fewer nuclear weapons, we have fewer nuclear weapon states, we have a keen awareness in the public policymakers that nuclear weapons must not, cannot be used, nuclear testing has ended, etc. These are all incredible successes that are, in part, if not large part, due to civil society engagement. And as I'm trying to explain, I mean, many of the failures or the inability to build on that success in the last 20 years is not due to civil society alone. And the failure to invest in civil society is in part one of the reasons why it's been less effective. But even so, I would say that, dollar for dollar, to borrow an Eisenhower phrase, the organizations that are working in the field today, provide a bigger bang for the buck than organizations... I'm just generalizing here, that might work in the climate change field or in some other kinds of fields. I mean, one of the things we haven't talked about, because it's very recent, is the role of ICAN and associated organizations.

Michal Onderco: I will come to that a little later.

Daryl Kimball: It's more than just one organization and pushing forwards…they weren't alone, [it] took governments, the TPNW. Now one can debate whether how useful that is. But, so anyway, I would disagree with your very wealthy individual and would appreciate 10 minutes with this person to convince them otherwise.

Michal Onderco: When we're off the record, I'll tell you who that person was, the person doesn't have a billion dollars. I want to move on to a different question. Imagine this interview is read in 10 to 15 years by a graduate students or an undergraduate student, what do they need to know about how the ACA as an organization? And what makes it different from the institutions on Massachusetts Avenue like the Carnegies, Brookings?

Daryl Kimball: Well, what's always been unique about the Arms Control Association, I think, even more so since I came here 21 years ago, is that we are we're a medium size think tank that combines several things that you don't see in other institutions in the field. We're not just a research organization, we're also a policy advocacy organization, we take positions. And we, unlike some other institutions, we actively seek out engagement and collaboration with other organizations that are like-minded, that have assets that we don't, and we work together with them. We also publish a magazine, 25 issues of

which are behind [my back] going back to 1970s are on the wall here. This, I think it gives us a knowledge base and expertise on our staff, because the staff is writing news reports every month. And because we're soliciting and reviewing articles that come in, the magazine provides a platform for us and the field for addressing these issues, providing information about these issues. It is also a platform for ideas for other people outside ACA. And we basically have, I mean, we refer to it loosely as, you know, we've an adjunct faculty of the people who are writing for Arms Control Today, people in the field. So this gives us the capacity to do far more than the… and with the 15 people that we have. That distinguishes us from these other institutions they're an individual or a few individual scholars embedded in a much larger institution. And so even Carnegie and we work closely with the Carnegie Endowment, and we began as a project of the Carnegie Endowment in 1971. It's four or five individuals in a much more larger organization. We are… right now we're 13, but we've been 12 to 15 people, and we are solely focused on these issues. So it makes us different in that sense, and we can move between the think tank world in the Washington D.C. world on Capitol Hill, the executive branch, the multilateral fora at the UN, and Geneva, Vienna elsewhere, and also with the grassroots organizations. And then we have the media calling us very frequently, because they're looking for analysis and information on a range of things which we can provide.

Michal Onderco: In your day-to-day work, how do you separate this policy activist job and the policy analyst job?

Daryl Kimball: That's a good question. I mean, you're talking to the person who has the hardest job doing that, because I've got lots of different hats I have to wear. I think first of all, we write and produce different products that have different purposes. And so we are very intentional and very disciplined about each one of these forms of communication, right? So, Arms Control Today is… yes, it is a house journal, but it is not just a vehicle for our own views. The reporting that we do in the news section is straightforward. It's supervised by an editor who is a New York Times veteran, Reuters veteran journalist. The feature articles are from outside authors, we have a high standard for what goes in there. But we include a range of views there. So that's the magazine, that's reporting and analysis. And then we have reports, issue briefs, op-eds, speeches, comments for the press, where we're doing combination of analysis. And no good analyst isn't also… even if they don't acknowledge it, doing a little bit of advocacy, because a good analyst comes to some conclusions about policy. But we're trying to do all this on the basis of what… I call it fact-based analysis. So, I don't know I mean, so I could go back and forth in the course of an hour, I might be doing all these things at once.

Michal Onderco: You already mentioned that you had close cooperation with Carnegie Endowment. Some time ago, I've interviewed Susi Snyder, who mentioned your name is one of the early people that she knew in Washington at a time when she was still a community organizer in Nevada. How would you position yourself, but also this institution, in this sort of broader civil society world in the US when it comes to nuclear weapons?

Daryl Kimball: Well, I mean, I like to think of us, and I think this is true, we're a bridging organization. We have the ability, because of our style, because of our personality, because of what we can offer in terms of information, we can offer something to organizations and individuals across a huge range of sectors. I mean, from grassroots activists in Nevada, and other places, to governments in Europe and

members of Congress. Later this afternoon, I'll be having a one-on-one meeting with a member of Congress who is interested in these issues. So we can operate in all these different worlds. What limits us is the number of people, the number hours in the day, and there are limits. But a lot of this comes from the fact that I came from an activist background with academic training in history, political science, foreign affairs. And this is an institution that has, by the design that I inherited when I came here, a culture and a program that has a strong emphasis on reporting, and analysis, and research for a purpose. So this all kind of comes together to where we are today.

Michal Onderco: About three weeks ago, I interviewed Ray Acheson. And Ray told me very similar thing about Reaching Critical Will, so they do a lot of reporting for some purpose. So how would you explain to this undergraduate in 15 years, what's the main difference between ACA and Reaching Critical Will?

Daryl Kimball: Well, one thing I would say is that Ray Acheson has a very good feature article on Arms Control Today this month about feminism and nuclear disarmament issues.

Michal Onderco: Was it based on the paper that they published for Reaching Critical Will?

Daryl Kimball: It's on a lot of different things. I mean, I think it's a unique article. Well, I mean, Reaching Critical Will has, I think, a different focus. They're based in New York, they're paying attention to UN debates on these and some other issues that we don't deal with. They are an important resource for reporting on what's happening inside the hallways, in the meeting rooms at the UN. And governments, and NGOs, researchers depend on that because otherwise… does a tree fall in the forest if you don't hear it? Reaching Critical Will also has, I would say, a more radical approach to nuclear weapons and disarmament issues than we do. And that's partly because we're operating mainly in a Washington environment where we're trying to move the policies of Washington, policymakers, and policymakers of other key capitals. So a lot of it has to do with where we sit and what we're trying to pay attention to. But yeah, there are some similarities.

Michal Onderco: I wanted to ask: how do you perceive other actors in the field? And now I'm mainly thinking about the think tanks, as well as academia.

Daryl Kimball: So the question is: how do we relate?

Michal Onderco: How do you relate them? And how do you perceive their role in the field? Do you find, for example, the academic work that is done on nuclear weapons useful?

Daryl Kimball: Well, incredibly useful. I mean, there are dozens of academic research centers, some of these are multidisciplinary centers, somewhere… there might be a history department, it might be a political science department, where there are researchers who are focusing on nuclear weapons as part of whatever that field is. I mean, they're making important contributions. I would say that most of the academic researchers tend to be less engaged in contemporary policy debates, most of them tend to be less familiar with and less interested in advocating for specific policy change. They're producing trained students, graduate students, which is incredibly important, because they are a key training

ground for many people who come into the field. But they're not necessarily a part of an organized effort to advance policy change on issue X, Y, or Z. Some of them do weigh in and they can be important from time to time. And there are some exceptions to those generalities. I mean people like Frank von Hippel at Princeton University, who we've worked with for a long time. People like George Bunn, who was Matt Bunn's father, people like this have played a role. So, regarding the think tanks, I mean, there are different think tanks here in town, who see their role differently. I mean, there are some on the conservative side of the ledger, who institutionally and the researchers there see themselves as an appendage of Republican party operations. And I would just generalize and say that much of that their analytical output is… they decide on what the conclusion is before they do their analysis. Then you'll have some of the other more mainstream think tanks, like CSIS and Brookings, where they have three or four people at most who might be specializing these issues. They have their personal positions that are within the four corners of the institutional culture and worldview. But those are individual views. And so our work here as a staff reflects the guidance from our board, to some extent our membership. And we're operating, I think, in a much more intentional fashion, utilizing different tools, and levers, and coalition partners rather than one person writing a short paper and giving a talk at a briefing that that institution might organize. Which is not to dismiss what these think tanks do on these issues, but it's just a different contribution.

Michal Onderco: You already mentioned ICAN, and I have talked about ICAN in almost every single interview I'm doing. And when I speak to people in the US, they will often say that ICAN has been remarkably successful in Europe. And it's sort of energized a lot of people in Western Europe. And that it has been comparatively less successful in the United States, and in North America. There are some cities that have signed the City Pledge and some members of Congress signed a parliamentary appeal, but so broadly seen, it's not as successful. Why do you think that ICAN is comparatively less successful in the US?

Daryl Kimball: Well, I would agree with that general characterization. I would just want to begin by saying, ICAN is an example of what I was talking about before. When a network, and ICAN is a network, can align on a one goal or a couple of goals, it can be more successful. And so ICAN has for a decade been focusing on the TPNW, to the exclusion of a lot of other things. So that has helped its success. Why has it been less successful in the US? I mean, it really has to do with how the TPNW relates to the nuclear weapons debate here in the United States. In the United States many people, particularly politicians, and people in the executive branch see nuclear weapons as having an important role in US national security. And so what does the TPNW say about this? It says that nuclear weapons are possession, development, use, threat of use, testing illegal.

Michal Onderco: And immoral.

Daryl Kimball: And immoral. Well, that too. And so where does that leave you with respect to the United States where a 70 year long policy of seeing nuclear weapons as having some role, as being moral if used in certain ways? It doesn't lead to changing minds on Capitol Hill. It may excite many people who look at nuclear weapons and agree that nuclear weapons are immoral and should be illegal, but it may just not resonate with people who are ambivalent about nuclear weapons, right? So I think it has…

Michal Onderco: But it hasn't reignited…. I mean, if you go, for example, to ICAN events in European universities, you're going to see lecture halls full of young people. And every single person that I speak to in Western Europe, they tell me, we have now massive interest from young people in nuclear disarmament. People say: well, if I speak to researchers, they will say ‘’a bunch of young people apply for internships in our organization because they have been energized by ICAN.’’ Is that a thing in the US?

Daryl Kimball: It's some quarters there is more enthusiasm, but not necessarily because of ICAN or the TPNW. I mean, what we also recognize about ICAN and the TPNW is it is based upon education and awareness about the catastrophic risks of nuclear weapons. That is what energized people United States in 1979 1980, 81, 82, when I got involved in the issue. So part of what has been successful about ICAN’s effort has been, it's focused on the, it's now called the humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons, it’s the health environmental effects of nuclear weapons. So in some ways, just to go back to one of your earlier questions, one of the things that I think the organizations working in this field, to some extent including ACA, have not done well is to emphasize in all of our work the catastrophic risks of nuclear weapons. So that's something that I mean, we, from time to time tried to do that in our work, I mentioned it in paragraph eight in almost every one of my op-eds, or essays, or speeches. But I think the other thing, the other reason why ICAN is not successful here, and ultimately it may not be successful in Europe and elsewhere, is the TPNW does not itself address some of the current problems that we're facing in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation fields. What does it do? If Indonesia next month ratifies the TPNW. It's not going to change Russia's behavior with respect to nuclear weapons threats, necessarily. It's not going to change Russia's behavior or the United States ‘behavior with respect to negotiating a new agreement to succeed New START or get China engaged in the nuclear disarmament process. So I think if you're an American and you're looking for a nuclear weapon problem from the prism of these issues, the TPNW does not offer a compelling solution, right? Now, there are some aspects of the TPNW, I would argue, because I think ultimately, it's a very important development that further strengthens the taboos against nuclear weapons. There are some things that the TPNW has helped to do in the last year, like, reinforce the taboo against nuclear threats, which has made it harder for Putin to continue threatening to use nuclear weapons in the context of Ukraine. So, I mean, ultimately, and I've had this discussion with Beatrice and her other colleagues, ICAN is going to have to not focus exclusively on the TPNW. And I understand why they focus on the TPNW now, it’s a young treaty you got to get countries to sign and ratify. But what can ICAN do to mobilize the young people and the other activists that are not part of this network to put pressure on the US and Russia to actually engage in nuclear disarmament? it's the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons, not to just prohibit nuclear weapons, right? So ultimately, the move to sustain the ICAN effort, there's going to have to be a strategic adjustment. Not abandonthe TPNW of course, but an adjustment.

Michal Onderco: I mean, we're talking now in 2023, would you consider the TPNW to be a success?

Daryl Kimball: To date? Yes, in the sense that… it does depend on what you consider to be a success.

Michal Onderco: That will be my second question. So how would you measure success?

Daryl Kimball: Well, by the measure of negotiating a treaty, bringing it into force, holding a first meeting with states parties. Yes, it has been successful. The future challenges for this treaty, like any treaty, will be: to what extent can it be universalized? That is yet to be seen. To what extent can some of the states that see nuclear weapons as useful for their security become engaged in the TPNW? Or at least stopped being opponents of the TPNW? And to what extent can the TPNW, as its designers had hoped, spur progress by nuclear-armed states on nuclear disarmament? Because after all, the TPNW is, the way that I see it, I think many objective analysts look at it, it is an additional piece in the framework for nuclear weapons abolition, It does not solve every issue but it is a piece, and it's a tool. And what it also does, which I think is the most valuable thing to date, but this is debatable, is it has reinforced the taboo against nuclear weapons use amongst non-nuclear weapon states. And non-nuclear weapon states, at the moment, have a greater influence over what Putin may or may not do than they did before. Because Putin needs states outside of the Western coalition thatare supporting Ukraine.

Michal Onderco: Would you say that the TPNW, and the fact that it has been signed ratified by 68 countries to date, is part of the reason why Russia has not used nuclear weapons?

Daryl Kimball: It is one of many reasons and I did an essay that's in Arms Control Today last month, and I just gave two speeches about this. The Vienna document that came out on June 23, 2022 from TPNW states parties, condemned unequivocally all nuclear weapons threats, that included states like South Africa on the statement. Following that statement, you had the NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg, using similar language when he wasn't using it before. You have the Chinese coming out using similar language. You had Indonesia, which is a TPNW state, chairing the Bali G20 Summit, they came out with a statement that said nuclear weapons use or threats are, quote, ''inadmissible.'' So it contributed to this more unequivocal condemnation from all these different countries. So in that sense, it played a role, it wasn't decisive. But it played a role. Why? Because the first meeting of state parties happened to be four months out after the Russian invasion, right? So that's an accident of history. But like any treaty, I mean it, success is has to be judged as time goes on. And with the CTBT, we are talking about the CTBT, we've got over 180 states that have signed the treaty. It still isn't entered before us because of its unique entry into force provision. But no country today is conducting nuclear test explosions. I think that's an incredible success. And yet the focus on the CTBT is the fact that it has not entered before. The TPNW has entered into force, but you have under 100 countries that have ratified. You don't have any of the nuclear weapon states or the so-called nuclear umbrella states. So has it reduced any or eliminated any nuclear weapons? No. So I know, by that standard, it's not as much of a success, right? So it depends on what we're judging.

Michal Onderco: So on Friday, I spoke to Ira Helfand. And he mentioned that PSR and IPPNW are currently starting a new campaign in the US that would call on the US to embrace the TPNW. Not necessarily ratify it, but sort of be more TPNW positive and use it as a momentum. do you think that these efforts to sort of use the TPNW as a moral force to advance nuclear disarmament, even if it happens outside of the strict legal framework of the treaty, are helpful? Or has the TPNW become so much of a sort of third rail, that it's more counterproductive than helpful?

Daryl Kimball: I think, on balance, it is very helpful. One thing I would say that… I'm not going to comment specifically on what Ira was telling you, because I'm sure it's more sophisticated than what

you just summarized. But it is not in the interest of the United States or the nuclear armed states to be actively antagonistic towards the TPNW. Why? Because the TPNW is fundamentally trying to achieve what the nuclear weapons states are already obligated to do. So by rejecting the TPNW you are implying that well, nuclear weapons use or a threat of use nuclear weapons are somehow okay. Its implies: ''We don't agree with you on the end goal of global zero.'' All that is negative. so, the United States should… we as ACA behind the scenes, but very aggressively, since the Obama administration, we kind of gave up during the Trump years ago, we're doing this again with the Biden people saying to the executive branch: ''look, the TPNW exists. There's no point in being nasty about it. It is consistent with the NPT, from a legal standpoint. If you disagree, show us your work,'' but they can't do that.

That doesn't mean you need to say ''we love it.'' But say that we respect and appreciate what the non-nuclear weapon states are doing to try to advance their NPT Article VI disarmament obligations. We're going to work with you to advance our common goals. And we will observe what happens in the TPNW, and may even send an observer. I think that would be appropriate. And in fact, the US NPT Ambassador Adam Scheinman said something to that effect at the end of the NPT Review Conference. Does that mean that the United States is going to embrace the TPNW, if that's what Ira's thinking? No, not likely. Is that what the nuclear disarmament movement should be doing right now? I would respectfully disagree with Ira that is some sort of successful approach right now, because that doesn't prevent the potential erosion of the US-Russia arms control architecture. It doesn't bring the US, and China, and Russia, and the other nuclear armed states to negotiations. It doesn't stop the United States and Russia from building new types of nuclear weapons. I mean, those are things that the nuclear disarmament movement, whether it likes to or not, it needs to be engaged on those issues, which are at the core of what we have been, and need to be about, in addition to advancing the TPNW.

Michal Onderco: There is sometimes a debate both among the experts, as well as among the academics, and I sometimes hear that debate also among the activists. Which is that you have basically options of focusing on the smaller goals, like advancing practical steps, and building cooperation, building understanding, and so on, so forth. And focusing on the big goal being: abolition and disarmament. And very often people frame it as either or so you can do one or the other. Do you agree with that framing? And if you agree, which of them would you say is more fruitful to focus on?

Daryl Kimball: I think that framing, that either or framing is extremely unhelpful, and naive, and in some ways immature. And I'm using strong words, because I've been doing this for almost 40 years. And I would take an "Both and" approach and that is what the ACA work over the last 20 years or so reflects that attitude. That's why we're working with Ira Helfand and ICAN. And it's why we're working with pro nuclear deterrence people who recognize the value of arms control. And, yes, there are differences in their tensions between these things, but progress towards nuclear disarmament does not happen with lightning speed. Institutions, like the Pentagon, the US and the Russian security establishments are not going to turn on a dime. So whether we like it or not, progress towards global zero is going to be a gradual process. My goal is to speed it up. And I think all of our goal should be to speed it up. And I mean, this tension has existed in the nuclear disarmament movement since the beginning of time, of nuclear time. There's nothing new about this. And sometimes this is just a very personal reaction to what is going on, frustrations about past experiences, etc. But I would say that to be more successful, it's pretty clear to me that organizations when trying to reach the public to

mobilize people and politicians, we can't be focusing on a single weapon system without putting it in a larger context. So one example, right now we and many others are trying to block the potential development of a new nuclear armed sea launch cruise missile. It would, in many ways, be a new US nuclear weapons capability if we have this. It would be destabilizing, it would lead the Chinese and the Russians to pursue or accelerate similar efforts. So it's important that we stop it, but stopping that one system alone is not a ginormous success. And it is part of a larger continuum of efforts to stop the development of new and destabilizing nuclear weapons, which is a part of a larger effort of halting the arms race, reversing it, and moving closer towards zero. But if organizations try to build a movement around a single weapon system debate, you're going to lose a lot of people, because you're not communicating what's the end goal. So people like Ira, and I respect him for this, want to keep the focus on the end goal. But some people are just too impatient to do the tough work of fighting the fight in Washington that's necessary to prevent the so-called bad guys from, as I call them, the Dr. Strangelove caucus, from winning the debates that are happening in real-time. And so the movement needs to engage, when necessary, on those debates as part of its larger objective.

Michal Onderco: We already talked quite a bit about how you assess success and impact. I want to ask two questions. The first one is: how do we know that certain initiatives may have impact? Because sometimes you have these things that may appear fruitless. And then 10 years down the line, you see that that actually leads to something. Can we only know the impact when we see it? And sometimes 10 years later. Or is there some better way to know whether a certain thing is impactful?

Daryl Kimball: That's a good question. I mean, it's often difficult to measure impact, because everyone's definition of what is a substantial success varies. It's also difficult because in the civil society field, you've got to be careful about taking credit for a decision or an action that a policymaker made, right? Or a reporter reported, right? So I mean, as I look at developments in the field, it's pretty obvious that with every victory, there are 1000 fathers and mothers, it's just the reality. And so a lot of people can claim a role in effecting positively some particular outcome. But I think, ultimately, we need to judge success by tangible actions and developments that advance… there are four parameters that I think about our work on nuclear weapons, one is: are we reducing the salience of nuclear weapons? Are we reducing the salience and role of nuclear weapons? Are we reducing the overall number of nuclear weapons? Are we preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons-related technology? And finally, are we preventing the potential use of nuclear weapons? What are actions that reduce the chances that nuclear weapons may be used, or threatened. So I think we measure success in terms of ‘’did this outcome contribute to one of those four things.’’ And those are, I think, so basic, that everybody no matter where they are in the movement can understand them and relate to them.

Michal Onderco: I once interviewed someone, and that someone said: one of the goals… it was very similar to your goal that you mentioned before, which is to prevent the use of nuclear weapons.

Daryl Kimball: That's the most elemental goal.

Michal Onderco: I find that me playing a little bit of a devil's advocate, I said: so if there is a soldier sitting up in the underground bunker in an ICBM silo, who would be executing the mission, that person by being involved in the deterrence…

Daryl Kimball: Can say: ''I am contributing...''

Michal Onderco: Exactly. And my question is: that is surely not your point of view that you would share the goal with that person/ So where do we draw the line?

Daryl Kimball: Well, this goes back to the conversation we're having about the role of nuclear weapons today. And whether one sees there was a greater liability or an asset, and whether you think nuclear deterrence as it's practiced by different countries is sustainable or do you believe it is going to fail in some point in the future. Based upon my study of historical events, and policies, and practices, I believe that someday there's going to be a failure, and so the way I think we avoid failure is to reduce all of the different factors that can lead to use and eventually advance the steps necessary to eliminate nuclear weapons. The guy who's sitting in the ICBM silo in Wyoming might be thinking ''all right, I'm going to be here for two-month rotation. I'm doing my part.'' And the general who's overseeing the missile range is saying: ''I'm going to be here for two years, and I'm doing my part, and in this particular historical circumstance, I am helping to deter the Russians from launching an out of the blue attack.'' You could argue that but ultimately, we need to be looking at 20- and 50-year timelines.

Michal Onderco: I have two more questions that I want to ask as we wrap up. The first one is: where do you see the field to go in the next 15 to 50 years? And some people find this question you easier to answer when I ask: do you think there will be nuclear weapons around in 50 years?

Daryl Kimball: So let me start by saying, I don't know if there will or there won't be nuclear weapons in 50 years. I hope there will not be, but hope is not a strategy. And I believe and I think we need to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. How we get there exactly, I don't know. There are multiple paths, these paths are going to be affected by unforeseen events that no one can predict, or really anticipate down years down the road. But what are some of the things that are clear over the next…You said 15 to 50?

Michal Onderco: Yes.

Daryl Kimball: Over at least the next 15 plus years they are. One: the United States and Russia, the possessors of the majority of the world's nuclear weapons, need to resume their off and on disarmed diplomacy effort in the near term, to maintain caps on their strategic arsenals,. and resume the process of reducing the number of all types of their nuclear weapons, not just strategic nuclear weapons. So that is, I think over the next five years, that is a key priority. Related to that is involving the other major… every nuclear armed state is major, but the other five original nuclear weapon states in the disarmament enterprise: China, the UK, and France. And they need to be engaged in ways that don't just relate to in numerical arms control arrangement. But they need to become engaged, because they too have Article VI responsibilities. And they are part of the problem fundamentally, especially the Chinese with their anticipated build-up.

So I see the challenges going forward relating to those issues. I see related in the next 15 [years]. The other challenges involve making sure that Iran does not acquire nuclear weapons, and we're at a critical juncture in that long running effort. And to find a way to halt North Korea's buildup. Now, North Korea if it continues to build up its arsenal, it could lead to the South Koreans building nuclear weapons, Japan becoming more militarized, it's just taking now some steps in that direction. So that has some ominous implications, if we don't find a way somehow to return to peace and denuclearization diplomacy on the Korean peninsula. Then I would say in addition, we have a range of new military technologies that are coming online that can negatively affect strategic stability and the prevention of nuclear war. And these include more sophisticated assets in space that can threaten space assets or assets on the ground, and some types of missiles on the ground that could hit space assets. And so there's a need for some form of broadly speaking, space arm control rules of the road. Hypersonic weapons, which are not in my view, technological game changers, but they're a new capability, have to be brought into the strategic or at least the intermediate range nuclear arms control process. Another thing that we need to set some parameters around is the use of AI in nuclear command and control, and the use of cyber offensive operations against nuclear command control. I mean, if these things enter into the equation, it creates even more uncertainty. It shortens the tripwire for nuclear miscalculation in a crisis. And then fundamentally, over the next 15 to 20 years, we need to find a way to bring the United States and China to a point in their overall relationship in which they recognize: yes, we're competitors, we may be opponents in the culture wars. We may be competitors with respect to technology and the economy. But like the United States and the Soviet Union recognized during the Cold War, the United States and China have a mutual interest in avoiding a direct military conflict and the use of nuclear weapons. And, therefore, we need to have a healthy adult relationship in terms of our crisis diplomacy or risk reduction efforts and our arms control disarmament dialogue. So those are some of the issues I see. Going forward, can the nuclear disarmament movement adapt to those things? We shall see. It's an increasingly complex set of challenges that are in many ways more… I wouldn't say more complicated, they're different than they were for the movement during the Cold War years. As bad as those years were.

Michal Onderco: My very last question that I always ask respondents is imagine there is a disarmed world, there is a world without nuclear weapons. How does the security in such a world look like? Some of my respondents say that the sound world would be so fundamentally different from the world that we live in today, that even the concept of deterrence would make no sense. There are others who say: people have been having deterrence since the time of sticks and stones, deterrence will be still around, it will be provided through different means. How do you view the disarmed world?

Daryl Kimball: Well, it's a difficult question, because there are so many different factors that may be in the equation 30, 50 years or more from now. But I would say that, the way that I thought about it, there will always be some form of deterrence, but it will not involve the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In other words: states, or ideally the collective of states, will deter potential aggressors, or breakers of the major rules by making sure that the costs of breaking the rules or aggression are greater than the benefits. And so that can be achieved. And you could argue that's being achieved today with Russia and Ukraine, without using or threatening to use nuclear weapons. And so that question brings me to this concept, which was quite popular in some circles in the 70s, and 80s, which is the concept of collective defense against individual states break the rules. Now, a lot of that

depends on how the world is organized politically, it depends on what the sources of conflict may be 50 years from now, we might be fighting over some new source of energy for some really new version of a vegetarian hamburger, I don't know what the hell it's going to be. But that's how I envision it. But the biggest challenge that we will have in a nuclear weapons free world to maintain a nuclear weapons free world is it's a cultural, and social, and psychological challenge, which is keeping everyone aware of the existential risks that nuclear weapons pose. And we can see that problem today, we're just describing without nuclear test explosions, people forget ''oh, yeah. These things could go off.'' Without Putin threatening to use nuclear weapons or anyone really threatening to use nuclear weapons against the United States in 30 years, people forget. People in school, many people in the street think that nuclear weapons is just a bigger kind of bomb. So that is the other kind of challenge. And that is something that I think the disarmament movement really is going to have to… we're going to have to revolutionize the way we do things and the way we communicate things going forward.

Michal Onderco: Perhaps if I can still pitch off from what you just said, do you think that the war in Ukraine makes the work on nuclear disarmament easier or more difficult in terms of communicating to the public?

Daryl Kimball: I'm going to say both because there is a renewed awareness in some cases, and also an awareness that was never there about the threat of nuclear weapons. That is valuable, as worried as I personally have been about what the war might bring about. But at the same time, the war has said severely disrupted the processes, the dialogue that's necessary to educe nuclear risks, let alone achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. So we need to seize the moment. There's no… what's the phrase? No, there's no crisis that shouldn't go un….

Michal Onderco: No good crisis should go unwasted.

Daryl Kimball: Unwasted, something like that. So let's not waste this horrible crisis.

Michal Onderco: Is there something I should have asked about? And I didn't.

Daryl Kimball: These are very good questions. I'm going to enjoy reading your write-up. Nobody's ever asked me these very broad questions before. This is more like an anthropology… I might think about something later. one question that you might have asked, I could try to answer briefly is: what is the disarmament movement? What is the field? I think that something that… I'm not saying you are, but a lot of people are kind of intellectually lazy about this. And a lot of people define the field just based upon what they see from their particular vantage point, right? And in the broadest sense, the field is everyone who is professionally or personally engaged in the debate about nuclear weapons, what should be done with them, etc. The disarmament movement, however, I think, is a specific subset of people who, through their actions, and through their philosophy are trying to move closer towards elimination nuclear weapons. And these two things are not the same. And the disarmament movement operates within the larger nuclear weapons policy field. So when we talk about successes, failures I think we need to… of which part of this continuum. And so often some of my colleagues talk about the ''nuclear disarmament community.'' Well, all right, there are a lot of people who are part of

this effort, but they're not part of a true community in the sense that we're not necessarily talking or are able to talk with one another every day so. So, I mean, that's just something to be…

Michal Onderco: So one of the things that fascinates me is that through the interviews, and through the study of archival materials… I mean, I'm looking at the period since the end of the Cold War. And since the end of the Cold War, there are people who have periodically came out, and discussed, and pushed through the idea of nuclear evolution in the United States. There was General Butler, there was Morton Halperin [who] had the project at CFR in the late 90s, there were the Four Horsemen…

Daryl Kimball: Dan Ellsberg who worked the Manhattan Project, have you seen that?

Michal Onderco: Yes.

Daryl Kimball: I was at PSR when he was pushing this in 92.

Michal Onderco: So there have been other people who have sort of toyed with the idea. The Nuclear Threat Initiative had some ideas about nuclear abolition, Global Zero was founded. And none of them worked out really successfully. Some people in some academics in Europe claim ''well, the reason why there has not been nuclear abolition is because other people have not come up with this idea. So there has not been enough intellectual thinking about this.'' But you can demonstrate that there has been some intellectual thinking.

Daryl Kimball: There's been a lot of thinking about how this could be accomplished. What has not happened, and we were talking about this and the earlier question, is that further dramatic changes in a world… in international relations, decisions by leaders were not taken. I mean, when were many of these things produced, the Ellsberg Manhattan Project II writing in 1992, General Butler 1995, 1996 as I recall. But every one of these plans is based upon certain things happening 10, 20 years down the road that move us to the next stage. What has happened over the last 20 years? We've not been moving in that direction for reasons that don't really have to do with the movement, but have to do with other of developments that just happened to…

Michal Onderco: So is it that these people have not invested in making sure that the conditions would arise that would bring us closer to abolition? Or is it because good people, good effort, but the world has just gotten in the way?

Daryl Kimball: I would say it's closer to the latter. But I mean, look, a lot of this has to do with one's theory of change and one's understanding of, of history and what creates the international security environment. So 9/11, it happened, maybe that could have been prevented, but that wasn't the work of the nuclear disarmament community. It changed the way governments acted, behaved, it changed the way academic records horses were organized, the change what people were interested in, dealing with. Bush invades Iraq. I'm now just naming some things in United States, invades Iraq, that changes the international security debate. You know, the fact that Hillary Clinton loses by a whisker, and you got a another government with a different outlook. I mean, these kinds of things can shape events, and it can mean that governments do not pursue certain policies, or they take certain approaches that are

anathema to a world without nuclear weapons. So I mean, those are factors. So, yes, the world has gotten in the way, but that always happens. And at some point, we're going to have to have leaders who recognize: ''oh my, we really do need to do something with this nuclear thing. And here's what I'm going to do about it.'' So I think the pendulum will turn, especially if there is a competent core of civil society organizations and people who are ready to seize the day.

Michal Onderco: I think this is good moment to stop our conversation. Thank you very much.