

# Video: The Threat of Nuclear Annihilation. Helen Caldicott

'We could have a nuclear war tonight!'

By [Dr. Helen Caldicott](#) and [Michael Welch](#)  
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*This exclusive interview for GRTV features one of the world's leading anti-nuclear advocates, Dr. Helen Caldicott, addressing the threat of a deliberate or accidental nuclear war 73 years after the first nuclear device was used on a human population.*

Dr. Caldicott discusses [the recent revelation](#) of personnel responsible for safe-guarding hundreds of missiles with nuclear payloads also operating an LSD ring. She also talks about the consequences of a nuclear exchange, some close calls in the past, and what Canadians can reasonably do to eliminate or at least reduce the threat.

*Dr. Helen Caldicott is an author, physician and one of the world's leading anti-nuclear campaigners. She helped re-invigorate the group Physicians for Social Responsibility, acting as President from 1978-1983. Since its founding in 2001, she has served as President of the U.S. based Nuclear Policy Research Institute, later called Beyond Nuclear, which initiates symposia and educational projects aimed at informing the public about the dangers of nuclear power, nuclear weapons, and nuclear war. She was the subject of the 1982 Academy Award-winning documentary short '[If You Love This Planet.](#)' Her latest book: '[Sleep-Walking to Armageddon: The Threat of Nuclear Annihilation](#)' featuring some of the world's leading nuclear scientists and thought leaders addressing the political and scientific dimensions of today's nuclear war threat.*

More resources on how to support the movement to abolish nuclear weapons available at the site <http://www.icanw.org>

Dr. Caldicott's site is <http://helencaldicott.com>

Videography by Paul Graham. Visit his Youtube channel : <https://www.youtube.com/user/redriver...>

Transcript - Interview with Dr. Helen Caldicott, August 15, 2018

Global Research: I wanted to start our conversation with a recent article that you wrote in relation to a rather shocking incident. They found out that a number of airmen from F.E.

Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming had been implicated in operating an LSD drug ring. One of the implicated personnel said that he had been feeling... had these feelings of paranoia and fear, and another one said he could not have responded in the wake of a nuclear security emergency.

So, I know that you've looked into the stringent protocols or the rigorous... supposedly rigorous protocols that are supposed to guard against any kind of a tragic accident resulting. I have to know, were you surprised by this incident, or is this maybe consistent with what you'd already known. Was this...something like this sooner or later going to happen?

Helen Caldicott: I was shocked, but not surprised.

There are two men in each missile silo. There are 450 missile silos, and in each missile called a Minuteman because they have minutes to decide whether to launch or not, are three hydrogen bombs. The two men are aged 17 to 26. They're like Pavlovian dogs. Yes sir, no sir, press the button sir. Each is armed with a pistol. One shoots the other if one shows signs of deviant behaviour, one of the deviant ones shoots the other one.

There are two locks 12 feet apart, so that one man can't turn both keys. But I worked out that if you tie a key to one string, one man can turn both locks. They're very — oh and they run by floppy disks, if you please, and often the telephones don't work. They get very bored down there they go to sleep down there. One of the girlfriends of the Missileers told me years ago that they take drugs before they go down there. So I was shocked at the extent at the drug-taking but not surprised. They're fallible human beings, and the job they have is one of the most boring you can imagine except that they're ready to blow up the Earth with a three-minute lead time.

GR: Yeah, I mean, even in a country that prides itself on its belief in their... the right to bear arms, I think that even they understand you don't hand over to somebody who's compromised that way a loaded gun, and these Minuteman missiles are a hell of a loaded gun. That being said, however, I feel the need to remind our viewers that these individuals were not accused of having been compromised while on duty, and there was a quote from an Air Force spokesman, Uriah L Orland, and he stated, and I quote, "There are multiple checks to ensure Airmen who report for duty are not under the influence of alcohol or drugs and are able to execute the missions safely, securely and effectively." Now, you are in a physician in addition to being a ... having studied these facilities. Should the public be reassured by these sorts of statements?

HC: Not at all. Absolutely not at all. Because drugs can hang around for many, many hours and sometimes days. So, and they're known to take cocaine and marijuana and all sorts of other things, so, no I'm not reassured in any way. Why he said to securely carry out their mission, and their mission is to destroy life on the planet. I mean the whole thing is absolutely insane and obscene, and no one really questions what it's all about. And we're closer to nuclear war now according to many people in the know than we were during the height of the Cold War, particularly with Donald Trump in charge, and he gets 3 minutes to decide whether or not to destroy the Earth. And there's always an officer walking behind him with a big suitcase called the football, and in the football are the codes to start a nuclear war.

He has three options. One is 'counterforce', and that is to point the missiles at all the missile

silos in Russia, and hence 'win' the nuclear war. That's a Pentagon term because everyone's going to die of radiation sickness, and the missiles almost certainly will be launched in Russia before they're attacked. Then there's 'countervalue' and that is to bomb all the cities in Russia, which is just obscene. And then there's 'counterforce and countervalue'. So they're the three options: cities, missiles, silos or seas plus missile silos

Because the Russians don't want to lose a nuclear war, in other words have their missiles bombed while they're still in their silos, they have to drop two hydrogen bombs on each missile silo within a very specified space of time, because you can get 'fratricide' and that is all the debris blown up by the first bomb would destroy the other incoming bomb.

The Russians don't like this idea at all, so they've dug a big cave in the Ural Mountains, and they have put in there a rocket called the 'Dead Man'. And it is to be launched, if, in fact, they see the missiles coming from America. And all this takes half an hour to go from where to go. And up goes that missile, and it sends a radio message to every single missile in Russia to launch. So nuclear war then would be in the hands of a computer only and no human.

Now, America's plan is to fight and win a nuclear war, and that's still a plan, and Canada is still part of that because you're part of NATO. And the way you 'win' the nuclear war is first you decapitate Moscow. That means you destroy Putin so he can't press his button. And then you land your two hydrogen bombs on each missile silo, and you've 'won' the nuclear war.

The fact is that they've... It only takes a thousand hydrogen bombs on a hundred cities to cause nuclear winter and the end of life on earth when a huge, huge cloud of toxic black smoke rises up to the stratosphere and circles the earth with a cloud so thick it blocks out the sun for up to 10 years and starts a new Ice Age. And everything and everyone will freeze to death in the dark. Of the 16,000 nuclear weapons in the world, Russia and America own 94 per cent. So the real terrorists in the world, the actual terrorists, are Russia and America, because only those countries can destroy life on earth.

And after all, why is America not liking Russia now? Russia is now capitalist. What's it all about? It's not communist. And so they interfered in American elections? America has interfered, I think, in 80 elections since the end of the second world war, including killing people and the like. So they're such hypocrites! But Canada goes along with it. And I was able to spend a whole lunch time with Pierre Trudeau, talking about the fact that America was testing cruise missiles in Canada. And I was able to convince him, because of his intense love for his boys, to start the five continent six-nation peace initiative. So Canada has done some good things, but by God, do you need to do some, you need to stand aside like New Zealand, and get out of NATO and not be part of the American plan to blow up the world. In other words, you're guilty.

GR: Yeah. I'd like to return to Russia just for the moment. Because, as you know, in March, Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, had announced in his State of the Federation speech a new class of weapons, a hypersonic missile, the SARMAT. They have these deep underwater drones that defy being tracked. And basically, the context of all that was saying, hey we know you've got these anti-ballistic missiles and other strategies, but we have the ability to overcome that. So it is essentially, what some analysts are saying, is that Mutual Assured Destruction, MAD is back, and that they're sending the message that you can't attack Russia. You will be obliterated. So, I wanted to get your take on that.

HC: Well, of course you're, of course you'll be obliterated. Because if America starts attacking Russia, and, as I say, the missiles take only 30 minutes to go from launch to land, and the Russians pick up the attack, although their satellites are not working because they've got a over the horizon radar which isn't as accurate and doesn't give them early warning, just the last few minutes, but they will launch their missiles anyway, and that will be the end of life on Earth. I mean all this sort of Pentagon-Russian jargon coming from the military analysts and the military scientists is absolute rubbish.

And what I really can't understand is why, why the Earth, or the humans are spending so much on killing and the military when in fact, there's no threat to anyone really at all except to be annihilated, and it's about empire isn't it? America's in many countries in Africa now with military operations... And it sees itself as a policeman of the planet, well we don't want to be policed thank you very much. But, what I don't understand this mad lunacy of killing and death, killing and death, killing and death, except it gives the corporations who make these weapons huge amounts of money. And it was Obama who agreed to spend 1.7 trillion dollars in the next 30 years replacing every single nuclear weapon, missile, ship, plane. And rebuild them all new ones, for what reason? No reason!

It's sheer nuclear madness. It's nuclear lunacy! And I don't understand why people don't talk more about it because, you know, we could have a nuclear war tonight. We really could. By accident, by design, by people hacking into the early warning system, which is - happens quite frequently, I mean, I actually do not know how it is that we're still here.

GR: Could we touch on what you just mentioned there: that the possibility of an accidental nuclear war? Because I think a lot of people have the belief that there's technology in place that... fail-safes, backup systems, so that we're not going to accidentally mistake a flock of geese for a Russian ICBM or something like that. I mean, you mentioned floppy disks earlier. What can you tell us, maybe even invoking a specific example, about that... the unreliability of this technology to prevent an accident?

HC: Well, there is no way to prevent an accident. I'll give you an example. In 19... God...I can't remember the exact date. But America was going to launch a weather satellite from Norway, and that's just near where the Trident submarines roam near Russia. And they told Russia that this was going to happen. They told the Kremlin. But the Kremlin lost the data because the Russians are a bit all over the place. I know from experience. And so, this missile went up with the weather satellite, and there was Yeltsin, a hardened alcoholic, like a bottle of vodka before breakfast. Korsakoff syndrome, whatever the case encephalopathy.

A badly damaged brain sitting there, and they opened the computer or the football for the first time in history. He had three generals standing over his shoulder, and he had three minutes to decide whether or not to press the button because they were sure they were under attack and a decapitation attack was occurring to take out Moscow. And the generals were saying, "press the button Mr. President!" "Press the button!" Three seconds before that three minutes elapsed, the missile veered off course, of course, because it was a weather satellite.

Now that's just one, one example of many, many. I got to know Robert McNamara, who was the Secretary of Defense under Jack Kennedy, and he was in the Oval Office during the Cuban Missile Crisis. And he said to me, "Helen, you don't know how close we came. To within 3 minutes. 3 minutes." Now there are numerous numerous examples like that.

And it's possible for a 16-year-old brilliant boy or girl, usually a boy because their frontal lobes aren't as developed as girls at that age, to think it might be a hell of a good thing to, you know, plug into the Pentagon, blow up the planet. Why not? And I ask the computer specialist once at a college, why hasn't it happened yet? And he said. "well they haven't worked it out yet."

There are over a thousand hackers into the Pentagon everyday. Not necessarily into the early warning system but hacking. And Russia, I mean I really don't know how we're still here. And then there are the nuclear hot points in my new book. Sleepwalking To Armageddon. My brother, Richard Broinowski, writes about the hot points. I mean, India and Pakistan could easily start a nuclear war between each other.

And that could initiate a global holocaust. Israel's got over 200 hydrogen bombs, but I'm sure many more. And then they're trying to make war with Iran. China's got only 200 bombs, and they're not very belligerent, that's for sure. But America is being extremely belligerent with them, going into the China Sea with their big... their ships. And then there's France, well I don't know about France, and then there's England and the only reason England's got nuclear weapons is to replace its lost empire with nuclear weapons. So you know we're on a very tenuous situation and nobody, but nobody, is talking about it! Everybody is in a state of manic denial, or is my daughter, who is a doctor said yesterday, "people are paralysed by their comfort."

The way we unparalysed people, if you like, during the '80s was just to describe the medical effect of a bomb dropping on a city. And I had an agent in Hollywood who worked for me with all the film stars, and put me on television all over the place, and in Canada and America. And we were able then to educate the majority of Americans about the medical consequences of nuclear war producing the final epidemic of the human race, and we had a million people in Central Park. I mean that was the second American Revolution. But then we got... We helped bring the Cold War to an end, and we all felt... thank God that's over. Americans started talking about a peace dividend, you know they can spend all that money, trillions of dollars, on peace and health and education.

But the corporations behind everyone's back just got going, Lockheed Martin in particular, and took over and just started making more and more weapons, and here we are. And the reason that it's happening is that the people are uneducated. And as President Jefferson said, an informed democracy will behave in a responsible fashion. I would suggest, Michael, that you play If You Love This Planet again on your television program because it's only half an hour long, and that really breaks people's psychic numbing and they get it. It's an old fashioned film because the haircuts are different, but the data is actually still totally relevant.

GR: Now, I... I just want to note that in addition to the big mobilization we saw in New York City, right here in our hometown, my hometown of Winnipeg, we had huge demonstrations the same day, like 15 to 20 thousand people in a city of just over half a million. It was the biggest we'd seen in several decades. Now, we're not seeing mobilizations, as you point out, anything comparing to that. But let's suppose, and remember you're talking to a Can- this is a Canadian show, let's suppose that we can get people concerned. Now a lot of those same people will say, yeah let's get rid of the nukes, let's disarm, but what can we do about it? Canada is not a nuclear power. We don't have any agency over what Trump and Putin do...

HC: Yeah, but you're part of NATO. You're part of NATO, and... and as such you're part of the nuclear war apparatus, for sure. Now there is a law coming up at the United Nations to ban all nuclear weapons. 122 countries signed on out of 194. Of course, nuclear nations have not. But they need 50 countries to ratify it. And I think I've got nearly 10 countries now to make it law such that all nuclear weapons will be banned like landmines, and cluster bombs, and chemical weapons etc. So Canada can sign on to that and give America a big kick in the bum! [Laughter] To use an Australian expression. You have enormous power, and you're right next to America. If you mobilize like New Zealand did when it banned nuclear-armed ships coming into its harbors from America, it had a huge effect in America. So you would make news you would support the ICAN ban against nuclear weapons in the United Nations and you would be one of the leaders. So do it. And play.. Get... see if you can, Michael, get If You Love This Planet replayed on CBC and, you know, your show and everything. And I don't mind being interviewed again after that film plays.

GR: Okay! Well, we'll see what we can do.

HC: There's a plan! there's a plan.

GR: Is there anything else you'd like to say? Just assuming we can get this video, get the Prime Minister Trudeau to see this film, anything else you'd like to say to him before...

HC: Well, Prime Minister Trudeau, should because he is the son of Pierre, who was sort of a kind of friend of mine, and I convinced Pierre over a lunch at the Prime Minister's residence to do the five continents six-nation peace initiative. I'm sure he knows who I am, Justin, and I...I wouldn't mind seeing him, but if he, if he could see that film again, I'm sure it would have a big impact on him. He's got children he loves, he's a fine young man, walks in the footsteps of his father who is a wonderful man. You've had some very good prime ministers in the past. Lester Pearson and others. Please stand tall and do what is required of you to help save the planet, Canadians.

GR: Dr. Helen Caldicott, thank you very much for your time.

HC: Thank you, Michael

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