Senator Nunn on "The Colbert Report"
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Stephen Colbert: My guest tonight is a former US Senator who has produced a new documentary called "Nuclear Tipping Point."

[Film Clip] *More states are acquiring nuclear weapons or developing the technology to build them. A terrorist organization would need no more than one or two of those weapons or the material to make them to throw our planet into chaos. The danger is very, very real. We are at a nuclear tipping point, and the actions being taken are not adequate to the threat.*

Colbert: Sounds like a great date movie. Please welcome Senator Sam Nunn.

Cheers and applause

Colbert: Senator Nunn, thank you so much for coming on. Please, sit down. Sir, thank you for coming on. Quite an honor.

Sam Nunn: Thank you, I've never gotten such an ovation.

Colbert: And you never will again.

Laughter

Colbert: Now, sir, you are the co-chairman and CEO and of Nuclear Threat Initiative. Alright. What is the Nuclear Threat Initiative because I'm on board if it means we should take the initiative in making nuclear threats.

Nunn: No, it doesn't mean that. It means we should do everything we can to reduce nuclear threats, and that the dangers of those threats are growing. We have gone through a cold war where we had tremendous dangers of an all-out war. Now we have more danger of a small attack, but a devastating attack. So nuclear terrorism, preventing nuclear terrorism, keeping nuclear materials out of the hands of terrorists because if they can't get nuclear materials, there will be no nuclear terrorist accident.

Colbert: But it seems to me you're encouraging nations to get rid of our nuclear weapons?

Nunn: Well, Stephen, we believe that without taking steps, the United States' citizens cannot really be protected, that is protecting nuclear materials all over the globe as well as many other steps. We believe without cooperation, those steps will not be possible. We have to have cooperation from other nations. We are in a race between cooperation and catastrophe.

Colbert: What other nations are we talking about here? Who are the bad guys who could get the terrorists these nuclear bombs?

Nunn: Well, there are a number of countries that are thinking about going into an enrichment program, and we believe that enrichment is spread…

Colbert (simultaneously): Iran, Iran, Iran.

Nunn: Iran is a good example. North Korea is a good example. That's right.

Colbert: How do we stop them from getting those?

Nunn: We have to have cooperation from other nations and without the United States taking the position that all nuclear powers should step by step get rid of their own nuclear weapons, we're not going to get the cooperation we need to take the steps we need to protect the American citizens.

Colbert: But if we give up our nuclear weapons and these other guys still pursue their nuclear weapons, we're going to be powerless against them.

Nunn: Absolutely right. So we're not going to give them up. We're not advocating giving up…

Colbert: Are we going to sell them? What are we going to do with them?

Nunn: No, we're not going to give them up unless other nations give up theirs and unless we have the verification and enforcement to prevent terrorists or rogue countries from getting nuclear capabilities.

Colbert: Now, could terrorists or rogue countries, like could a rogue country or a terrorist get nukes from like North Korea who already has a couple of nukes?

Nunn: Well, that's right. You saw what happened with Syria and we've seen other instances with the Pakistan Kahn network. So nuclear…

Colbert: How about this. If any nuclear bomb goes off from a terrorist organization, we just automatically nuke North Korea or Iran and that will -- without even investigating, we just say, boom, tag, you're it -- and that will encourage those countries to try to keep nuclear weapons out of the hands of terrorists even harder than we do because they know if anything happens, we pull the plug on them. What about that? That's deterrence.

Nunn: Stephen, I have to confess, I hadn't thought of that answer.

Cheers and applause

Colbert: You see!

Colbert: You surprise me, sir. Sam Nunn was always known as being a Democrat you could trust on defense. Head of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Have you gotten soft with your peacenik friends putting your flowers down the barrels of the guns?

Nunn: Well, I would not think that George Shultz or Henry Kissinger or Bill Perry, secretary of defense, secretaries of state, are in that category. We all…

Colbert: Those are all members of the Nuclear Threat Initiative?

Nunn: Yes that's right -- that's what this "Nuclear Tipping Point" is all about. The four of us are talking about how you protect America. So we all believe in a strong national defense.

Colbert: Now where can you see this movie?

Nunn: We would love for people to order this movie and we give it away free. It's nuclear…

Colbert: Wait a second. You give this movie away for free? Where do you make your money, on like concessions, popcorn, soda? How can you do this for free, sir?

Nunn: I'd say popcorn, soda, Warren Buffett and Ted Turner. Those are the…

Colbert: Oh, you got a sugar daddy.

Nunn: We have some very generous support and George Russell helps us a lot, too.

Colbert: So where do we go to get this movie?

Nunn: You order it from nucleartippingpoint.org.

Colbert: Nucleartippingpoint.org. Very important. The "org" is very important. You go to dot com and you can actually order a nuclear weapon.

Audience laughs

Colbert: Don't do it.

Nunn: Well you can actually get it dot com, either way.

Colbert: Oh really?

Nunn: Yep

Colbert: And dot net?

Nunn: Yep, dot net. We got it all covered.

Colbert: Fantastic. Of course, you got Kissinger and George Shultz. You got it covered. Those guys know the internet. Well Senator Sam Nunn, thank you so much for joining me.

Colbert: [to audience] Senator Sam Nunn. The movie is "Nuclear Tipping Point" at nuclear tipping point dot net, com, org. We'll be right back.

Audience Cheers