

**The Nuclear Bible: Nuclear Terror Movies**

**Intro:** The following mainstream movies and documentaries dealing specifically with nuclear terror have been sporadic over the last 33 years but have intensified in the 5 years.

- **1977:** *Black Sunday*
- **1983:** *Special Bulletin*
- **2002:** *The Sum Of All Fears*
- **2005:** *Last Best Chance*
- **2007:** *Next*
- **2010:** *Unthinkable*
- **2010:** *Countdown To Zero*
- **2010:** *Nuclear Tipping Point*

**Date:** March 11, 1977  
**Title:** *Black Sunday*  
**Director(s):** John Frankenheimer  
**Writer(s):** Ernest Lehman, Kenneth Ross, Ivan Moffat  
**Producer(s):** Robert Evans, Alan Levine, Robert L. Rosen  
**Distributor(s):** Paramount Pictures  
**Nuclear Target(s):** Miami, Florida

**Abstract:** An American thriller film based on the novel by Thomas Harris. Michael Lander (Bruce Dern) is an American blimp pilot deranged by years of torture as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, a failed marriage, and a bitter court martial. He longs to commit suicide and take as many people as possible with him, so he conspires with Dahlia Iyad (Marthe Keller), an operative from a Palestinian terrorist group known as Black September, to launch a massive suicide bombing over the Miami Orange Bowl during the Super Bowl X between Pittsburgh and Dallas. American and Israeli intelligence agencies, led by Mossad agent David Kabakov (Robert Shaw) and FBI agent Sam Corley (Fritz Weaver), race to prevent the catastrophe (Wikipedia, 2010).

**Date:** 1983  
**Title:** *Special Bulletin*  
**Director(s):** Edward Zwick  
**Writer(s):** Marshall Herskovitz (teleplay), Edward Zwick, Marshall Herskovitz (story)  
**Producer(s):** Marshall Herskovitz, Edward Zwick  
**Distributor(s):** NBC (National Broadcasting Company)

**Abstract:** A terrorist group brings a homemade atomic bomb aboard a tugboat in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina in order to blackmail the U.S. Government into disabling its nuclear weapons, and the incident is caught live on television. The movie simulates a series of live news broadcasts on the fictional RBS Network (Wikipedia, 2010).
Date: Filmed 1999; Released: 2002
Title: The Sum Of All Fears
Director(s): Phil Alden Robinson
Writer(s): Tom Clancy (novel), Paul Attanasio, Daniel Pyne (screenplay)
Producer(s): Mace Neufeld
Distributor(s): Paramount Pictures
Nuclear Target(s): Baltimore, Maryland

Abstract: The Sum of All Fears is an American action film directed by Phil Alden Robinson and based on a book of the same name by Tom Clancy. Starring Ben Affleck and Morgan Freeman it was filmed in 1999, but not released by Paramount Pictures in the United States until May 31, 2002. The film begins with a sequence inspired by the novel's prologue set during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, in which a single Israeli A-4 jet carrying a nuclear weapon is shot down over the Syrian desert. The bomb, over time, is consumed by the sand and disappears. Eventually, after an ensuing geopolitical drama, the nuclear bomb arrives in a crate in Baltimore, Maryland, and is placed in an American football stadium disguised as a cigarette vending machine. After the detonation, it is eventually concluded that the plutonium for the Baltimore bomb was manufactured in Savannah River nuclear plant in South Carolina in 1968, thus indicating that the original nuclear fissile material was of American origin (Wikipedia, 2010).

Date: April 27, 2007
Title: Last Best Chance
Director(s): Sam Nunn’s Nuclear Threat Initiative, Carnegie Corporation of New York, MacArthur Foundation.
Writer(s): Sam Nunn’s Nuclear Threat Initiative, Carnegie Corporation of New York, MacArthur Foundation.
Producer(s): Sam Nunn’s Nuclear Threat Initiative, Carnegie Corporation of New York, MacArthur Foundation
Distributor(s): Sam Nunn’s Nuclear Threat Initiative, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, MacArthur Foundation

Abstract: Last Best Chance is an educational DVD that reveals the modern nuclear threat of international terrorist organizations, produced by the Nuclear Threat Initiative. The DVD is freely available through the NTI-supported website. The film stars Fred Thompson as President Charles Ross. The name of the film is a reference to a quote by Abraham Lincoln. Running at forty-five minutes (Super Bowl 45 is February 6, 2011) in length, Last Best Chance premiered in the fall of 2005 at the lavish East Side mansion that is home to the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City. Among the attendees were diplomats, military personnel, international bankers, and lawyers.

Speakers at the event following the film included:

Pete Peterson: Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations
Ted Turner: Founder of CNN
Warren Buffett: Investor and philanthropist
Sen. Richard Lugar: Chairman of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Sam Nunn: Founder of the Nuclear Threat Initiative (Wikipedia, 2010).
Abstract: Early autumn is a big season for new releases, and last week, what with the opening of the New York Film Festival and all, there were lots of such screenings around town. One of them was different. Its setting was a modest auditorium in the immodest East Side mansion that houses the Council on Foreign Relations. The audience consisted of diplomats, military officers, international bankers and lawyers, and think-tankers. The speakers after the lights went up were white-haired gentlemen in business suits: Pete Peterson, the council's chairman; Ted Turner, the billionaire philanthropist and founder of CNN; Warren Buffett, the folk philosopher and fabulously rich investor; Richard Lugar, Republican, the current chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; and Sam Nunn, Democrat, the retired chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and now head of a nongovernmental organization called the Nuclear Threat Initiative. The film, “Last Best Chance,” was a bit unusual, too. You might even say it isn’t really a movie at all—it just plays one on TV. Set in the near future, it takes the form of a slick international suspense thriller, the kind that cuts from a rainswept warehouse in a bleak corner of the former Soviet empire to a dimly lit White House Situation Room. It has no sex scenes, no car chases, and no wisecracking sidekicks, and it is only forty-five minutes long, but it lays out a frighteningly plausible narrative of how terrorists might buy or steal the makings of a nuclear bomb, assemble one, smuggle it halfway around the world, and send it on its way to an American city in an S.U.V. The closest thing to a star in the cast is Fred Thompson, the lawyer turned actor turned Republican senator from Tennessee turned actor again. Thompson plays the President of the United States, and his character is mature, wise, and serious—the one jarringly unrealistic note in the picture. “Last Best Chance” was made not by a movie studio but by a singularly unraffish indie producer: Nunn’s Nuclear Threat Initiative, with support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the MacArthur Foundation. The blurb on its poster comes not from Ebert & Roeper but from Kean & Hamilton—Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton, the chairman and vice-chairman of the 9/11 Commission. Its grosses are zero. For the past five months, it has been distributed free on DVD. Now it has been taken up by HBO, which plans to show it repeatedly, beginning on October 17th. “Last Best Chance” is entertaining, in a grim sort of way, but entertainment is not its raison d’être. Its purpose is to stimulate public support and political pressure on the Bush Administration and Congress to do something serious about the terrifying danger of nuclear terrorism. And this is a scandal. It is scandalous that at this late date, four years after the attacks on New York and Washington, people like Nunn, Lugar, and Buffett feel it necessary to go to such unorthodox lengths to get the attention of Washington’s responsibles. “Last Best Chance” is a symptom of an immense failure of national, and especially Presidential, leadership. “As short a time ago as nine years or eight years,” Turner said in his remarks after the screening, “I still thought that nuclear weapons, biological and chemical weapons, was an area that the government took care of” (Herzberg, 2005).

Abstract: Cris Johnson (Nicolas Cage) is a magician who can see into his future, but only two minutes ahead. He draws the attention of FBI agent Callie Ferris (Julianne Moore), who has figured out his ability and wants to stop terrorists from detonating a nuclear weapon (Wikipedia, 2010).
Abstract: An American Muslim man named Yusuf (Sheen), formerly named Younger, who claims to have nuclear bombs planted in three U.S. cities that will go off if his (at first, unstated) demands are not met. Using extreme torture as a method of interrogation [Torture], "H" (Jackson) attempts to force Yusuf to reveal the locations of the nuclear bombs. Also involved is Special Agent Helen Brody of the FBI who, at the same time, is leading a team trying to locate the bombs using other information. Once H is authorized to interrogate Yusuf, he quickly shows his capability and cruelty by chopping off one of Yusuf's fingers with a small hatchet. Horrified, Special Agent Brody attempts to put a stop to the measures. Her superiors make it clear that the potentially disastrous consequences necessitate these extreme measures. As the plot unfolds, H escalates his methods (with Brody as the "good cop") and Yusuf, trained in resisting torture, maintains his silence. When Brody accuses Yusuf of faking the bomb threat in order to make a point about the moral character of the United States government, he breaks down and agrees that it was all a ruse. He gives her an address to prove it, but visiting the address triggers a C-4 explosion at a nearby shopping mall, killing 53 people. Angry at the senseless deaths, Brody takes a scalpel and begins cutting Yusuf's chest. It is clear, though, that Yusuf is not afraid. He justifies the deaths by comparing them to the greater number of Muslim deaths by American hands. Yusuf then makes his demands: he would like the President of the United States to announce a cessation of support for puppet governments and dictatorships in Middle Eastern countries and a withdrawal of American troops from the Middle East. The group quickly blows off the possibility of his demands being met. H falters in his belief that the bombs' location will be revealed until Yusuf's wife is found and detained. He brings her in front of her husband and threatens to mutilate her in front of him. Brody and the others begin to take her away from the torture room in disgust. Out of desperation, H slashes her throat and she bleeds to death in front of Yusuf. Still without cooperation, H tells the soldiers to bring in Yusuf's two children, a young boy and a girl. Outside of Yusuf's hearing, he assures everyone that he will not harm the children. Yusuf's children are brought in and H makes it clear that he will torture them if the bombs' locations are not given. Yusuf breaks and gives three addresses, but H does not stop, forcing the others to intervene. Citing the amount of missing nuclear material Yusuf potentially had at his disposal, H insists that Yusuf has not admitted anything about a hence-unreferenced 4th bomb. When Brody refuses to retrieve the children for H, he unstraps Yusuf, who then manages to get a hold of a pistol and commit suicide. Brody walks out of the building with Yusuf's children. A FBI bomb disposal team arrives at one of the disclosed locations and resets the timer to prevent the bomb from going off. As the screen immediately cuts to black and the credits roll (Wikipedia, 2010).
asked Walker if she was interested in directing a film about nuclear weapons, and Walker said yes. More than 84 people were interviewed for the film. Global Zero, an international organization promoting the elimination of nuclear weapons, provided production assistance for the film. (Wikipedia, 2010).

**Date:** 2010  
**Title:** Nuclear Tipping Point  
**Director(s):** NTI (Nuclear Threat Initiative)  
**Writer(s):** NTI (Nuclear Threat Initiative)  
**Producer(s):** NTI (Nuclear Threat Initiative)  
**Distributor(s):** NTI (Nuclear Threat Initiative)  
**Nuclear Target(s):** America

**Abstract:** Nuclear Tipping Point is a 2010 documentary film produced by the Nuclear Threat Initiative. It features interviews with four American government officials who were in office during the Cold War period, but are now advocating for the elimination of nuclear weapons. They are: Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, Sam Nunn, and William Perry. The film was screened at the White House on April 6, 2010 (Wikipedia, 2010). According to the official website: Nuclear Tipping Point is a conversation with four men intimately involved in American diplomacy and national security over the last four decades. Former Secretary of State George Shultz, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of Defense Bill Perry and former Senator Sam Nunn share the personal experiences that led them to write two Wall Street Journal op-eds, in support of a world free of nuclear weapons and the steps needed to get there. Their efforts have reframed the global debate on nuclear issues and, according to the New York Times, “sent waves through the global policy establishment.” "Nuclear weapons today present tremendous dangers, but also an historic opportunity. U.S. leadership will be required to take the world to the next stage — to a solid consensus for reversing reliance on nuclear weapons globally as a vital contribution to preventing their proliferation into potentially dangerous hands, and ultimately ending them as a threat to the world.” From The Wall Street Journal Op-ed by George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn, January, 2007. The film is introduced by General Colin Powell, narrated by Michael Douglas and includes interviews with California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Nuclear Tipping Point was written and directed by Ben Goddard and produced by the Nuclear Security Project in an effort to raise awareness about nuclear threats and to help build support for the urgent actions needed to reduce nuclear dangers. It was produced with support from NTI’s Nuclear Security Project in cooperation with Stanford University’s Hoover Institution, with funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Richard P. Anderson, Phineas Anderson and Stephen Stranahan (Nuclear Tipping Point, 2010).

**Conclusion:** Everything starts in the movies, and nuclear terror is no different. Interestingly, the entire idea of nuking the Super Bowl originated from Tom Clancy’s The Sum of All Fears. A best-selling book and a major motion picture later, fiction will likely turn into reality on February 6, 2011.