

William Van Cleave

- Ph.D. (1967) in government and international relations at the Claremont Graduate School.
- Upon graduation, he joined the faculty of the School of International Relations at USC.
- Van Cleave was a member of the 1971-72 arms control negotiating team but resigned before the Nixon administration accepted and signed SALT I in Moscow in 1972. But in testimony before a Senate subcommittee headed by Sen. Henry Jackson, he warned that the treaty contained weaknesses that might prove dangerous in the future -- a prophecy that has come all too true in the past eight years.
- In 1972, he was the sole witness called to testify before the Senate in opposition to the SALT and ABM Treaties.
- In 1976, Van Cleave was a member of the precedent-setting "B-Team," commissioned by then Director of Central Intelligence George H.W. Bush to review intelligence community estimates of Soviet military capabilities and strategy.
- In both the 1976 and 1980 presidential campaigns, he was the senior defense advisor to candidate Ronald Reagan, during which time he was also a founding member of the Committee on the Present Danger.
- In the 1970s, Van Cleave was also an executive member of the Committee on the Present Danger (CPD), a political pressure group that shared the alarmist threat assessments of Team B, many of whose members went on to serve under President Reagan.
- From 1979 to 1981, he was senior adviser to Reagan and director of the defense transition team for Reagan's new administration.
- Later serving as a member of President Reagan's General Advisory Committee on Arms Control.
- In 2001, Van Cleave was a team member of a group that authored a National Institute for Public Policy strategy document titled "Rationale and Requirements for U.S. Nuclear Forces and Arms Control," which some have argued served as a blueprint for George W. Bush's Nuclear Posture Review.
- He was also Professor of international relations and director of the Strategic Studies Program at USC Dornsife from 1967 to 1987.
- In December 2010, Van Cleave was one of 32 signatories to an "Open Letter to the U.S. Senate on the New START Treaty." It argued that the treaty "is not consistent with the national security interests of the United States," and that the "Senate should reject this accord and begin instead a long-overdue and vitally needed process of modernization of the nuclear stockpile and refurbishment of the weapons complex that supports it".
- Van Cleave is best known for his work as an educator in Defense and Strategic Studies, first at USC where he was thrice honored as Outstanding Professor of the Year and later at Missouri State University where the department he founded now resides. Van Cleave-trained students have served in some of the most prominent positions of government including senior members of the National Security Council staff, Secretary of the Air Force, Assistant and Deputy Assistant Secretaries of Defense and State and key leaders of the U.S. intelligence community, as well as distinguished positions in industry and academia.