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179. Memorandum From the Military Assistant to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Odom) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, March 15, 1980

SUBJECT

Threat Assessment Conference Call on Missile Warning

The NMCC convened a "Threat Assessment Conference Call" last night at 2132 hours. Launches from the Kurile Island site were detected, not unusual, but the "fan" of one of the missile tracks included Alaska, Canada, and the tip of Oregon. At that point, NORAD and the NMCC convened the Threat Assessment Conference. It was terminated five minutes later when the impact of both missiles were determined to be in Kamchatka. (S)

The procedures worked well within the White House. I was in the call by one minute after it was convened. The duty officers at NORAD and the NMCC sorted out the "anomalies" in the computer displays quickly. They might have avoided the Threat Assessment Conference, but I heard enough on the line to realize that convening it was prudent. (S)

Other procedures went as well. SAC readiness changed at 2130 hours. The NEACP began rolling at 2132 hours. (S)

Daily Report Item

The National Military Command Center convened a Missile Threat Assessment Conference Call at 2132 hours on March 14. Soviet launches from the Kurile Island site were detected, not unusual, but the "fan" of one of the two missile tracks included Alaska, Canada, and the tip of Oregon. At that point, NORAD and NMCC decided that a threat assessment was appropriate. The conference terminated five minutes later when the impact of both missiles were determined to be in Kamchatka. (S)

The procedures within the White House worked well. The duty officers at NORAD and the NMCC sorted out the anomalies in the missile attack displays quickly. Other procedures also proceeded smoothly. SAC readiness changed at 2130 hours. The NEACP began to roll at 2132 hours. (S)

1. Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 15, Crisis Management: 11/78–5/80. Secret; Outside the System. A stamped notation indicates Brzezinski saw the memorandum.↵