

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM

WASHINGTON

TOP SECRETINFORMATION

October 3, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

FROM: WILLIAM E. ODOM *WEO*

SUBJECT: SIOP Changes and Tactical Warning (TS)

This morning at 4:00 a.m. the NMCC placed me in a "Missile Threat Assessment Conference Call." One of three radars on the West Coast indicated -- with high confidence -- that an SLBM had been launched and would impact 150 NM off the Oregon coast. Technically, the DDO in the NMCC should have initiated a "NUCFLASH" conference call, bringing you, Harold Brown, and General Jones into the net. They considered it, but in the meanwhile, the absence of a second radar confirming the track and the time of impact slipping by convinced the DDO not to raise the NUCFLASH conference. (TS)

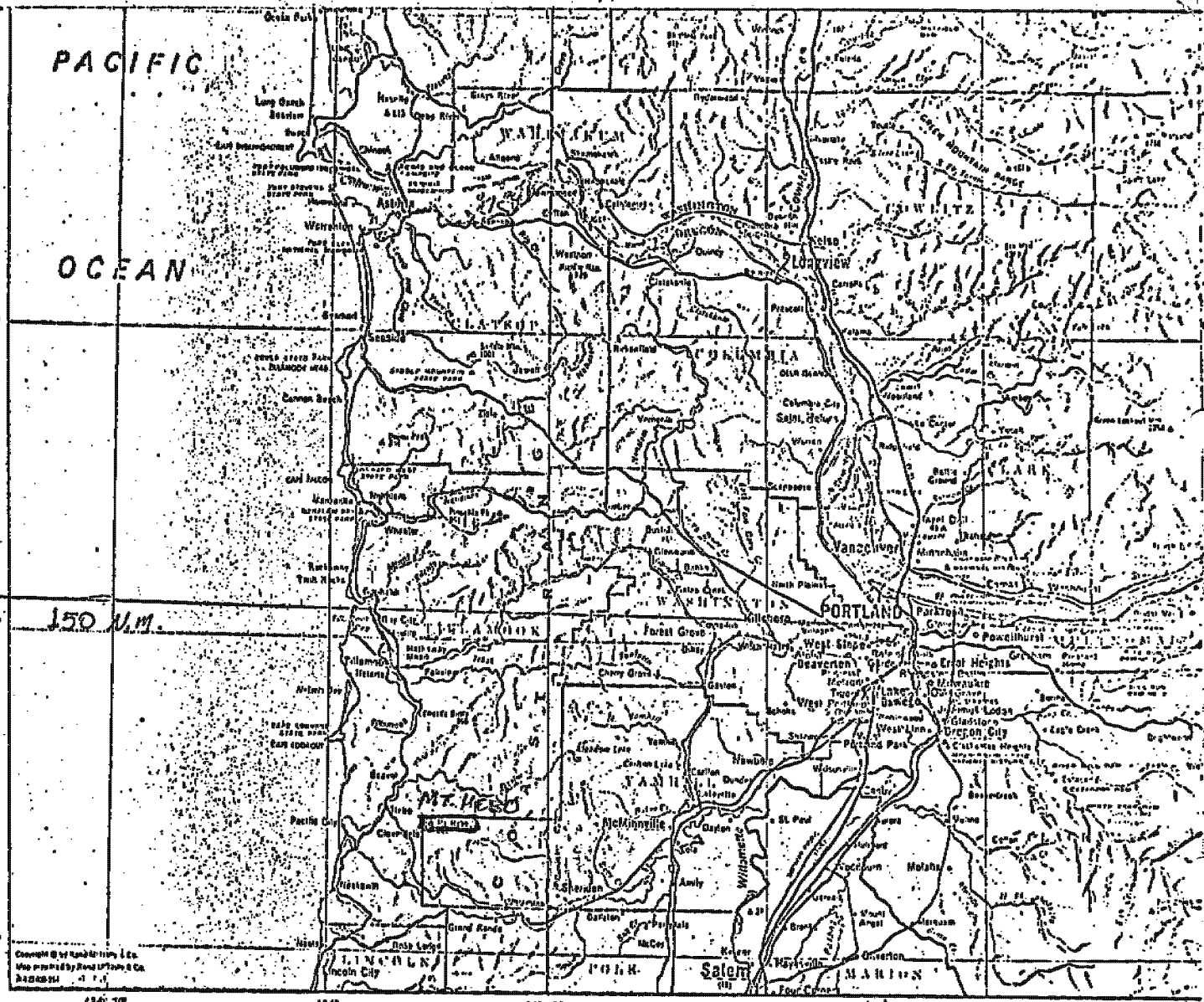
It is a very chilling experience to pick up the phone and hear NORAD repeating "we have high confidence in the system" and wonder how to use the remaining four or five minutes. A few weeks ago, the PARCS system reported a positive track -- "high confidence." It was accurate. It was tracking a decaying space object, the J-3 reported later. (TS)

I provide this as background for another memo on SIOP matters which I shall give you for the Friday lunch with Harold Brown. I believe you can see why I am a little disturbed. I am comforted, however, by the fact that our WHCA switch works. They alert me at the lowest warning level, which occurs two or three times a year. We could have put you and the President on the line instantly, but you would have had only the uncertain data on which no confident decision could have been made. (TS)

*WEO*  
→ *checks?*

TOP SECRET

Review on October 3, 1999  
 Extended by Z. Brzezinski  
 Reason for Extension: NSC 1.13(e)



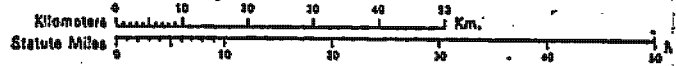
PROTECTED  
SLBM IMPACT  
~~SECRET~~  
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→ not necessarily. NORAD said "high confidence"

ENGLISH	Sea	base	channel	isle	strand	isla	marsh	oak	shall
DUITSCH	See	Basis	Canal	Insle	Strand	Isle	See	Eiche	Meeresspiegel
ESPAÑOL	Mar	Base	Canal	Isleta	Playa	Isle	Marisma	Roble	Nivel del mar
FRANCAIS	Mer	Base	Canal	Île	Plage	Île	Marais	Chêne	Niveau de la mer

For complete glossary see page 402.



SLBM THREAT ASSESSMENT. OCT. 3

BILL: SYSTEMS MALFUNCTION AT MT. HEBO SLBM DETECTION SITE APPARENTLY TRIGGERED THREAT ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE THIS MORNING CIRCA 0400. TWO OTHER DETECTION SITES WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN NOTICED BY SIMULTANEOUS LAUNCH INDICATED NOTHING. NMCC WILL SEND US MFR.

Yes -  
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won't see / wo

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