

MEMORANDUM

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WASHINGTON

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EYES ONLY

ACTION

October 8, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
FROM: WILLIAM E. ODOM WO
SUBJECT: Launch From Under Attack (C)

ZB HAS SEEN

As you know, the SIOP now contains an LUA option. I find it most unwise, and I believe you should discuss it with Harold Brown. The following points are the grounds for my concern which you may want to use:

-- Our tactical warning system, the "I", is just not good enough to let us know that our ICBMs are under attack. More troubling is the high probability that our tactical warning system will be attacked and disabled.

-- The present LUA option is targeted at empty Soviet silos and some conventional military targets. Little thought has been given to the rationale of the target set. What it would achieve beyond provoking a major Soviet response, I fail to see.

-- If the LUA is executed and a few minutes later there is a decision to execute one of the MAOs, large numbers of our RVs would be destroyed through fratricide. Once the "timing" of the MAO is messed up by the LUA, fratricide is a problem.

-- The word leaking out that we now have an LUA option could create untold problems. Our professed policy is "escalation control." The change would look like acknowledged strategic inferiority. (TS)

To sum up, I recommend that you ask Harold Brown to withdraw the LUA option because (1) we don't have adequate "I"; (2) it has no targeting rationale other than to ensure escalation; (3) it would cause large fratricide; (4) it could create unfortunate public perceptions. (TS)

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Review on October 8, 1999
Classified and Extended by Z. Brzezinski
Reason for Extension: NSC 1.13(e)

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