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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

November 16, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL WILLIAM ODOM, MILITARY ASSISTANT  
TO THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT  
FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: Proposed Oral Message Response

Attached for your consideration is a draft U.S. oral  
message to the Soviet government which the Secretary of  
Defense would support.

*Carl R. Smith*

CARL R. SMITH  
Brigadier General, USAF  
Military Assistant to the  
Secretary of Defense

Attachment

DECLASSIFIED  
BY :ISA  
DATE: 2/20/2003

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U.S. ORAL MESSAGE TO SOVIET GOVERNMENT

The United States Government has received the oral message from President Brezhnev concerning recent press reports of a purported "alert" of American strategic forces. Because the oral message was based on inaccurate and misleading information, the assertions in the message are inaccurate and unacceptable to the United States Government.

The level of alert of U.S. strategic offensive forces was not raised above its usual level because the U.S. command and control system assures review and control by responsible officials at all levels. It does not serve the purposes of peace or strategic stability for the Soviet Union to base its actions or its diplomatic exchanges on press reports or to exploit such reports for purposes of propaganda. The United States Government assures the Soviet Government both that its local commanders have and will exercise the authority to put their forces in condition to survive attack, and that control of the offensive use of our forces is totally reliable, as was demonstrated in this case.

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similar information on ~~the other side~~ *the other side*

*or to*  
*the other side*

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