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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

NOV 20 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: NORAD False Alarm (c)

DOD / DFOISR	
TOP SECRET CONTROL	
Copy No.	
Case No.	99-75-2328
T.S. No.	99-75-026
Document No.	29

(S) On 9 November 1979, a spurious missile attack warning was inadvertently introduced into the computer system

[REDACTED]

(S)(U)

(S) The immediate cause of the incident was

[REDACTED]

(S)(U)

(S) Within less than sixty seconds of initial alert, system redundancy and direct paths of critical warning information

[REDACTED]

(S)(U)

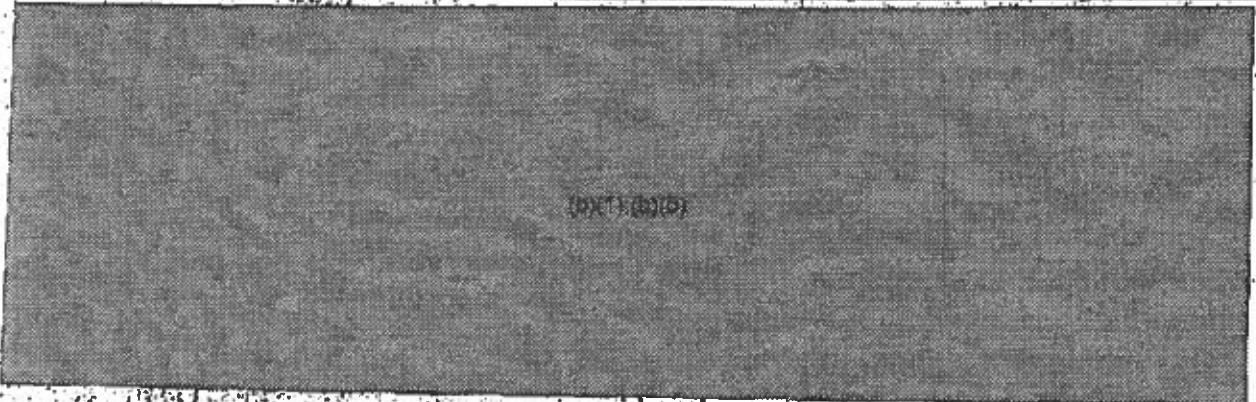
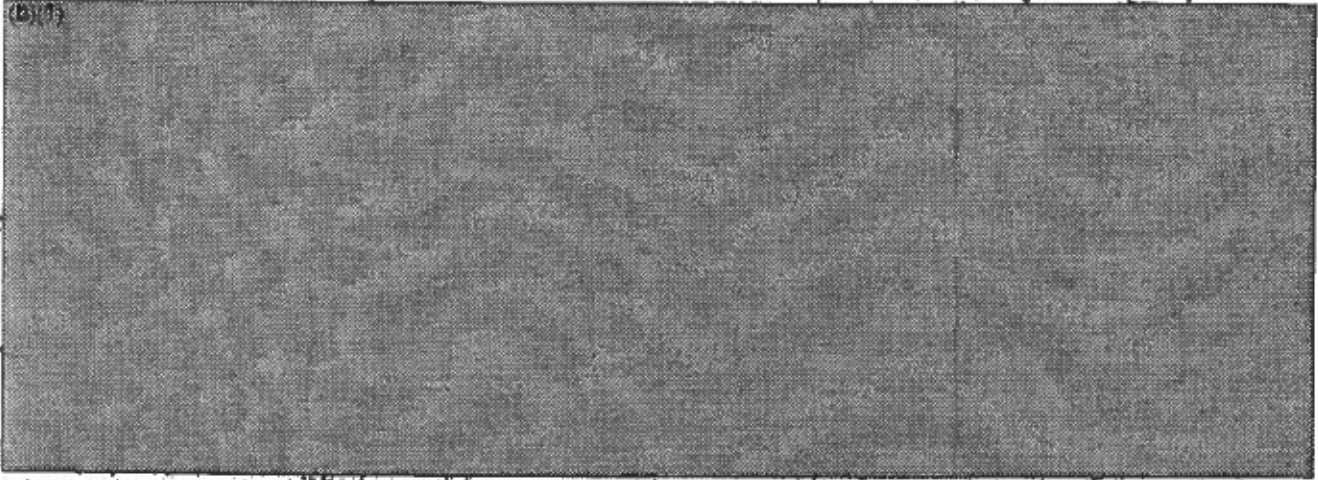
Classified by SecDef

Declassify on 20 Nov 1999

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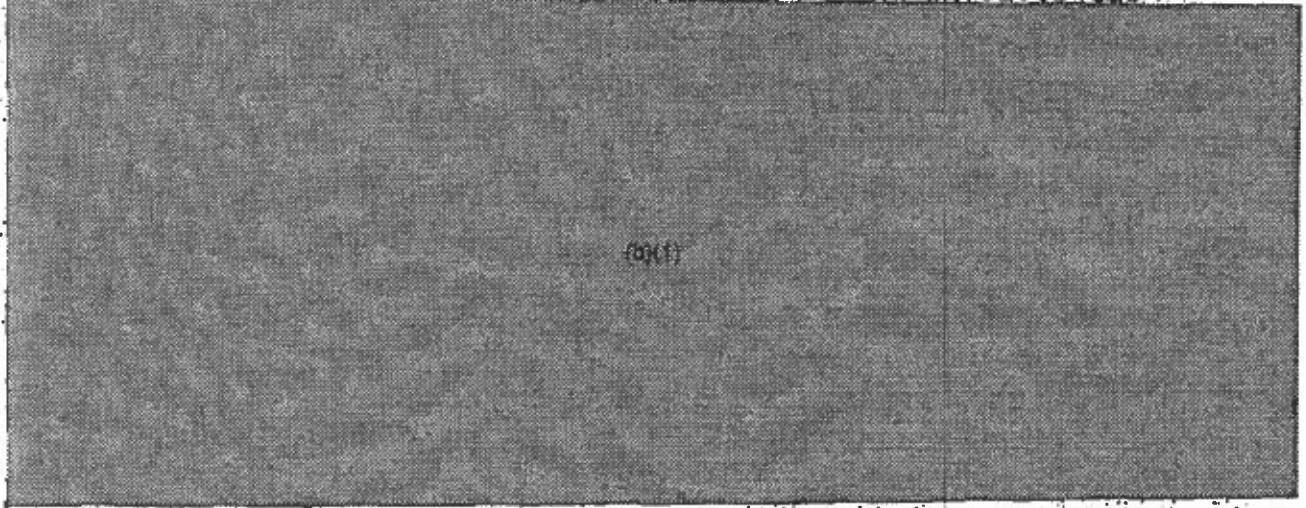
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(b)(7)



(b)(7) (b)(1)

... and there is a higher order of concern. It involves the



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3.

(TS) My overall assessment of the lessons learned is that

(U) (S)

(U) In case this incident raises further questions in the Congress, the media, or among allies, I believe that the following points should be stressed:

1. At no time were the strategic nuclear forces activated--the incident was completely contained within the command and control community;

2. The malfunction was very quickly identified and acted upon;

3. The overall way in which the system worked after the initial malfunction is reassuring with respect to the redundancy of indicators, responsible human judgment and adequacy of safeguards in a very short decision time frame.

Harold Brown

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