

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTONOUTSIDE THE SYSTEMSECRET/SENSITIVE

March 8, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

FROM: WILLIAM E. ODOM

SUBJECT: Chat with Lt. General Sitton,  
Director of the Joint Staff

As I told you, I paid a call on Lt. General Ray Sitton, who "directs" the Joint Staff for General George Brown. He made the following points which will be of interest to you:

- In the Uganda affair, he was delighted that I kept an informal line open to the NMCC. It allowed them to be more responsive to the Secretary of Defense.
- He is sensitive to the National Command Authority and wants to make sure that we do not send "instructions" directly. Warnings of "instructions" that may be coming from the Secretary of Defense, however, are most desired in a crisis where some time can be gained thereby. I explained that you understand this very clearly and will not try to "direct" the NMCC.
- He generally corroborated my assessment of the vulnerability of the NCA in a short warning situation. NEACP is good for command and control but not really where the President wants to be.
- He gave a very positive assessment of the OSD-JCS relationship at present.
- He is delighted that President Carter has shown interest in the SIOP and related command matters. Although Kissinger took great interest in these matters, he noted, Nixon avoided them and Ford was hardly enthusiastic.
- He remarked at length on "Entebbe raid" capabilities. Our capability for this kind of affair seems to have come up rather

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often in the past. We have the assets for operations of that scale in the Army Ranger Battalions, the 82nd Airborne Division, and Marine landing forces with the Sixth and Seventh Fleets. Three problems have arisen when Kissinger and others wanted to use them:

- a. We cannot match the Israelis in controlling the press' anticipation of such an action if we alert more forces than two or three companies.
- b. Decision-makers tend to forget that the U.S. cannot send Rangers into the British or French airports (as they thought of doing in the Croatian sky-jack affair) without British and French permission. Britain and France are not Uganda in this regard. They feel able to perform their own rescue operations.
- c. Small powers tend to gain public support for feats of rescue daring. Superpowers are almost sure to receive bad press for demonstrating the same prowess and competence.

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