

The Dangers of Hair-Trigger Alert

Lisbeth Gronlund

April 2, 2016







Early Warning Sensors







Nuclear Risks

- Accidental launches
- Unauthorized launches
- Deliberate launches in response to a false alarm

Nuclear Close Calls

November 9, 1979



September 26, 1983



**The Man Who
Saved the World
Stanilov Petrov**



Sun glint off clouds



January 25, 1995



These stories of false alarms
have focused a searing
awareness of the immense peril
we face when in mere minutes
our leaders must make
life-and-death decisions
affecting the whole planet.



William Perry, former Secretary of Defense
My Journey at the Nuclear Brink

China's military pushing for putting missiles on alert





“Barack Obama believes that we should take our nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert... Maintaining this Cold War stance today is unnecessary and increases the risk of an accidental or unauthorized nuclear launch.”

--2008

**Union of
Concerned Scientists**

www.ucsusa.org