

March 8, 1969

**Memorandum for the President from Henry A.
Kissinger, 'Next Steps on the Middle East'**

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<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/220078>

Summary:

Kissinger details a plan to hold separate talks with the Soviet Union, France, and Great Britain with the aim of bringing them closer to the US position and press them to share responsibility for success.

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/EXDIS

ACTION

March 8, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Next Steps on the Middle East

Attached is Secretary Rogers' recommendation on how we might relate our talks with Eban to those with the Russians both separately and together with the British and French. I talked at length with Joe Sisco during its drafting and feel it comes out just about where we want to be.

The essence of the plan is, first, to give Eban a detailed description, some of it in writing, of our views on the principles that should govern a settlement. (These are the principles formulated for your European talks modified to reflect the nuances in the diplomatic debates of the last twenty months. They are attached to the Secretary's memo.) While we will not give Eban a veto, we need to preserve the atmosphere of consultation. We would then begin point-by-point discussion with Dobrynin of our positions on the main items in the UN resolution. Meanwhile, we shall try to clarify further the French position, and Joe Sisco will be having talks with his British counterpart on the nuts and bolts of possible guarantees, forms of agreement and so on. After hearing Eban's reaction to our general principles, we would surface them in the four-power forum the week of March 17.

This seems to me the right way to proceed, provided everyone understands that our broad initial objectives are to use these talks (a) to bring the others as close as possible to our position and (b) to press on them--especially the USSR--co-responsibility for achieving success or sharing the blame for failure.

One final point should be called to your attention. If we achieve enough common ground in all these talks to warrant going on, it is implicit in the Secretary's recommendation that we would present any formal proposals through Jarring. The reason for insisting on this approach is to fend off possible French and Russian proposals that the big powers present proposals directly. That would pin responsibility on us alone to deliver Israel, while keeping Jarring in the middle would tend to pin the main responsibility on the parties themselves.

Recommendation: That you approve this general approach as a basis for the talking points to be written for the talks you and Secretary Rogers will have with Eban next week (March 12-13) and for following through with the Russians, French and British.

Approve *HK* Disapprove _____ Other _____

SECRET

3/10/69 - Notified...
SS that this approved way for proceeding.
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Authority EO 12958

By *NT* NARA Date 10/23/07