

March 10, 1970

Memorandum from Henry A. Kissinger to President Nixon, 'Follow-up Actions on Military Cooperation with the French'

Citation:

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Summary:

Kissinger seeks Nixon's approval on certain points regarding military cooperation with France. He seeks and receives approval to convey a message to Goodpaster to increase theatrical and naval cooperation with France; to rescind the U.S.-French R&D Steering Committee dealing with military technology; to deal with specific French requests for military assistance via Laird; and to convey a message to Prime Minister Wilson about U.S.-French military cooperation. The end of the document is the memorandum itself to Goodpaster from Kissinger on the points approved by Nixon to be sent to him.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

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MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/SENSITIVEACTION

March 10, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Follow-up Actions on Military Cooperation with the French

I have taken steps in three areas to implement your wish to move ahead on military cooperation with the French. Subject to your approval, I would propose to do the following:

1. Convey to Andy Goodpaster, in his capacity as USCINCEUR, a directive instructing him to contact the French Chief of Staff for the purpose of exploring expanded practical cooperation between our theater, naval and strategic forces. Arrangements made at the military level would then be subject to review and approval by yourself and President Pompidou. (Tab A)
2. Direct Secretary Laird to activate promptly the dormant US-French R & D Steering Committee, about which President Pompidou spoke to you. This body, which has not met since 1966, deals with military technology applicable to weapons and materiel below the strategic missile level. (Tab B)
3. Direct Secretary Laird to submit promptly for your approval a course of action responsive to a number of pending French requests for assistance for their missile development, other than nuclear components (Tab C). This will run up against the terms of a Johnson Administration directive (NSAM 294 of 1964) prohibiting all forms of cooperation in this area. The directive to Secretary Laird stipulates that this old NSAM should be set aside in the present instance. Its formal revocation at this time is likely to provoke a bureaucratic battle, leaks and Congressional (Joint Committee) opposition. This matter can be handled later.
4. To meet your commitments to Prime Minister Wilson to keep him informed if anything should develop in the area of US-French military preparation, I have prepared a communication to him on the Pompidou

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visit. It is couched in very general language and I would convey it orally to Ambassador Freeman (Tab D).

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the directive to General Goodpaster (Tab A).

Approve *JM* Disapprove _____

That you approve the directive to Secretary Laird on the US-French R & D Steering Group (Tab B).

Approve *JM* Disapprove _____

That you approve the directive to Secretary Laird on missile cooperation (Tab C).

Approve *JM* Disapprove _____

That you approve the contents of a communication to Prime Minister Wilson, along the lines of the paper at Tab D, on the basis of which I will talk to Ambassador Freeman.

Approve *JM* Disapprove _____

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR

GENERAL ANDREW J. GOODPASTER

SUBJECT: Further Contact with French Military Authorities

Following his conversations with President Pompidou, the President wishes you to resume contact at an early opportunity with the French Chief of Staff.

The President wishes you to explore the following matters:

1. All feasible improvements in practical relations between US and French theater forces, including in the area of tactical nuclear weapons. This is to include the possibility of cooperation with French forces stationed in both Germany and France.
2. All feasible ways of improving practical cooperation between US and French naval forces, wherever operating. (You should arrange, at your discretion, for appropriate support for this aspect of your discussions from US Navy personnel.)
3. Any feasible way to move toward the joint targeting of US and French strategic forces.

The French appear to be principally, though not exclusively, interested in planning for wartime contingencies. They have made clear their continued opposition to peacetime integration. You should be guided accordingly.

Any agreement you may reach should be without commitment and subject to approval by the two Presidents. If feasible, agreements should be embodied in a document of understanding between yourself and your French counterpart, to be submitted to the two Presidents. You should also prepare a separate report with your conclusions, recommendations and comments to the President.

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4. At your discretion, you should seek Presidential guidance for any portion of your exploration on which you deem it necessary, before or during your contacts with the French.

5. These actions should, until further instructions, be conducted on a US EYES ONLY basis and should be given maximum security classification and be made known to US personnel on the most restricted need-to-know basis.

Henry A. Kissinger

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