

March 19, 1971

Memorandum from Helmut Sonnenfeldt to Henry A. Kissinger, 'Decisions on Military Cooperation with France'

Citation:

"Memorandum from Helmut Sonnenfeldt to Henry A. Kissinger, 'Decisions on Military Cooperation with France'", March 19, 1971, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Nixon Presidential Library, National Security Council Institutional Files (NSCIF), box 222, NSDM 103 [2 of 2]. Obtained and contributed by William Burr and included in NPIHP Research Update #2. https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/112245

Summary:

Sonnenfeldt summarizes the options for providing France with more advanced computers and missile assistance, recommending "a minimal response."

Original Language:

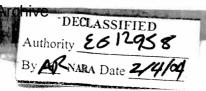
English

Contents:

Original Scan

- -- For the computers, the memorandum recommends maintaining some restrictions on exports for use in French nuclear laboratories, but authorizes a redefinition of "advanced computers"; in practice this would mean allowing the French to use a new generation of IBM computers, but still exclude the most powerful. The same revised definition could serve to update our export controls on computers manufactured abroad by American subsidiaries to keep pace with progress in computer technology. However, to prevent any further delay in our response to the French, this broader question would be handled separately. The Under Secretaries Committee could be requested to work out the precise formula. (In the technical jargon, it probably involves raising the line defining "advanced" computers from a bus rate of 50 million to a level of approximately 200 million bits.)
- -- On missile assistance the memorandum recommends that we cooperate in those items of least sensitivity (discussed at the SRG), but inform the French that there will be limits to our assistance.
- -- On nuclear safety, which is non-controversial, an exchange is recommended, but limited to non-Restricted Data information.

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There are two draft NSDMs, though I am not sure how you want to come out on these issues. The memorandum to the President requests authorization for you to issue the NSDMs if the President concurs in your recommendations. The nuclear safety issues should be treated separately because of the sensitivity of the first two items.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the memorandum to the President (Tab A).

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