

**June 27, 1969**

**Memorandum of Conversation between Ambassador Shriver and the National Security Council, 'Conversation with Schriver on Pompidou Visit, Military Cooperation with France, and Middle East'**

**Citation:**

"Memorandum of Conversation between Ambassador Shriver and the National Security Council, 'Conversation with Schriver on Pompidou Visit, Military Cooperation with France, and Middle East'", June 27, 1969, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, National Security Council Files (NSCF), box 675, France Vol. III. Obtained and contributed by William Burr and included in NPIHP Research Update #2. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/110249>

**Summary:**

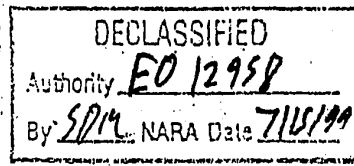
Ambassador Shriver and Kissinger discuss wanting President Pompidou to visit the U.S. soon, and the former states that he will ask President Nixon to give his opinion on this and to approve it soon. Kissinger further states that he does not know if the President wants to aid France, either militarily or by nuclear means, though he does not think it is out of the question that the President may want to do so. Finally, Kissinger notes that the U.S. does not need French aid in negotiations with the Soviets but would not be opposed to their help in talks with the Israelis.

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan



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France

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Date: June 27, 1969  
Place: Mr. Kissinger's Office  
Present: Ambassador Shriver  
Henry A. Kissinger  
Helmut Sonnenfeldt  
Mr. Tanguy

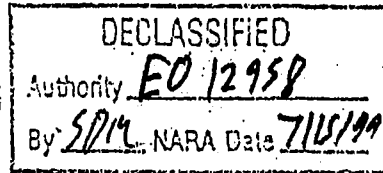
Invitation to President Pompidou to Visit the United States

Ambassador Shriver gave his view that it would be in the U. S. interest to invite President Pompidou to visit the United States in the near future. The Ambassador pointed out that Pompidou does not know our country at all from first-hand experience except for a brief visit to New York City several years ago. The Ambassador also noted that several months ago, Pompidou had made plans to come to the United States as a private citizen and spend one month here visiting different parts of the country including one or two important campuses. The Ambassador concluded that all things considered, it would be desirable if the President could invite Pompidou to come to the United States early next fall even though Pompidou, because of his preoccupation with domestic questions, might not be able to make the visit that soon.

Mr. Kissinger agreed that it would be highly desirable for Pompidou to visit the United States in the near future and he was sure that the President would support the idea. It was pointed out that the interim NSC report on U. S. policy toward post-de Gaulle France contemplated an official invitation from the President to Pompidou.

As to the timing, Mr. Kissinger thought that September might be a little early for the President in view of his existing and anticipated obligations at that time. The simplest solution would be simply to substitute Pompidou, as the new President of France, for former President de Gaulle, who had accepted the President's invitation and had planned to come to the United States sometime in January 1970. However, it might be possible to arrange for Pompidou to come sooner if he was able to.

In response to Ambassador Shriver's suggestion, Mr. Kissinger agreed to speak to the President in the next few days about authorizing the Ambassador to sound out Pompidou with respect to visiting the United States



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sometime in the coming months at the invitation of the President. If the President approved, this preliminary, informal inquiry would enable us to judge when it would be best to send Pompidou a formal invitation. Mr. Kissinger told the Ambassador that he would inform him of the President's reaction after the Ambassador returned to Paris.

### Military Cooperation

Mr. Kissinger said that he did not think that the President had made up his mind yet about military cooperation with France although he was well disposed to explore the possibilities. In approaching the question the President would not let "NATO theology" stand in the way of whatever advantages might accrue to U.S. security through an increase in French military cooperation with the United States.

Mr. Kissinger said that he was less clear about the President's thinking on possible nuclear cooperation with France. However, Mr. Kissinger would not exclude the possibility that the President might be interested in developing a certain amount of cooperation in this field. Mr. Kissinger thought that the President would just as soon have it as not to have it. Moreover, Mr. Kissinger felt that the President would be highly sympathetic to French-U.K. cooperation in the nuclear field. He did not think that the MacMahon Act would be a serious impediment.

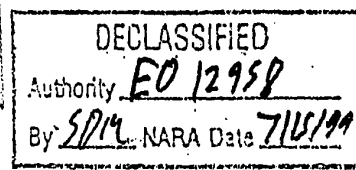
### U.K. Entry

The President continues to favor British entry into the Common Market but he does not want to spend a great deal of U.S. political currency to achieve this objective.

### The French Role in the Middle East

In answer to a question by the Ambassador, Mr. Kissinger said the United States is happy to approach the Middle East problem through the four-power talks provided France supports what the United States is trying to achieve. On the other hand, if the French try to play us off against the Soviets, then we will concentrate our efforts in two-power talks with the latter.

We do not need the French in order to negotiate with the Soviets. It is easy to talk with them directly. The French should realize therefore that there is no brokerage role for them between us and the Soviets. The



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French should try to get back in a position where they can exert some influence over the Israelis. The United States is not going to allow itself to be put in a position where it has the entire onus for putting pressure on the Israelies to accept proposals agreed upon by the four powers.