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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

INFORMATION

WASHINGTON

2627

May 18, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER *B*

SUBJECT: Letter from Eugene V. Rostow *MC7*

Eugene Rostow has written you a letter expressing his thanks for the meeting he had with you on April 17 to discuss the Middle East. He adds two brief points to his oral presentation: 1) There should be no United States initiative for "an imposed settlement," i.e. we should not undertake an initiative (even along the lines he outlined to you) without prior assurances from the parties and support from our allies; and 2) The solution to the Palestinian problem lies in the relationship between Jordan and Israel, perhaps in some kind of federation, but there is nothing to be gained by "redividing the territory of Palestine," (presumably he means there should be no separate Palestinian entity on the West Bank). [Letter at TAB B]

Rostow also warns against any effort by the United States to move to a position of "Peace in Exchange for the 1967 Boundaries." Working from his (and the Israeli) interpretation of Security Council Resolution 242, he says that the United States should base its position on two fundamentals: no Israeli withdrawal until there has been negotiated a peace agreement, and then withdrawal to secure and recognized boundaries negotiated as part of that agreement. He holds open the possibility of recognition of Egypt's 1967 boundary but rules this out for Syria or Jordan. He believes such an approach to an overall settlement would be supported by the American Jewish Community.

We have already discussed at length the major elements of Rostow's proposals. While his letter steps back somewhat from the positions he expressed in his meeting with you, there are no surprises in his comments.

Since you talked with Rostow, I do not believe any response is really required. However, should you wish to send him a brief acknowledgment, a proposed draft is at TAB A.

RECOMMENDATION: That you sign the letter to Mr. Rostow at TAB A. [Paul Theis concurs in the text.]

Attachments: TABs A and B