Kissinger as National Security Adviser, 1968-1973

Henry Kissinger and American Power

Osher Lifelong Learning 2018
Henry A. Kissinger
Nixon and Kissinger
TV appearance

- 19681202CBS 001.mpg
William Rogers, Secretary of State
America in the late 1960s

1.) Half a million men in Vietnam – no strategy for victory

2.) Serious racial conflict and violent polarization at home/despite strong economy

3.) Perceived over-extension in foreign policy commitments and defense spending – country turning inward, public support for foreign commitments waning
Nixon’s goal: “Peacemaker”

- 1.) Nixon talked about an era negotiation replacing the era of confrontation – compared himself to Woodrow Wilson, - a peacemaker
Kissinger Crafts an Image, 1969-1970 – President’s top adviser

1.) Failure of linkage with Soviets, slow progress with China – the Korea parallel

2.) Secret bombing of Cambodia – “madman theory” – when the bombing is revealed, Kissinger goes along with wiretaps of NSC staff and journalists

3.) Failure of negotiations with Hanoi
   - Midway conference, Nixon Doctrine, Defense Secretary Laird’s role in Vietnamization, beginning of troop withdrawals – Kissinger’s uneasiness with this strategy

4.) Plans for Operation Duck Hook – “savage, punishing blows”
Kissinger and Vietnam

1.) Hope for “linkage” – Soviet help in securing a settlement

2.) Planning for Operation Duck Hook, escalation of the war

3.) Opposition to Vietnamization – the “salted peanuts” memo
The Frustrations of Vietnam, 1969

4.) Growth in antiwar sentiment – moratoriums of October and November 1969 –

5.) Nixon’s - Silent Majority Speech – polarization as a strategy – attacks on the media by Agnew

6.) Few protests in December - First draft lottery – December 1969 – buying time for negotiations
Kissinger as “secret swinger”
1970 Nixon strategy: New Realism in foreign policy

1.) continued withdrawals – 150,000 – secret negotiations conducted by Kissinger in Paris

2.) invasion of Cambodia – May 1970 – domestic reaction – Kent State

3.) China – no progress – Mao reverses view after Cambodia
Other Foreign Policy Frustrations and Achievements

1.) Middle East – Continuing Violence, Jordanian Crisis September 1970

(Kissinger – “‘You can’t lose them all.’”)

2.) Chile – Allende’s Victory – Kissinger’s role in plotting a coup – killing of General Schneider – debate over Kissinger’s responsibility

3.) Increasing European Assertiveness, German Ostpolitik

4.) Lack of Agreement with Soviets on Arms Control – no summit
1.) Republicans gained two seats in the Senate, but lost 9 in the House – Democratic margin in House elections increased from 1.1 million to 4.5 million

2.) Nixon – thought he might be a one-term president; considering end of the war announcement – tells advisers to highlight Kissinger, because of media favoritism

https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/educational-resources/bob-haldeman-s-audio-diary-entry-on-nixon-s-plans-for-withdrawal-from-vietnam

4.) Kissinger decides to stay

19710116CBS 001.mpg