Celebrity Diplomat

Henry Kissinger and the Dilemmas of American Power

Osher Lifelong Learning 2015
Henry A. Kissinger
Review

1.) Kissinger’s rise to prominence from refugee to Cold War “defense intellectual”

2.) Nixon’s selection of Kissinger to centralize foreign policy decision-making in the White House, gain domestic political benefits

3.) Failure to make much progress on ending the war in Vietnam – increasing domestic discontent
1970 – Vietnam and Cambodia

- Redefining foreign policy – Nixon Doctrine, “new Realism” in foreign policy – less unilateral; American retrenchment

- 1.) continued withdrawals – Nixon announces the withdrawal of 150,000 on April 20

- 2.) Secret negotiations conducted by Kissinger in Paris

- 3.) coup in Cambodia – overthrow of Sihanouk brings to power pro-US regime
Cambodian "Incursion"
Nixon’s Seventh Crisis

1.) Nixon challenged by Congress and the demonstrations

2.) Kissinger – tense meeting with former Harvard colleagues; Nixon admires his loyalty
Other Foreign Policy Frustrations and Achievements

1.) Middle East – Soviet troops in Egypt, Continuing Violence, Jordanian Crisis September 1970; (Kissinger – “‘You can’t lose them all.’”)

2.) Chile – Allende’s Victory – US tries covert action

3.) Increasing European Assertiveness, German Ostpolitik

4.) Lack of Agreement with Soviets on Arms Control – no summit

5.) Lack of progress with China
Midterm elections – Republican losses

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 (60 Minutes profile)
Nixon and Elvis – December 1970
Invasion of Laos
Nixon’s Frustrations, Kissinger’s Reassurance

- Low point in the Nixon presidency, Laos invasion had gone badly, Republican congressional leaders wanted to set a date to get out of Vietnam, Nixon resented their pressure

- http://millercenter.org/presidentialrecordings/rmn-001-0101

- Shortly after this speech, things began to break for Nixon – the Chinese approved a trip, the Russians wanted talks on SALT
SALT negotiations

Present Nuclear Strength

- ICBMs
  - U.S.: 1,054
  - U.S.S.R.: 1,530

- Submarine-launched Missiles
  - U.S.: 656
  - U.S.S.R.: 560

- Long-range Bombers
  - U.S.: 455
  - U.S.S.R.: 140

Opening to China
Kissinger as National Celebrity
Indo-Pakistani War
Nixon Policy

1.) Supportive of Pakistan – “Don’t squeeze Yahya.”

2.) Hostility toward India and Prime Minister Gandhi

3.) Official neutrality but tilt toward Pakistan

nixontapes.org

4.) http://nixontapes.org/hak/1971-12-07_Nixon_016-037.mp3
India-Pakistan

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OrhVsuiZY1c&list=PLrISWmDC_QZ86fhY1weUQ2iobozmWhwHp&index=4
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QLCKkMvz8w
Kissinger as Nixon’s “Secret Agent” – TV coverage
The trip to China: February 1972
Easter offensive, April 1972
Nixon’s gamble

1.) Nixon orders renewed bombing of North Vietnam and the mining of Haiphong harbor – against Kissinger’s advice

2.) Soviets don’t cancel the summit

3.) North Vietnam pressured to settle by Soviets and China
The Soviet Summit
Vietnam and the Decent Interval

- http://millercenter.org/presidentialclassroom/exhibits/nixon-on-and-kissinger-on-south-vietnamese-president
McGovern’s Campaign – Come Home, America
Impact on the election

- Chapter II - Memoirs V. Tapes: President Nixon & the December Bombings

- “wiped McGovern out now”
Nixon Landslide – 1968 vs. 1972
Time “Men of the Year” 1972
Christmas bombing
Paris Peace treaty, January 1973