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# Ending the Vietnam War: A History of America's Involvement in and Extrication from the Vietnam War

By Henry Kissinger



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**Ending the Vietnam War: A History of America's Involvement in and Extrication from the Vietnam War** By Henry Kissinger

## The Definitive Account

Many other authors have written about what they thought happened -- or thought should have happened -- in Vietnam, but it was Henry Kissinger who was there at the epicenter, involved in every decision from the long, frustrating negotiations with the North Vietnamese delegation to America's eventual extrication from the war. Now, for the first time, Kissinger gives us in a single volume an in-depth, inside view of the Vietnam War, personally collected, annotated, revised, and updated from his bestselling memoirs and his book *Diplomacy*.

Here, Kissinger writes with firm, precise knowledge, supported by meticulous documentation that includes his own memoranda to and replies from President Nixon. He tells about the tragedy of Cambodia, the collateral negotiations with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, the disagreements within the Nixon and Ford administrations, the details of all negotiations in which he was involved, the domestic unrest and protest in the States, and the day-to-day military to diplomatic realities of the war as it reached the White House. As compelling and exciting as Barbara Tuchman's *The Guns of August*, *Ending the Vietnam War* also reveals insights about the bigger-than-life personalities -- Johnson, Nixon, de Gaulle, Ho Chi Minh, Brezhnev -- who were caught up in a war that forever changed international relations. This is history on a grand scale, and a book of overwhelming importance to the public record.



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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

As a relatively unknown Harvard professor, Kissinger played an interesting-though entirely cloaked and somewhat serendipitous-role in one of Lyndon Johnson's muddled attempts to end the Vietnam War through diplomacy. Later on, he sat at the nexus of American power during his days as Nixon's foreign policy adviser, national security adviser and secretary of state. In addition to being a major player in the events he narrates here, Kissinger is also a scholar of the first rank and a gifted prose stylist. Thus readers interested in the Vietnam period but unfamiliar with Kissinger's previous books will find this new volume worthwhile. All others will find it redundant, nearly entirely derivative from chapters previously published in his three volumes of memoirs and his study *Diplomacy*. "I have rearranged and occasionally rewritten the material to provide a consecutive narrative," Kissinger writes in his foreword, and "reshaped the narrative from the anecdotal tone of memoirs to a more general account of the period...." Like the previous works from which it is mined, this new book provides a cogently written insider's take on the process of shutting down America's involvement in the long Southeast Asia conflict. The sections documenting Kissinger's day-to-day, face-to-face skirmishes with the North Vietnamese over a negotiating table in Paris are particularly engaging. Overall, Kissinger's account of America's venture in Vietnam and his role in that shipwreck is factually accurate, eminently informed and masterfully crafted. But it is also an account that many of us have already read.

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From [Booklist](#)

"This book deals with the way the United States ended its involvement in the longest war in its history." The opening line of this book is as unambiguous as its title. Kissinger was, of course, President Nixon's national security advisor, later his secretary of state, and is currently an academic and author. In fact, Kissinger's latest book is really a selection of chapters gathered from four previous books, which he has rearranged and somewhat rewritten. In this insider book par excellence, Kissinger keeps fairly, if not wholly, grounded in objectivity as he records and interprets events in this "black hole of American historical memory." As he sees it, the problem with the Vietnam War by the time Nixon became president was not that American involvement there needed to be terminated--"every administration in office during the Vietnam war sought to end it"--but *how* to end it. The war on the home front brought into glaring light the "tension" between U.S. idealism and the need to be immersed in the pragmatic world of international power-play. To the author, the lesson of Vietnam--"the tragedy described in these pages"--is that "America must never again permit its promise to be overwhelmed by its divisions." The density of Kissinger's prose style will not keep most readers from realizing the important place of this book within the complete historiography of the Vietnam War. *Brad Hooper*

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### About the Author

Henry Kissinger was the fifty-sixth Secretary of State. Born in Germany, Dr. Kissinger came to the United States in 1938 and was naturalized a US citizen in 1943. He served in the US Army and attended Harvard University, where he later became a member of the faculty. Among the awards he has received are the Nobel Peace Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the Medal of Liberty. Dr. Kissinger is currently Chairman of Kissinger Associates, Inc., an international consulting firm.

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