

NYTimes MAY 1 1975  
**Look on My  
Works...**

By Anthony Lewis

WASHINGTON, April 30—The war is over. Did we think we would ever say those words? They bring relief, pain, exhaustion, an aching desire to forget. But the rest cannot be silence—not if America is to restore her integrity and her vision after these ravaging years.

The Vietnam experience cries out for us to re-examine our premises in the world. Inevitably, the process of re-examination must bring into question the man who has dominated our foreign policy these last six years as few individuals ever have. To focus on him at a moment of his failure may seem unfair; but then he sought the power—and used it in ways that cost hundreds of thousands of lives in Cambodia and Vietnam.

Regardless of one's general view of Henry Kissinger, there is a weighty philosophical reason for him to leave office now. That is the principle of responsibility. When a democracy suffers a disastrous policy failure, resignation of the responsible official helps clear the air. It allows new policies to be developed without the hindrance of personal attachment to the old. It allows public faith in leadership to be restored.

When the French were defeated at Dienbienphu in 1954, their Government fell. A man with the courage to face reality, Pierre Mendès-France, came in as Premier and liquidated France's long adventure in Indochina with surprisingly little public trauma. France emerged stronger.

We do not have a parliamentary system, but the political and psychological necessities at a time of failure are not so different—as Lyndon John-

Of course Mr. Kissinger is not the sole author of the American debacle in Indochina. Behind him stretches a long line of failed men. But the principle of responsibility usually attaches to those immediately associated with policy disasters, and that is appropriate in Mr. Kissinger's case for a number of reasons.

The early American decisions on Indochina can be regarded as blundering efforts to do good. But by 1969 it was clear to most of the world—and most Americans—that the intervention had been a disastrous mistake. Instead of facing that truth, Mr. Kissinger sought to avoid it by widening the war and then pulling American combat forces out under cover of the illusion that "stability" had been achieved.

It was a cynical policy, because Mr. Kissinger well knew that the Saigon regime did not have the political base to last a minute without perpetual American intervention on its behalf. The cynicism intensified when he declared "peace" and then allowed Saigon to block the political terms of the Paris agreement—the one chance for peaceful transition.

The end was worst of all. As illusion crumbled in Vietnam, Mr. Kissinger swung between hysteria and immobility. He pronounced America faithless before the world. He insisted that the country stick to such failed ideas as more arms for Saigon. He tried to arouse recrimination and then piously deplored it.

A month ago there was still a chance for a cease-fire and a negotiated settlement—a chance to save lives—but Mr. Kissinger clung to Nguyen Van Thieu. He let his ambassador in Saigon delay evacuation until the final shame was inevitable: Americans clubbing the fingers of Vietnamese trying to climb the walls of the embassy compound.

After these last weeks, the extraordinary era of a personalized American foreign policy—with one man making it, executing it, negotiating—must be at an end. Such established outside figures as Clark Clifford are saying out loud that Mr. Kissinger should go. Within the executive branch, within his own State Department, there is growing disillusionment with the manner and substance of his performance.

If he should hang on, Mr. Kissinger will be operating under new restraints, executive and Congressional. And President Ford may see the advantage, to him, of having a new Secretary of State: one not tied to the failures of the past, one who could restore dignity and credibility to that office.

But whatever happens to the person, there will be deeper questions to answer about American policy in the Kissinger years. They are questions about means and ends.

The means with which the world has become familiar are bombs and threats, secret undertakings and tall tales—the diplomacy not of Metternich but of Curtis LeMay and Baron Munchausen. The stated end has been "stability." In practice that has meant attempts to freeze the status quo, and a concern for power rather than humanity.

Do those means and ends represent the American vision two hundreds years after we made our revolution? The real question is not for Henry Kissinger but for ourselves.

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## ABROAD AT HOME

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son understood in 1968. Moreover, Mr. Kissinger has taken a truculent line toward our corrective institution, which is Congress: Blaming it for South Vietnam's collapse and drafting for President Ford's State of the World speech a series of ill-timed demands that Congress repeal its restraints on his power.

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The second of two articles on "The Worker as a Commodity," by Richard M. Pfeffer, will appear on Friday.