



## Henry Kissinger Says US 'Infinitely' More Polarised Today Than During Vietnam War

### Description

**USA: Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger recently shared his opinion of the Ukraine crisis and Russia's ongoing special military operation in that country. At the latest World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, he suggested that it was time for Kiev to think about a diplomatic settlement of the conflict, even if that means territorial concessions.**

Henry Kissinger, a geopolitics colossus who turned 99 on 27 May, has claimed that the US is "infinitely" more divided today than at the time of the Vietnam War (1955-1975). The former US Secretary of State to presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, whose book, *Leadership*, is set to come out on July 5, offered his opinion of the present state of US internal politics, the Ukraine crisis and US the stand-off with China in an exclusive interview for *The Sunday Times*.

### 'Unremitting Hostility of the Opposition'

The patriarch of international politics deplored the partisan antipathy that has surged in the US over the past several decades. The American National Election Studies surveys and polls have increasingly shown that [Democrats](#) and Republicans view members of the other party more as enemies than simply as political opponents.

According to Kissinger, in the early Seventies, there was "still a possibility of bipartisanship" in the US, before the "hostility" firmly took root.

"The national interest was a meaningful term, it was not in itself a subject of debate. That has ended. Every administration now faces the unremitting hostility of the opposition and in a way that is built on different premises ... The unstated but very real debate in America right now is about whether the basic values of America have been valid," underscored Kissinger, a Republican since the Fifties.

The “values” in question refer to the sacrosanct status of the American Constitution and the “primacy of individual liberty and equality before the law”, the publication explained.

Kissinger deplored the stance espoused at present by the “progressive left,” which, according to him, argues that “unless these basic values are overturned, and the principles of [their] execution altered, we have no moral right even to carry out our own domestic policy, much less our foreign policy”.

Kissinger warned that this is “not a common view yet, but it is sufficiently virulent to drive everything else in its direction and to prevent unifying policies ... [It] is [a view held] by a large group of the intellectual community, probably dominating all universities and many media.”

Kissinger offered a dire warning of what such “unbridgeable divisions” are fraught with.

“Either the society collapses and is no longer capable of carrying out its missions under either leadership, or it transcends them ...”

The veteran foreign policy scholar agreed that sometimes an “external shock” or an “external enemy” was resorted to to bridge this “divide”.

At this point Kissinger broached the subject of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, where Russia launched a special military operation to demilitarise and de-Nazify the country on 24 February after the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics (DPR and LPR) appealed for help in defending themselves against shelling from Ukrainian forces.

Kissinger recently sparked controversy by his brief virtual speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos on 23 May. Movement toward peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine needs to begin within the next two months or so, he said, before the conflict escalates to a point where tensions are much harder to overcome.

Kissinger, known for his efforts to ease tensions between the US and the Soviet Union, emphasised Russia’s importance to Europe and, in his Davos address, urged western countries not to get swept up “in the mood of the moment”, as he advocated that the West pressure Kiev into accepting negotiations even if that means territorial concessions.

The seasoned US scholar, renowned for his wise statements on geopolitics, faced a backlash for his calls for negotiations between Russia and Ukraine.

Kissinger, who played an integral role in developing the relationship between the US and the People’s

Republic of China during the Nixon administration, found himself blacklisted by Ukraine's notorious website Mirotvorets (Peacemaker) for "participation in Russia's special information operation against Ukraine". He was also charged with "propaganda, blackmail and encroachment on the territorial integrity of Ukraine".

As western countries seek to isolate Russia with a sweeping sanctions policy while funnelling weapons into Ukraine and eyeing NATO expansion, Henry Kissinger predicted in The Sunday Times interview that "big issues are going to take place in the relations of the Middle East and Asia to Europe and America."

Against the backdrop of squabbling over Finland and Sweden's NATO [membership bid](#) with Turkey, Russia has continuously reiterated that further expansion of the NATO bloc will not bring greater security to Europe.

Kissinger, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1973, claimed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an "institution whose components don't necessarily have compatible views. They came together on Ukraine because that was reminiscent of [older] threats and they did very well, and I support what they did. The question will now be how to end that war. At its end a place has to be found for Ukraine and a place has to be found for Russia – if we don't want Russia to become an outpost of China in Europe."

## Obligation to Avert 'Catastrophic Collision'

On the issue of China, Kissinger believed that Beijing and Washington were "facing each other as the ultimate contestants", who are "governed by incompatible domestic systems".

"And this is occurring when technology means that a war would set back civilisation, if not destroy it," said Kissinger, agreeing that the two superpowers "have a minimum common obligation to prevent [a catastrophic collision] from happening".

Kissinger concluded by acknowledging his profound concerns about the lack of a dialogue between superpowers, as "other countries will want to exploit this rivalry".

**"So we're heading into a very difficult period," Kissinger foretold.**

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