

Henry Kissinger is considered to be one of the most influential diplomats of U.S. history. During the decade he spent directing the U.S. foreign affairs from one of the top level positions, he achieved many important successes. His power extended far beyond the normal competence of the secretary of state. His personal skills, which were an important asset in obtaining such an influential position, combined with the complicated internal political situation in the United States. At the time Kissinger entered the Middle East conflict as an important actor, the Nixon Administration fought against charges connected with the Watergate affair and the president consequently had little time and energy to devote to the foreign policy. Henry Kissinger could thus become the creator of American diplomacy and its main representative. The documents about the Yom Kippur War and the U.S. engagement in the region, which were declassified much later and which this thesis make use of, show that the real power of Henry Kissinger was much broader than widely believed.