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ANALYTICAL PAPER ON THE VIETNAM WAR

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One of the topics discussed regarding United States history is the ²Vietnam War. The battle took place between 1954 and 1975, between the North and South Vietnam where the US was centrally involved. The United States feared the spread of communism, which would give the Soviet Union more power. The nation, therefore, funded the South with money, weapons and soldiers as its victory would control communism spreading. As a result, different debates have developed concerning the involvement of the United States in the war. King Martin Luther made one of the significant arguments in 1967 with the title 'Beyond Vietnam'. Another claim was published in the New York Times in 1978, with the title 'our Vietnam duty is not over'. The two pieces discuss the role of United States in Vietnam War, but the ideas raised are different, as discussed below.

The leading similarity between the pieces is the idea that the United States played a significant role in the war and thus need to be responsible.² Martin Luther states that the Vietnam people find the United States as strange liberators. In 1945, the nation declared independence under the Ho Chi Minh rule and quoted the US, but the statement was not respected.¹ Instead, the US-supported France to begin the war to regain its former colony indicating the United States did not find the Vietnamese ready for independence. The opportunity to be independent was denied for nine years, where at that time, the US was funding France in the war. After some point, the French lost the willingness to engage in the war, but the United States went ahead supporting the war and supplying more soldiers and weapons. In the end, thousands of lives were lost especially the children and women.

The New York Times article shows similar claims on the United States contribution in the war. ¹The paper pays more attention to the refugees where Thailand was the most

¹ King Jr, Martin Luther. "Beyond Vietnam: A time to break silence." speech, Riverside Church, New York, NY, April 4 (1967).

²The New York Times. 'Our Vietnam Duty is not over'. February 28 (1978).

affected as its many Laotian refugees were returned to Communist Laos. The news gives the example of the Laotian woman with children forced by the Thai police to cross the border.²

Moreover, others were moved to prisons with gun threats and were considered to be better treated. On the other hand, the United States was worse in handling the immigrants. Notably, about 100,000 and 82,000 Indochinese and Laotians respectively were in the Thailand camps. Despite the large numbers, the United States did not establish a permanent asylum for them. The statement implies that the United States was inconsiderate as the government-funded the war but would not take care of the consequences. The pieces, therefore, consider the United States irresponsible.

The texts differ regarding the actions that the United States should have taken in becoming responsible for the Vietnam War. According to Martin Luther's speech, the US was supposed to end the bombing in all the North and South parts.¹ The nation was also to announce a unilateral stop fire to create the hope for negotiations to end the war and after that put strategies in place, to control the battlegrounds in South East Asia by cutting the military buildup in Thailand. Martin Luther also claimed that the US government had to agree that National Liberation Front was approved by South Vietnamese and thus plan negotiations with it to discuss the future of the Vietnam administration. Finally, Luther believed that the US should set a date to eliminate its soldiers and funds from Vietnam, as stated by the Geneva Agreement of 1954.

He believed that these actions would convince the Vietnamese that the US had goodwill for the poor and the rest who suffered during the war. The New Times post was different as it dwelt on the immigrants and people displaced by the war.² The piece stated that

¹ Martin Luther. (1967).

²The New York Times. (1978).

the parole leadership should have agreed not only the boat people into the United States but larger groups from the Thailand camps. The criteria for admission should also be lenient so that even those who lacked close relatives in the nation were allowed to enter. Moreover, the Eilberg bill should have been amended so the parole officials would adopt flexible admission procedures.

In a nutshell, both texts insist that the United States was irresponsible in its involvement in the Vietnam War. Martin Luther says that the government did not consider the poor and Vietnam's government decisions while the post claims the nation did not take care of the aftermath. However, they differ in solving the issues where Luther goes deeper into the problem while the post focuses on refugees alone.

Bibliography

- King Jr, Martin Luther. "Beyond Vietnam: A time to break silence." *speech, Riverside Church, New York, NY, April 4 (1967)*.
- The New York Times. 'Our Vietnam Duty is not over'. February 28 (1978).

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