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Auszug aus:

*Speech Analysis: Martin Luther King - Why I oppose the War
in Vietnam*

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revolution in China. They were led by Ho Chi Minh. And this is a little known fact. And these people declared themselves independent in 1945. They quoted our Declaration of Independence in their document of freedom. And yet our government refused to recognize them. President Truman said they were not ready for independence. And so we fell victim as a nation at that time of the same deadly arrogance that has poisoned the international

situation for all of these years. France then set out to reconquer its former colony. And they fought eight long, hard, brutal years trying to reconquer Vietnam. You know who helped France? It was the United States of America. It came to the point that we were meeting more than eighty percent of the war costs. And even when France started despairing of its reckless action, we did not.

And in 1954, a conference was called at Geneva. And an agreement was reached, because France had been defeated at Dienbienphu. But even after that, and even after the Geneva Accord, we did not stop. We must face the sad fact that our government sought in a real sense to sabotage the Geneva Accord.

Well, after the French were defeated, it looked as if independence and land reform would come through the Geneva Agreement. But instead the United States came and started supporting a man named Diem who turned out to be one of the most ruthless dictators in the history of the world. He set out to silence all opposition; people were brutally murdered merely because they had raised their voices against the brutal policies of Diem. And the peasants watched and cringed as Diem ruthlessly rooted out all opposition. And who are we supporting in Vietnam today? It's a man by the name of General Ky who fought with the French against his own people, and who said on one occasion that the greatest hero of his life is Hitler. This is who we are supporting in Vietnam today. Oh, our government, and the press generally, won't tell us these things. But God told me to tell you this morning. The truth must be told. Let me say, finally, that I oppose the war in Vietnam because I love America. I speak out against this war, not in anger, but with anxiety and sorrow in my heart, and above all, with a passionate desire to see our beloved country stand as the moral example of the world. I speak out against this war because I am disappointed with America.

I call on Washington today. I call on every man and woman of good-will all over America today. I call on the young men of America who must make a choice today and take a stand on this issue. Tomorrow may be too late. The book may close. And don't let anybody make you think that God chose America as his divine messianic foster being - a sort of policeman of the whole world. And God has a way of standing before the nations with judgement and it seems that I can hear God saying to America: "You are too arrogant. And if you don't change your ways, I will rise up and break the backbone of your power. And I'll place it in the hands of a nation that doesn't even know my name. Be still and know that I'm God."

Vocabulary:

to make a passionate plea - to make a statement or appeal full of strong feelings

major - very important

to estimate - to think, to guess

to classify - to put into a group

much. . . goes for salaries - reference to the vast bureaucracy, of the American welfare system

to compel [-'] to force

recognition - act of getting to know or discovering s.th.

to devastate['---] to destroy completely

extraordinary - very unusual proportion number, percentage

relative to - compared to

to cripple - to hurt s.o. so much that he can no longer use his arms or legs; here: to hurt mentally and socially

to guarantee - to promise, to make sure that s.o. keeps or gets s.th.

to be faced with - to be presented with s.th. (one cannot avoid)

to seat - to provide seats for

brutal - cruel and violent

solidarity - unity based on agreement of interests or aims

manipulation - act of controlling or pushing s.o. in the direction wanted

awareness – consciousness, knowledge

desperate - being without hope

to reject - here: to throw away, or push aside. as useless

compassion - feeling for the suffering of others

conviction - belief

massive - very large or great, heavy

dose - measured amount

to hit home (coll.) - to be exactly to the point

to raise one's voice against - to speak out against, to criticize



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