

# The United States

## A Country That's Lost Its Way

Frank H. Joyce

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Doc Greene is confused. So are 170 million other white Americans, including Hubert Humphrey and Roy Wilkins.

It all started when they were born white in a society which told them all their lives that they were better because they were whiter. And which then organized itself to make it come true.

In a column he writes regularly for a newspaper which calls itself *The Detroit News*, Doc Greene spoke for most Americans when he condemned Dr. Martin Luther King for finally coming out against the war in Vietnam.

Niggers are supposed to know their place. And the war in Vietnam is, to quote Doctor Greene, "an American problem, not a racial problem." Just who the Hell does Martin Luther King think he is speaking out about an American problem? He is only a NEGRO leader and he had better not forget it. Never mind the Nobel peace prize. That's only for added stature when he keeps his place.

Race is an American problem, of course. And the war is a racial problem. Gooks and Niggers. Yellow dwarfs with pocket knives is the way Lyndon Johnson characterized it. Would you want one to marry your sister? Could he live next door—this little man you're dying for? Sending the United States to fight for freedom and Democracy in non-white Vietnam, said Dick Gregory, "is like sending a convicted child molester to babysit with your daughter."

Watts and Saigon. Who does not believe that there is a connection between the inability of this nation to understand the drive for liberation of American black people and the drive for liberation of Vietnamese yellow people? Communist agitators, says Senator Eastland of the Mississippi civil rights workers. Communist aggressors, says Lyndon Johnson of the National Liberation Front. Is there, perhaps, a connection between the War on Poverty and the pacification program for south Viet Nam? They certainly look the same.

Dr. King, it is argued, is hurting his cause. That is a self-fulfilling prophecy if ever there was one. It's what they say about everything. They said it about the sit-ins, then about the marches, then about voter registration, then about moving to Chicago. And of course they were right. Most Negroes are worse off today than they were in 1960. More Negroes live in segregated housing. More Negro children attend segregated schools. A higher percentage are unemployed. More Negro mothers die in childbirth, relative to whites than did before.

More Negro babies die before reaching the age of one year than did before, both relative to whites and absolutely. And the gap in income between the average Negro family and the average white family rose from \$1,600 in 1950 to over \$3,000 in 1965.

It's all in the records. The Department of Labor and the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and the Health Education and Welfare and Commerce departments will tell you about it if you care to look.

The reason is that white people control everything in this society. They do so to their own benefit. They do not like people who are not white. In Louisville, Kentucky they throw rocks and bottles and lob cherry bombs with slingshots and shoot pistols. In Vietnam they drop napalm and chemicals and anti-personnel weapons with B-52s and F-101s. But of course it doesn't have anything to do with race. Neither did proposition 14 or the homeowner's ordinance. If you don't believe it, ask the people who sponsored the legislation. Or the people who passed it.

The war isn't racist because it's integrated, "even though it is an equality of danger and death... I was somewhat thrilled by the view," says Doc Greene, who has been there and seen it with his own eyes.

And it is only fair, now he tells us, that a disproportionate share of Negroes are dying in Vietnam now because in World War II a disproportionate share of whites died because Negroes were segregated from combat. The only problem is the whites died to defend the American Way of Life. And the American way of life doesn't include black people. Except as slaves of one sort or another.

It is all part of a larger problem this view that Doc Greene has. It is a typical view; most Americans agree with it. But then most Americans are always getting confused about who is the criminal and who is the victim.

It is Stokely Carmichael's fault that there was a riot in Nashville. And it is his fault that Lester Maddox and Lurleen Wallace and Ronald Reagan got elected.

And it is Adam Clayton Powell's fault that there is a double standard. And if black people march into white neighborhoods it is their own fault if they get rocks thrown at them or their cars dumped in a river. Sure, and it was the Jews fault that Hitler put them all in gas ovens.

Yes, we used to admire Dr. King. But now he has strayed from the path of whiteousness. He is "A Leader Who Has Lost His Way."

No, Dr. Greene. You are wrong. It is the country which has lost its way. If it ever had one. It may be just as well.

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