

Katie Scott

We all know MLK was anti-violence, but there were few times when we realized how that applied to all areas of his life. One of Rev. King's least famous quotes about this stance has all but been lost to history, just an opening line in one of his anti-Vietnam speeches. But perhaps this quote, "A time comes when silence is betrayal," is more impactful to modern America than MLK could have ever imagined due to it applying to modern day racism and the US' current day actions.

The quote, "A time comes when silence is betrayal," is beneficial to remember in the 21st century because it truly applies itself to how actions against racism will prevail. We all remember in 2020 after the death of George Floyd how protesters took to the streets with a rallying cry of, "White silence is violence!" That is practically the same sentiment, how not saying anything is siding with the oppressor. We can even look at modern day measures to combat racism federally. The C.R.O.W.N. act has been a modern day civil rights bill that 18/50 states have adopted. The bill which, "prohibits racial discrimination based on hair texture and protective hairstyles," and has been passed in so many states because of black people talking about and solving a problem, and non-black people listening and helping as well. This solidarity exemplifies what happens when we aren't silent and we help each other, one small step at a time.

"A time comes when silence is betrayal," is also so impactful for the US today when looking at our country's actions. When talking about this quote, two things in particular come to mind. The War on Terror, which eerily mirrors the Vietnam War and the Russia/Ukraine war. The War on Terror was said to be started by 9/11 but recently people speculate that the decision to invade Iraq specifically was more about their oil. People were silent during the invasions in the Middle East and that led to, "7,075 Americans dying," and, "460,000 Iraqi deaths." The war was costly and mirrored Vietnam, except this time American jingoism prevented us from speaking up about the horrors in the Middle East. Another time the US has been in a situation that could've turned out like the Middle East and Vietnam was the Russia/Ukraine war. I think the US is doing what we should always do in foreign wars that do not directly impact us. We made a clear stance to side with NATO and put sanctions on Russian trade. We've let Ukrainians apply for asylum and have sent weapons over. These

efforts are all done in the background so that we can focus on work on issues the American people find necessary to solve first. If we want to involve ourselves more then we will be loud about it, showing how our quiet voice has as much impact as our loud one.