

Johnson's doctrine essay sample

War



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Throughout the history of the United States, the presidency has greatly affected our nation and influenced where we are today. After reading two scholarly journal articles discussing the "Johnson Doctrine" and the "Nixon Doctrine", one can learn much about the presidency during this particular time of policy. Their decisions and policies as president came during a rough time for the United States. Their doctrines greatly impacted foreign affairs during Vietnam and the Cold War. It's important to analyze each president's own doctrine first for their differences, and then compare both for their similarities. Lyndon Johnson took office following John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1961. At this time, some major issues concerning Johnson were the U. S involvement with Latin America, as well as the Cold War. In May of 1965, the "Johnson Doctrine" was introduced when he addressed the nation, stating that "the American nations cannot, must not, and will not permit the establishment of another Communist government in the Western Hemisphere." He also stated the importance of preventing a Communist takeover of the Latin American republic.

His address created a new principle of U. S foreign policy. Johnson's doctrine outlined similar objectives to what the United States had been trying to do since the late nineteenth century. The United States had become an overwhelming influence to the Western Hemisphere in trying to shape Latin America's development. In addition, the U. S has attempted to maintain peace and order throughout the world, and eliminate European influence on other countries. By the time Johnson was in office, the nonintervention pledge which said the U. S would not intervene with foreign nations no longer applied. In relation to the Cold War, security, stability, and

anticommunism became Johnson's primary goals against a possible war with Russia. Johnson kept the United States military involvement with Guatemala, Brazil, and British Guiana. With the domino theory as a major issue on his agenda, Johnson further involved the U. S in Latin America by engaging in military conflict with the Dominican Republic. The U. S conflict in the Dominican Republic created some stability, but afforded no guarantees of prevention of a communist takeover. To combat this, Johnson wanted the CIA to prepare the Dominican Republic for a presidential election with a candidate favored by the U. S government.

President Balaguer, who supported U. S foreign-policy initiatives, fulfilled Johnson's wishes. In short, the " Johnson Doctrine" should be seen as a desire for the United States to keep control of the Western Hemisphere. Johnson's successor, Richard Nixon was faced with some difficult decisions during his presidency. He came forth with a new set of foreign-policy principles known as the " Nixon Doctrine." Its main principle was that the U. S would call upon its allies and friends to use their own manpower to " defend" themselves against " Communist aggression," while America supplied only advice, aid, and arms. Nixon planned to accomplish this doctrine through " Vietnamization", which meant he wanted to remove American forces from Indochina while continuing to defend South Vietnam, winning the war, achieving peace, and preserving American " honor". The Nixon doctrine first became known on July 25th, 1969, when he gave a public speech in Guam, his purpose being to gain public support, and develop a strategy for the Vietnam War. Nixon stated he was " convinced that the way

to avoid becoming involved in another war in Asia was for the United States to continue to play a significant role.”

He believed that in the next few decades, the Pacific would be the greatest threat to peace. He continued saying, “ We need policies that will see that we play a part and a part that is appropriate to the conditions that we will find.” Most importantly, Nixon wanted to avoid the failures from Vietnam to occur in the future. He said towards the end of his speech, “ I don't say that critically of how we got into Vietnam, but I do know that we can learn from past experience, and we must avoid that kind of involvement in the future.” Immediately following Nixon's speech, the newspapers began using the term “ Nixon Doctrine”. Five days later, Nixon met with President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam to tell him more American troops would be withdrawn, and continue to be withdrawn according to American timetables. In respect to the “ Nixon Doctrine”, the press and the public saw the war in Vietnam as ending. Many took Nixon's word that the U. S would not get involved in future Vietnams.

On the negative side, the public viewed Nixon as violating his doctrine when he gave orders to bomb Cambodia. Both the “ Johnson Doctrine” and the “ Nixon Doctrine” were similar in that both presidents attempted to limit their involvement in foreign affairs yet felt compelled to halt the spread of communism. Today, the United States continues to abide by these doctrines. President George H. W. Bush dispatched forces in 1989 to Panama to overthrow Manuel Antonio Noriega. The U. S also got involved with Iraq in the early 1990's. His son, President George W. Bush followed suit in 2002 by attempting to overthrow the president of Venezuela. Once again, The U. S

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got involved with Iraq in 2003, this time capturing their ruthless dictator Saddam Hussein. The "Nixon Doctrine" is similarly compared to the United States' current situation in Iraq, paralleling Vietnam, the main issue being whether or not U. S troops should be withdrawn. In conclusion, it is evident that both the "Johnson Doctrine" and the "Nixon Doctrine" possess similarities. Their doctrines greatly contributed to foreign affairs in such countries as Latin America, and influenced the Cold War and Vietnam.