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Thinking after reading “What, to the Slave is the Fourth of July?”

Slavery always existed in history as a legal part of society. In ancient Roma, ancient China and some other countries, slavery was once legal. However, with the development of society and the dawn of civilization, most countries abolished slavery and turned it into illegal. Though human have equal rights to living on Earth and share all kinds of resources together, it took a long time for every country in the world to reach this goal. Many people fight for this goal, they gave speech, write books and articles, they did so many things to create a world which people can live equally and have liberty. People today need to remember what happened in the past and learn from it, with the heavy weight history and the miserable past that slaves once suffered. Remember that everyone deserve equal right.

This is a speech given by Frederick Douglass on July 5, 1852. Frederick Douglass is a famous America socialist and abolitionist who did a lot of works for slavery and appealed to even rights for slaves. He has led some abolitionist movements. America, one of the most developed and powerful countries in the 18th century, still deemed slavery to be legally in south society of America. So some people like Frederick Douglass stood out for slaves and spokes for them. In this speech, he gives his critical thinking of slavery in America. Douglass first praised the work that reformers did for the U.S. when they fight for their rights at the period they are under British control. Then he points out that in today’s America, slave actually didn’t have the same rights as other citizens have in America. What he and other anti-slavery people did and fight for was the same as what reformers did in the past, fight for liberty and equality. In the passage, Frederick Douglass vocalized for slave’s rights and appeal not only citizens but also religions should help to liberate slaves and fight for their equal rights. Douglass (1852) point out that July 4th is not a celebrate day for him for all slaves, July 4th only reveals the insurmountable distance between citizens and slaves. It’s the most darkness day. Though there were so many disappointing things happened in America, Douglass was not frustrated. He believes that one-day Slavery will finally collapse.

In the development of human history, Slavery always exists. It has a really long history. In ancient time, slaves were usually prisoners, criminal or people who lose in the war. Slavery is an inequality system that divided people into different ranks, and limited people’s authority. In Western, back to 15th century, Portugal started the first trade of the slave. After that, Europe quickly developed the slave trade. The built-up of the Atlantic triangular slave trade sell thousands of slaves to Western countries, including America. America used a long time to abolish slavery completely. Not until 1864, with the published of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, people in the whole state were finally admitted to having liberty and the same rights and authority. Before it, just like what Douglass (1852) mentioned in this speech, with the same crimes, if it was admitted by a slave, the slave may be punished to death. While if it was admitted by a white man, there need two of the same crime might give him the same punishment. Douglass knew greatly about how slaves lived and suffered because he was once a slave. He lived through as a slave during his childhood and youth in Maryland. He successfully escaped to New York in 1838, there he first-time steps on the free soil and became a freeman. After that, he gradually became one of the people who anti-slavery. *“The United States Declaration of Independence”* shows great unfair for it declared the independence of America and the equal rights that America people asked for. But with the action of America Congress, slavery has even been nationalized. In the southern part of America, slavery was still legal. Many people like Douglass at the time step out and appeal for anti-slavery. Just like Frederick Douglass (1852) point out in this reading, the father of the citizens did great jobs and makes a good resolution and it’s now for citizens to carry out their work in their society. Douglass appealed people to look back in their former’s history and start to do their jobs — to fight for equal rights for slaves, just like how their formers fight for their rights.

Reading this article helps me know more about America’s history, especially in the history of slavery. There are still some similarities with my country. In World War II, part of my country was colonized by Japan and some other countries. Just like what America people did in their Independence War and in anti-slavery, my country fights for our own liberty, independence, identity. The world needs to be equal, everyone living on this planet has the right to live equally and freely. No matter where people come from, no matter what color of the skin, people all have the same right.

Although today most of people are living in the society which Slavery is illegal, we still need to remember the efforts our formers did, how they fight for equality and liberty. Now there is still some bad influence that slavery left, for example, racial discrimination and Sexism. Just like what Douglass (1852) said “Your fathers have lived, died, and have done their work, and have done much of it well. You live and must die, and you must do your work.” It’s time for us to fight for all kinds of discriminations in the world.

Reference

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