Vietnam Songs

The Ballad of the Green Berets

by Staff Sergeant Barry Sadler (1966)

Fighting soldiers from the sky

fearless men who jump and die

men who mean just what they say

the brave men of the Green Beret

Silver wings upon their chest

these are men Americas best

one hundred men will test today but

only three win the Green Beret

trained to live off natures land

trained in combat hand to hand

men who fight by night and day

courage take from the Green Beret

(Choris)

Silver wings upon their chest

these are men Americas best

one hundred men will test today

but only three win the Green Beret

Back at home a young wife waits

her Green Beret has met his fate

he has died for those oppressed

leaving her this last request

put silver wings on my sons chest

make him one of Americas best

he'll be a man they'll test one day

have him win the Green Beret

Draft Dodger Rag

By Phil Ochs (1966)

Oh, I'm just a typical American boy from a typical American town

I believe in God and Senator Dodd and a-keepin' old Castro down

And when it came my time to serve I knew "better dead than red"

But when I got to my old draft board, buddy, this is what I said:

CHORUS

Sarge, I'm only eighteen, I got a ruptured spleen

And I always carry a purse

I got eyes like a bat, and my feet are flat, and my asthma's getting worse

Yes, think of my career, my sweetheart dear, and my poor old invalid aunt

Besides, I ain't no fool, I'm a-goin' to school

And I'm working in a DEE-fense plant

I've got a dislocated disc and a wracked up back

I'm allergic to flowers and bugs

And when the bombshell hits, I get epileptic fits

And I'm addicted to a thousand drugs

I got the weakness woes, I can't touch my toes

I can hardly reach my knees

And if the enemy came close to me

I'd probably start to sneeze

I'm only eighteen, I got a ruptured spleen

And I always carry a purse

I got eyes like a bat, and my feet are flat, and my asthma's getting worse

Yes, think of my career, my sweetheart dear, and my poor old invalid aunt

Besides, I ain't no fool, I'm a-goin' to school

And I'm working in a DEE-fense plant

Ooh, I hate Chou En Lai, and I hope he dies,

One thing you gotta see

That someone's gotta go over there

And that someone isn't me

So I wish you well, Sarge, give 'em Hell!

Kill me a thousand or so

And if you ever get a war without blood and gore

I'll be the first to go

Yes, I'm only eighteen, I got a ruptured spleen

And I always carry a purse

I got eyes like a bat, and my feet are flat, and my asthma's getting worse

Yes, think of my career, my sweetheart dear, and my poor old invalid aunt

Besides, I ain't no fool, I'm a-goin' to school

And I'm working in a DEE-fense plant

The Eve of Destruction

by Barry McGuire (1965)

The eastern world, it is exploding

Violence flarin’, bullets loadin’

You’re old enough to kill, but not for votin’

You don’t believe in war, but what’s that gun you’re totin’

And even the Jordan River has bodies floatin’

But you tell me

Over and over and over again, my friend

Ah, you don’t believe

We’re on the eve

Of destruction.

Don’t you understand what I’m tryin’ to say

Can’t you feel the fears I’m feelin’ today?

If the button is pushed, there’s no runnin’ away

There’ll be no one to save, with the world in a grave

[Take a look around ya boy, it's bound to scare ya boy]

And you tell me

Over and over and over again, my friend

Ah, you don’t believe

We’re on the eve

Of destruction.

Yeah, my blood’s so mad feels like coagulatin’

I’m sitting here just contemplatin’

I can’t twist the truth, it knows no regulation.

Handful of senators don’t pass legislation

And marches alone can’t bring integration

When human respect is disintegratin’

This whole crazy world is just too frustratin’

And you tell me

Over and over and over again, my friend

Ah, you don’t believe

We’re on the eve

Of destruction.

Think of all the hate there is in Red China

Then take a look around to Selma, Alabama

You may leave here for 4 days in space

But when you return, it’s the same old place

The poundin’ of the drums, the pride and disgrace

You can bury your dead, but don’t leave a trace

Hate your next-door neighbor, but don’t forget to say grace

And… tell me over and over and over and over again, my friend

You don’t believe

We’re on the eve

Of destruction

Mm, no no, you don’t believe

We’re on the eve

Of destruction.