

SING OUT! HOOTENEERS Folkways Records FN 2513



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SING OUT! HOOTENANNY

with PETE SEEGER and others

INTRODUCTION

In 1947, while preparing a little booklet called "How To Run a Hootenanny" for People's Songs, I came up with a formula which, I believe, has been an accurate guide for Hootenannies ever since. I take no great credit for the idea, since Hootenannies were bound to develop in this fashion anyway. And far from being original, the concept was directly borrowed from a folk tradition. Very simply, my idea of a good hootenanny is one that contains, in the traditional adage for the wearing apparel of brides-to-be, "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue."

The tremendous surge of singing, strumming and picking which has swept the U.S.A. in recent years and is now officially known as "the folk song revival" has, in its totality, reflected these basic elements. With an amazing ecclecticism, city youngsters have taken to themselves a tremendous variety of songs. Mild-mannered housewives in Ohio and Indiana sing bloody ballads of murder and rape. (Is there some



form of sexual repression manifesting itself here?) Jewish kids from Brooklyn become the leading exponents of Negro blues while college students who have never had to earn a day's pay in their life lustily sing the militant union organizing songs of the thirties. New York City teen-agers form bluegrass bands and New Mexico school-teachers are singing Eastern Européan melodies.

Scholars may deplore it (and they usually do); purists wring their hands. But the young people go on singing the songs which appeal to them (for whatever reasons) and are busy reviving the oncegreat tradition of people making their own music. In the process, many an artistic clamity occurs, but from it all a new sound may be emerging -- an American music which is truly "national" and overcomes the boundaries of region and academic classification.

The folk, after all, never consciously sang "folk songs," or at least not until they read the Lomax books and discovered that they were singing folk songs. The "folk" have always sung the songs which appealed to them. These were traditional ballads, music hall songs, art songs, and the current popular songs of the time. On an infinitely larger scale, this is what is happening all over America today. The old exists side by side with the new, and who is to say that one is more valid than the other.

The songs on this record were all recorded during the years 1950-1955. Some were recorded "live" at various Hootenannies sponsored by SING OUT! magazine. Some were issued as 78 rpm records on the long-defunct Hootenanny Records label. Others were recorded at various times for special recording projects organized by SING OUT!

Put together on one record, they typify the Hootenanny tradition.

This tradition dates back some nineteen years and covers more than 75 different New York City folk song programs all presented to the public under the "Hootenanny" title. In recent years, folk song groups throughout America have adopted the "Hootenanny" title for their concerts -- but in New York City, the word Hootenanny has always had a particular meaning and has been associated with an important trend in the folk song world.

The word has been, successively, the title designated by The Almanac Singers (1940-1941), People's Songs (1946-1949), People's Artists (1949-1956), and <u>Sing Out</u> magazine (1957) for folk song programs presented by these particular groups.

In the course of these 19 years, some four or five hundred performers have appeared in a great variety of stages under the Hootenanny album. The first "Hoots," staged by the Almanac Singers in the prewar years, featured such performers as Woody Guthrie, Lee Hays, Josh White, Burl Ives, Pete Seeger, Millard Lampell, and many others. These were on a fairly small scale, mostly put on in the less than modest quarters of the Almanacs.

The post-war Hoots sponsored by People's Songs Inc. were much larger. Some were held in such diverse arenas as The Newspaper Guild Hall on East 40th Street, the old Irving Plaza, and the Fraternal Clubhouse (still on West 48th Street.) But the mostfamous of these Hootenannies were staged at Town Hall where their impact on the local musical critics was tremendous.

Many of the old Almanacs were still on these Hoots. Pete, of course, still typified the spirit -- as did Lee Hays whose dry, eminently sophisticated "backwoods" humor was unique in New York City. Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Alan Lomax, Hally Wood, The Duke of Iron, and scores of others appeared on these Hootenannies.

The Hoots of the Fifties, sponsored by People's Artists, featured a new crop of younger performers. Pete Seeger still appeared on many of these but not as often. Performers like Betty Sanders, Hope Foye, Ernie Lieberman, Laura Duncan, Earl Robinson, Osborne Smith, Elizabeth Knight, Bill Robinson, Les Pine, and Leon Bibb became the leading Hootenanny personalities. The halls changed, too. The ballroom of District 65 of the Wholesale and Warehouse Workers Union, at 13 Astor Place, was one of the chief stages. Manhattan Center, Webster Hall and The Pythian Temple were other favorite Hootenanny halls.

In recent years, under the sponsorship of <u>Sing Out</u>, the Hootenannies have not been as frequent -- but they have reached a new peak in popularity. Carnegie Hall has become the Hootenanny meetingplace in these years and performers such as those on this album, with others like Sonny Terry, Eleanor Stone, Guy Carawan, the New Lost City Ramblers, and others, among the frequent participants.

But with all these varied performers and changes of locale, certain constants have remained in the Hootenanny. These are:

- 1. Audience participation. Hootenanny audiences come expecting to sing as much as possible, and it is a wonder to watch the amazement on a trained musician's face as he sees (and hears) these young people picking up intricate parts and unusual harmonies with the greatest of ease.
- Topicality. Hootenannies have always served as the basis for musical comments on the events of the world. In general, these comments have reflected a "left-of-liberal" political outlook characterized by belief in and support for the trade union movement, world peace and coexistence with the Russians, and an antagonism to such representative political symbols as Senators Bilbo, Taft and McCarthy.
- 3. Variety of form. Hootenannies, while based on the folk song tradition, have always included many forms of theatrical and musical expression. The comedy of Will Geer on this record is typical of other Hootenannies which features such artists as Jack Guiford and Les Pine. Poets have read their own works from the Hootenanny stage, sometimes with jazz or folk song accompaniment, even before it became fashionable to do so. Concert singers, pop singers, Dixieland and "progressive" jazz men, Calypso singers, modern dancers, choruses and steel bands have all done their stuff for Hootenanny audiences.
- 4. New performers. Hootenannies have always featured new and young artists. Many a Hootenanny performer has never appeared before an audience larger than 250 people or so prior to getting up before the microphone.
- 5. The audience. The most important quality about Hootenannies has been the fact that its audiences is composed predominantly of young people -teen-agers and college students -- who have found that a Hootenanny communicates music, ideas, and a sense of the real America to them.

Learned and adapted from the singing of Negro longshoremen.

Sung by Pete Seeger and group.

All I want is Union, Oh, roll on All I want is Union, Oh, roll on.

Union makes me happy, Oh, roll on, Union makes me happy, Oh, roll on.

Union makes all men my brothers, Oh, roll on, Union makes all men my brothers, Oh, roll on.

All I want is Union, Oh, roll on, All I want is Union, Oh, roll on.

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SIDE I, Band 2: PUT MY NAME DOWN

I had a brother in the infantry, I thought you know'd. I had a brother in the infantry, Way down the road. He's got a home and wife and baby He don't like war and he don't mean maybe And he's gonna put his name down.

REFRAIN:

Put my name down, brother, Where do I sign? I'm gonna join the fight for peace Right down the line. Ashes to ashes and dust to dust, If you don't sign up the world goes bust, So I'm gonna put my name down.

I've got a sister in Portland, Maine, I thought you know'd. I've got a sister in Portland, Maine, Way down the road. She lost a son at Anzio, And now she wants the world to know, That she's gonna put her name down.

I've got a brother in Birmingham, I thought you know'd. I've got a brother in Birmingham, Way down the road. He don't want an ocean trip, In a Jim Crow Navy, on a Jim Crow ship, And he's gonna put his name down. I've got a brother in Stalingrad, I thought you know'd. I've got a brother in Stalingrad, Way down the road. On lots of things we don't agree, But he wants peace, just like me, So, he's gonna put his name down.

I've got brothers throughout this land, I thought you know'd. I've got brothers throughout this land, Way down the road. From the Golden Gate to Baltimore, We all say we don't want war, And I'm gonna put my name down.

SIDE I, Band 3: TALKING UN-AMERICAN BLUES

By Betty Sanders and Irwin Silber

Early one morning I got an invitation To help Congress out in an investigation: A man came around a-knocking at my door And he gives me a paper that says what for Subpoena -- Looking for un-Americans; Look in the mirror!

Now, if you want an invite, here's what to do, Visit your neighbors, hear what they say, Before you know it, you're on your way, Fare paid! Ride in style. First class.

Well, you brush your hair and you dress real pretty,

You've got a date with the un-American Committee; You take the stand and they swear you in, Old man Wood is wearing a grin --He thinks he's got you; He's got a short memory --Can't recall what happened when they stuck a union label on his cantankerous investigation.

"Are you now, or have ever been, Were you ever sympathetic or interested in? When did it start, how long did it last, Tell us all about your interesting past --Answer yes or no!"

"Did you go to a meeting, did you sign a petition, Did you ever hold an executive position? Did you make a speech, did you carry a card, Did you ever hold a conference in your back yard?" Fifth Amendment!

Now they were asking questions, but we wouldn't buy it,

Like those union brothers did it, it was time for us to try it;

We added up the facts from the figures historical, And we asked a simple question which seems a bit rhetorical --

Mister Wood -- Are you now or have you ever been a Bastard?

You don't have to answer that question if you think it might tend to incriminate you.

1 Providente

Now Mister Wood, get out of your rut, Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but? Well, Wood said he would, but we knew he wouldn't, But that's Congress for you --Week in, week out, weak all over!

Now Wood he couldn't rest on his laurels, He tried his best to corrupt our morals; He talked about Philbrick, Budenz too; "They're getting theirs, how about you?"

Now I like chicken, and I like duck, And I don't object to making a buck; Well, I ain't got wings and I sure can't fly, And there's one bird I won't buy --Stoolpigeon! I'm strictly in the market for doves of peace.

It is known that birds of a feather Have a habit of flocking together; So listen MacCarran, Wood and the rest, You can't use us to feather your nest -That's strictly for the birds.

So here's the moral without a doubt, If you want to be free, you've got to Sing Out; Sing it loud, sing it strong People are singing a freedom song, So keep singing, and keep fighting!

(c) 1952 Sing Out, Inc.

SIDE I, Band 4: IN CONTEMPT

Words and Music by Aaron Kramer and Betty Sanders

Build high, build wide your prison wall, That there be room enough for all Who hold you in contempt, build wide That all the land be locked inside.

Though you have seized the valiant few, Whose glory cast a shade on you. How can you now go home with ease, Jangling your heavy dungeon keys.

The birds who still insist on song, The sun-lit stream still running strong, The flowers still blazing red and blue, All are in contempt of you.

The parents dreaming still of peace, The playful children, the wild geese, Who still must fly the mountains too, Like fists, are in contempt of you!

When you have seized both moon and sun, And jailed the poems one by one, And trapped each trouble-making breeze, Then you can throw away your keys.

(c) 1950 Sing Out, Inc.

SIDE I, Band 5: GRAY GOOSE

Sung by Pete Seeger

Well, last Monday morning, Lord, Lord Lord, Last Monday morning, Lord Lord Lord. Preacher went a-hunting, Lord, Lord, Lord, Preacher went a-hunting, Lord, Lord, Lord. He took along his shot-gun, Lord, Lord, Lord, He took along his shot-gun, Lord, Lord, Lord. Well, he's hunting for the gray goose, Lord,

Lord, Lord, He's hunting for the gray goose, Lord, Lord, Lord.

- Well, the gray goose came a-flying, Lord, Lord, Lord,
- A way high a-flying, Lord, Lord, Lord.
- He pulled that trigger way back, Lord, Lord, Lord,

Hammer went a click-clack, Lord, Lord, Lord. Well, a zulu went a bulu, Lord, Lord, Lord,

A zulu went a bulu, Lord, Lord, Lord.

- Now the gray goose came a-falling, Lord, Lord, Lord,
- Well, he was six weeks a-falling, Lord, Lord, Lord.
- Then they put him in a wagon, Lord, Lord, Lord, They took him to the White House, Lord, Lord, Lord.

Then your wife and my wife, Lord, Lord, Lord, They had a fit a-picking, Lord, Lord, Lord.

They were six weeks a-picking, Lord, Lord, Lord.

They put him on the parboil, Lord, Lord, Lord. He was six weeks a-parboilin', Lord, Lord, Lord, And they put him on the table, Lord, Lord, Lord. And the knife couldn't stick him, Lord, Lord, Lord.

- And the fork couldn't prick him, Lord, Lord, Lord.
- So they throwed him to the saw-mill, Lord, Lord, Lord,
- He broke that saw's teeth out, Lord, Lord, Lord. So they throwed him to the hog-pen, Lord, Lord, Lord.

Broke old Jerry's jaw bone, Lord, Lord, Lord. So the last time I seen him, Lord, Lord, Lord, He was flyin' 'cross the ocean, Lord, Lord, Lord. With a long string of goslins, Lord, Lord, Lord, All went a-quack-quack, Lord, Lord, Lord.

SIDE I, Band 6: COME ALL YOU FAIR AND TENDER LADIES

Sung by Pete Seeger

Come all you fair and tender ladies, Take warning how you court young men. They're like the stars of a summer's morning; They'll first appear and then they're gone.

If I'd ha' known before I courted, I never would have courted none, I'd have locked my heart in a box of golden And fastened it up with a silver pin. I wish I were some little swallow, And I had wings and I could fly. I'd fly away to my false-true lover And when he'd speak I would deny.

Oh don't you remember our days of courting, When your head lay upon my breast? You could make me believe by the falling of your arms.

That the sun rose in the west.

Come all you fair and tender ladies, Take warning how you court young men. They're like the stars of a summer's morning; They'll first appear and then they're gone.

SIDE I, Band 7: RAISE A RUCKUS TONIGHT

My old master promised me, Raise a ruckus tonight,

That when he died he'd set me free, Raise a ruckus tonight,

He lived so long his head got bald, Raise a ruckus tonight,

He got out the notion of dying at all. Raise a ruckus tonight.

CHORUS:

Come along, little children, come along, Come while the moon is shining bright, Get on board, little children, get on board, We're gonna raise a ruckus tonight.

My old mistress promised me, Raise a ruckus tonight,

That when she died sh'd set me free, Raise a ruckus tonight,

She lived till her head got slick and bald, Raise a ruckus tonight,

And the Lord couldn't kill her with a big green maul.

Raise a ruckus tonight.

(CHORUS)

Yes, they both done promised me, Raise a ruckus tonight,

But their papers didn't set me free, Raise a ruckus tonight,

A dose of poison helped them along, Raise a ruckus tonight,

May the Devil preach their funeral song. Raise a ruckus tonight.

(CHORUS)

SIDE II, Band I: I'VE GOT A RIGHT

Boss tells me I got to stay down where I belong, Tells me my place must be 'way down and I'll get along,

Tells me that I should be humble and mend my ways

But I say Boss-man will tumble one of these days.

I've got a right to lift my head up, Got a right to lift it 'way up high, I've got a right to lift my head up, Got a right to look up at the sky, My heart has had double of grief and trouble I want to know the reason why.

I've got a right to change my blues song Got a right to sing out clear and loud I've got a right to sing a new song Got a right to teach it to the crowd There must be a show-down for all the low-down So they can stand up tall and proud.

No Jim-crow laws no more, no chain-gangs on the levee Swanee shore with no trees hangin' heavy

So I can see the sky, shining way up high.

I've got a right to lift my head up Got a right to lift it way up high, 'Cuz I've learned my lesson Now I'll hold my head high until the day I die.

SIDE II, Band 2: JEFFERSON AND LIBERTY

Sung by Pete Seeger

The gloomy night before us flies, Its reign of terror now is o'er; Its gags, inquisitors and spies, Its herds of harpies are no more.

CHORUS:

Rejoice, Columbia's sons, rejoice, To tyrants never bend the knee; But join with heart and soul and voice, For Jefferson and liberty.

No Lordling here, with gorging jaws, Shall wring from industry the food; Nor fiery bigot's holy laws Lay waste our fields and streets with blood.

(CHORUS)

Here strangers from a thousand shores, Compelled by tyranny to roam, Shall find, amidst abundant stores, A nobler and a happier hame.

(CHORUS)

SIDE II, Band 3: ANOTHER MAN DONE GONE

Another man done gone, Another man done gone, Another man done gone, Another man done gone.

A-from the County Farm	(4X)
He had a long chain on	(4X)
I didn't know his name	(4X)
Another man done gone	(4X)

SIDE II, Band 4: PIE IN THE SKY

Words: Joe Hill Music: Sweet Bye & Bye Sung by Pete Seeger

Long-haired preachers come out every night, Try to tell you what's wrong and what's right; But when asked how about something to eat, They will answer with voices so sweet:

CHORUS:

You will eat bye and bye, In that glorious land above the sky; Work and pray, live on hay, You'll get pie in the sky when you die.

If you fight hard for children and wife, Try to get something good in this life, You're a sinner and a bad man, they tell, When you die you will surely go to Hell.

(CHORUS)

(That's a lie)

And the starvation army they play, And they sing and they clap and they pray. Till they get all your coin on the drum, Then they tell you that you're on the bum.

(CHORUS)

(That's a lie)

Working men of all countries unite, Side by side we for freedom will fight! When the world and its wealth we have gained To the grafters we'll sing this refrain:

Final Chorus:

You will eat bye and bye, When you've learned how to cook and to fry, Chop some wood, 'twill do you good, And you'll eat in the sweet bye and bye.

SIDE II, Band 5: BALLAD OF THE BOLL WEEVIL

Oh, the boll weevil is a little black bug, Come from Mexico, they say, Come all the way to Texas, Just a-lookin' for a place to stay

CHORUS: Just a-lookin' for a home, Just a-lookin' for a home.

Now, the first time I seen the boll weevil, He was settin' on the square, The next time I seen the boll weevil, Had his whole damn family there

(CHORUS)

The farmer took the boll weevil, He put him in the hot sand, The weevil say, "This is mighty hot, But I'll stand it like a man," This'll be my home, etc.

Then the farmer took the boll weevil And put him in a cake of ice, The weevil say to the farmer, "This is mighty cool and nice," This'll be my home, etc.

Then the boll weevil say to the doctor, "You can throw away all them pills, 'Cause when I get through with the farmer, Won't pay no doctor bills," Won't have no home, etc.

The merchant got half the cotton, The boll weevil got the rest, Didn't leave that farmer's wife But one old cotton dress, And it's full of holes, etc.

And if anybody should ask you Who it was that made this song, Just tell him a poor old farmer, Who's done been here and gone, Ain't got no home, etc.

SIDE II, Band 6: THE POPULAR WOBBLY

Words: T-Bone Slim Music: "They Go Wild Over Me" Sung by Pete Seeger

I'm as mild mannered man as can be, And I've never done them harm as I can see; Still on me they put a ban, and they throw me in the can,

They go wild, simply wild over me.

They accuse me of rascality, And I can't see why they always pick on me; I'm as gentle as a lamb, but they take me for a ram,

They go wild, simply wild over me.

Oh the "bull" he went wild over me, And he held his club where everyone could see, He was breathing mighty hard when he saw my union card,

He went wild, simply wild over me.

Then the judge he went wild over me, And I plainly saw he never could agree, So I let "his Nibs" obey what his conscience had to say,

Oh the jailer he went wild over me, And he locked me up and threw away the key; It seems to be the rage so they keep me in a cage, They go wild, simply wild over me.

They go wild, simply wild over me, I'm referring to the bedbug and the flea, They disturb my slumber deep and they rob me of my sleep, They go wild, simply wild over me.

Will the roses grow wild over me, When I'm gone into the land that is to be? When my soul and body part, in the stillness of my heart,

Will the roses grow wild over me?

SIDE II, Band 7: JOHN HENRY

Sung by Pete Seeger

John Henry was about two days old Sittin' on his papa's knee; He picks up a hammer and a little piece of steel, Said hammer's gonna be the death of me (Lord, Lord) (4X)

John Henry said to his captain Lord, a man ain't nothing but a man; But before I'd let your steam drill beat me down, I'd die with a hammer in my hand. (4X)

John Henry had a little woman Her name was Polly Ann. Her name was Polly Ann. John Henry took sick and he went to his bed, Polly Ann drove steel like a man. (4X)

The captain he said to John Henry, I believe that mountain's cavin' in. John Henry said stand back captain, Ain't nothin' but my hammer suckin' wind. (4X)

Now the man that invented the steam drill He thought he was mighty fine; But John Henry drove fifteen feet And the steam drill only made nine.(4X)

John Henry hammered in the mountain, His hammer was striking fire. He worked so hard that he broke his poor heart, And he laid down his hammer and he died. (4X)

Some say John Henry came from England, Some say he came from Spain; But I know he was a Louisiana man, And the leader of a steel-driving gang. (4X)

So every Monday morning, When the Blue birds begin to sing, You can hear John Henry a mile or more, You can hear John Henry's hammer ring. He went wild, simply wild over me. (4X)

SIDE II, Band 8: WE SHALL OVERCOME

We shall overcome (3) some day Oh deep in my heart I do believe We'll overcome some day.

We shall live peace (3) some day Oh deep in my heart I do believe We'll live in peace some day.

We will end Jim-crow (3) some day Oh deep in my heart I do believe We'll end Jim-crow some day.

