

THE NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS: MIKE SEEGER, JOHN COHEN, TOM PALEY

SONGS FROM THE DEPRESSION



SIDE I

Band 1.
No Depression In Heaven - (A.P. Carter)
(Vocal: M. Seeger & T. Paley)

Band 2.
There'll Be No Distinction There -
(Blind Alfred Reed)
(Vocal: J. Cohen & M. Seeger)

Band 3.
Breadline Blues - (Slim Smith)
(Vocal: T. Paley)

Band 4.
White House Blues
(Vocal: M. Seeger)

Band 5.
Franklin Roosevelt's Back Again - (Bill Cox)
(Vocal: J. Cohen & T. Paley)

Band 6.
How Can A Poor Man Stand Such Times
and Live - (Blind Alfred Reed)
(Vocal: M. Seeger)

Band 7.
Keep Moving
(Vocal: J. Cohen)

Band 8.
Taxes on the Farmer Feed Us All
(Fiddling John Carson)
(Vocal: M. Seeger)

Band 9.
Serves Them Fine - (Dave & Howard)
(Vocal: T. Paley)

SIDE II

Band 1.
NRA Blues - (Bill Cox)
(Vocal: T. Paley)

Band 2.
Death of the Blue Eagle - (George Davis)
(Vocal: J. Cohen)

Band 3.
Join The C. I. O. - (Aunt Molly Jackson)
(Vocal: M. Seeger)

Band 4.
Old Age Pension Check - (Roy Acuff)
(Vocal: J. Cohen)

Band 5.
Sales Tax On The Women - (Dixon Bros.)
(Vocal: T. Paley)

Band 6.
Wreck Of The Tennessee Gravy Train -
(Uncle Dave Macon)
(Vocal: J. Cohen & T. Paley)

Band 7.
Loveless C. C. C. - (Jimmie Collins)
(Vocal: T. Paley)

Band 8.
Boys, My Money's All Gone
(Instrumental: Fiddle - M. Seeger)

Band 9.
All I Got's Gone - (E. V. Stoneman)
(Vocal: M. Seeger)

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RETURN TO ARCHIVE

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FOLKWAY PROGRAM
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

CITY RAMBLERS: MIKE SEEGER, JOHN COHEN, TOM PALEY

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

SONGS FROM THE DEPRESSION

THE NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS: MIKE SEEGER, JOHN COHEN, TOM PALEY

DEPRESSION - Tom Paley

These are the songs of unemployment,
Songs of the down and out,
Songs of hard times and depressions.
When the children are cold and hungry
And there's no work to be had
What is there to sing about?
Some sing of the Heaven they hope to reach
"There'll be no depression there."
"There'll be no distinction there."
Some sing with a wry humor that it "Serves Them Fine"
The songs are full of complaint and sorrow.
And the bitterness of the hungry and the homeless.
Some sing of the breadlines and bank failures.
Some sing of the mill and some of the mine.
And few hold out any hope for the morrow.
The old ballads are sung, too,
Their lonesome sound like the wind,
But the songs about hard times and Heaven
Are the ones that speak the heart of a hungry man.

DEPRESSION John Cohen

The selection of songs on this record was primarily determined by our initial reaction to the material encountered as we sought out songs about the depression. It was dependent upon a quality of actuality and authenticity within the songs as well as upon a sense of history.

In this selection, we were aware that there was a certain amount of material not included which was pertinent to the depression. There were songs current in the cities of the north - such as Bing Crosby singing, "Buddy Can You Spare a Dime" and "Happy Times Are Back Again". There were a wealth of blues mostly of Negro origin; Big Bill's, "WPA Blues", "They gonna tear my house down, that crew from the WPA", notion struck me I better be on my way". There were also songs with conscious messages, composed with a calculated awareness, from sophisticated industrial and urban sources. These often sounded self-conscious and sometimes un-musical. There were the songs of the I.W.W., songs of Marc Blitzstein which were written in the style of popular show tunes and musical comedies. There were the Bob Miller songs which with insight and humor dealt with problems of the farmer, in the style of country music, but which came out sound-

ing like political speeches and forced dialectics. There were some songs planted by reactionary A & R men and served as anti-New Deal propaganda.

The songs we selected, stem more from sources which up to this time were steeped in the "oral Tradition". One part of this tradition consists of making up songs dealing with contemporary problems, using traditional themes and tunes as a basis for composition.

The songs we sing here are largely from commercial recordings, mostly from the south, and field recordings such as those collected during the Farm Resettlement Program which have ended up in the files of the Library of Congress. Concerning the commercial recordings, one must realize that the big companies which themselves were in bad ways during the depression, found it feasible and profitable to release records about hard times, while people who were in the midst of hard times, spent the money they didn't have to hear about their own difficulties. The recording companies had no choice but to put out such records for the demand was evident.

Few of these songs could be considered as significant contributions to the oral tradition, or as things which will be handed down from generation to generation. Rather they can be seen as songs from these people in distress, as they meet the disaster of this period. The songs operate as vehicles which carry the news of the day and comment upon it and then are discarded like a newspaper.

Perhaps this is a good point to again differentiate between such songs and those of Tin Pan Alley. Although both are temporary in nature and both are composed, the difference seems to lie in the intent and initial impulse of conception. The songs on this record are hardly escapist in nature. They don't offer pretty dreams to take the mind away from the problems of reality, neither do they attempt to offer much of a solution to the problem. Rather they offer a way of living through and dealing with the actuality of the times.

In several cases an idea of heaven seems to be the solution, yet the definition of heaven is only in the form of complaint about the problems on earth. Some of the songs are revealing in their awkwardness, as these people in distress were suddenly confronted with situations and concepts which were incomprehensible to them.

There is an element in young people today which feels a yearning for the thirties, a desire to have a clear and humane cause to fight for.

Looking back, the thirties contained the ideal of replacing a bad situation with a better one, as well as presenting a vast stage of social revolution upon which to act. This seems different from the situation confronting young people today who almost all agree that now there is no cause.

During the thirties, the intellectuals entered actively into government. Harvard graduates who had never seen a potato bug were formulating sweeping agricultural programs. The nature of our present businessman government is far from this.

There are fashionably romantic notions attached to the thirties, with overtones of action and reform. People, who today feel futile - are looking for such a band wagon to jump onto - yet this is probably as much in response to a need within themselves to do something, as it is to any social conscience.

Perhaps this record is valid, in that it is an accurate reflection of the responses of "the people" to the depression. However, I'm afraid that it won't provide any marching songs for the arguments of social reform or provide anyone with a cause to pursue.

If the concept of "living" through the actuality of the times comes across, we will have accomplished something by this record.

Two of us who sing on this record were born in the midst of the depression. I've often wondered on the outlook of families in this period who were optimistic enough to bring children into a world whose prospects seemed grim. However, when I recently visited the mountain area of Kentucky where a severe depression is going on, I learned that the birth rate is going up, for since there are few jobs now, most of the men are around their homes all day.

There is a quiet economic depression in many places all through this country right now which is receiving little publicity from the politicians and Life, Time, Fortune. I suppose they would rather not threaten the security of peoples' present attitudes or prosperity by confronting them with the actuality of the situation.

- November 1959

As in our previous two records for Folkways the majority of our songs are drawn from country singers of the 1925-1935 era who recorded for commercial companies engaged not in documenting the times but in recording performers that they expected would produce marketable records. But most of these songs unlike the others were composed during hard times and the depression years of the 1930's when a particular singer, in the words of "Breadline Blues" wanted to "get something off(his) chest" as well as to sell records, gain fame and make money.

These people lived in the south during the beginning of its most rapid change, during industrialization and the following depression, and protest was as much mocking people for grabbing so quickly for high living on time payments, as much as complaint of the more familiar hard times. Examples are "Tennessee Gravy Train", "Serves 'em fine" and "All I Got's Gone".

Other songs have a religious slant such as "No Depression", "There'll be no Distinction There", saying that these injustices will not be there.

Others like "Whitehouse Blues", and "Taxes on The Farmer Feeds us all" set new words to old familiar tunes. Still other songs dealt with the effects of the Roosevelt Administration's program such as C.C.C., Social Security, repeal of prohibition, NRA etc.

With the exception of "Join the CIO" (a true story) the largest number of these songs were not anything but protest or comments about hard times, and they did not often propose a solution, especially the organization of a trade union since these were musicians, not organizers. Furthermore unions were and still are unpopular in the south, as invasions of the workers individuality.

In addition the recording companies opposed anti-Hoover or pro-Roosevelt songs so that the most likely place to find such songs is in the Folklore Division of the Library of Congress, due to opposite political indignations of its collectors at that time.

It is amazing that so many of these songs were actually recorded and released by the commercial companies during the depression.

BACKGROUND (by John Cohen)

This period in our nation's history, which was economically the poorest we have known was, nevertheless, one of the best documented periods (of history ever). It was during this time that the Library of Congress Folklore recording projects were set into full play. The Federal Writers Project employed authors to document the talk and tales of America from one end to the other. The WPA contained the largest state-financed program of the arts that western civilization has ever known. The marvelous photographic work of the Farm Security Administration was done during this period.

In the years immediately following the Wall Street crash of 1929, this country came extremely close to revolution because the economic situation was in such a state of collapse and there was no foreseeable path out of it.

Below are some general notes of which will help to place a few of these songs in proper historical context.

Based on notes in Schlesinger - "The Coming of the New Deal."

The N.R.A.

The National Recovery Act - (June - 1933) was designed to revive industrial and business activity and to reduce unemployment. It was based on the principle of industrial self regulation operating under government supervision through a system of fair competition codes. Hugh S. Johnson was the head of the N.R.A. Originally it was only concerned with the relation of government to industry but in July it became a popular movement to pledge all employers to a blanket agreement to uphold N.R.A. standards on wages and hours. (A minimum was 12 or 13 dollars a week for 40 hours of labor)

The Blue Eagle became the N.R.A.'s symbol of compliance to the code. It bore the legend, "We Do Our Part". The new emblem became the focus of moral and civil pressure. Parades celebrated it, speeches praised it. Throughout the land, merchants put the Blue Eagle in their windows and stamped it on their products. Over two million employees signed up. The N.R.A. ultimately affected about 500 fields and a total of 22 million employees.

Johnson was making speeches such as, "When every American housewife understands that the Blue Eagle on everything that she permits to come into her home is a symbol of its restoration to security, etc."

The Blue Eagle campaign changed the popular mood from despair to affirmation and activity.

While the N.R.A. was initially successful, code violation soon became increasingly frequent; complaints of cutthroat competition and unfair price fixing became numerous. While the N.R.A. overrode certain anti-monopoly laws at first, monopolistic practices finally became its downfall and it was held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1935 (Schechter Poultry Corp. vs. U.S.).

The more enduring achievements of the N.R.A. lay not in the economic but in the social field. Here it accomplished a fantastic series of reforms, any one of which would have staggered the nation a few years earlier. It established the principle of maximum hours and minimum wages on a national basis. It abolished child labor. It dealt a fatal blow to sweatshops. It made collective bargaining a national policy and thereby transformed the position of organized labor.

Tennessee Gravy Train - Headlines from The N.Y. Times

- 1929 - Extra session of Legislature to be called to provide funds to meet shortage.
- ROADS - Tenn. Legis. plans Building Program.
- ROADS - Inability of State to Float Note Issue In Outside Market Endangers Highway Plans.
- 1930 - Failure of Holsten-Union National Bank and of Bank of Tenn. Involves Over \$5,000,000 of State Funds.
- H. H. Clements Will Ask For Investigation At Next Legislative Session as Result of Failure of Bonds.
- Vigilance Committee of 100 Men Formed To See To Prosecution and Punishment of Officials Involved In Failure of Banks In Which State Funds Deposited.
- Hint at Impeachment of Governor.
- Mass Meeting, Hamilton County - Demands Investigation Into Handling of State Funds in Recent Banks Failure.
- 1931 - ROADS - \$10,000,000 Highway Bond Bill Blocked in Legis., As All Night Session Ends in Blows.
- Impeachment of Gov. Horton - Postponement of Inauguration - Horton to Fight to Clear Self of Charge of Collusion - Conditions Bad Because of Row Between Gov. Horton and Legis.
- No October Salaries for State Employees, Teachers Unpaid for Entire Semester.
- Political Leader Shocked by N.Y. Bankers Lack of Interest in Proposed Bond Issues.
- Plans to Establish Eastern Tenn. as Separate State Defeated.

C.C.C.- Civilian Conservation Corps Reforestation Relief Act March, 1933 - passed as an unemployment relief measure. Authorized to provide work for jobless male citizens ages 18 to 25 in reforestation, road construction, prevention of soil erosion, national park and flood control projects. Work camps established for those in CCC; the youths received \$30 per month, part of which went to dependents. CCC had as many as 500,000 on its rolls at one time; by the end of 1941 had employed over 2 million youths.

1932 Election - Roosevelt carried 42 states - defeating Hoover.

1936 Election - Roosevelt carried 47 states - defeating Landon - Greatest electoral majority in any national contest in which there were two or more separate tickets.

Old Age Pension - Dissatisfaction with the New Deal led to the emergency of several organized anti-administration groups during 1934-35. The old Age Revolving Pension scheme proposed by Dr. Townsend of California called for payments to persons over 60 years of age to be drawn from a national tax on commercial transaction. Huey Long of Louisiana inspired the "Share Our Wealth" movement, demanded that Federal Government make "Every Man a King" by guaranteeing a minimum annual income of \$5,000 to every family. Gerald L. K. Smith succeeded Long in the movement and formed an alliance with Townsend which included Charles E. Coughlin. In August 1935 the Social Security Act passed by the administration motivated in part to win over the Townsend-Long following. Part of this act provided for a tax for old age insurance. The act was exclusively Federal in scope. It also authorized money grants to states for similar programs.

Problem of the Migrant Workers

Simultaneously with the general depression, there was another factor tending to worsen the lot of the workers and particularly of the farm workers. Many farmers were being pushed off their farms to become migratory workers or move to the city and compete there with other workers for the few available jobs. Farmland was being taken over by large outfits and combines which rent it on an industrial basis, using mechanized equipment and employing less labor and exploiting it more effectively than before. Rural America was changing and taking on some of the worst as well as some of the best (ie, most efficient) aspects of American industry. A generation of farmers with strong ties to the soil was being replaced by a generation of landless, and, in many cases, homeless farm industry employees.

- Refugees from the Dust Bowl and tracted-out sharecroppers became migrants working the crops of California, etc. "Farming has ceased to be a simple, serene mode of living and has evolved into an outdoor factory deal with all the attendant industrial grief" - from California; magazine of Pacific business - Lettuce Strike - 1938.

At the conclusion of the pea harvest in one California county, the supervisors voted \$2,500 to fill the tanks of the pickers cars with enough gasoline to get them into the next county and avoid having to feed them. The receiving county, resentful, sent word that if there is a repetition, the migrants will be turned back at the county line with guns.

SIDE I, Band 1: NO DEPRESSION

For fear the hearts of men are failing
For these are latter days we know
The great depression now is spreading
God's word declared it would be so.

CHORUS:

I'm going where there's no depression
To the lovely land that's free from care
I'll leave this world of toil and trouble
My home's in heaven, I'm going there.

In that bright land there'll be no hunger
No orphan children cryin' for bread
No weeping widows, toil or struggle
No shrouds, no coffins and no death!

(CHORUS)

This dark hour of midnight nearing
And tribulation time will come
The storms will hurl in midnight fear
And sweep lost millions to their doom

(CHORUS)

SIDE I, Band 2: THERE'LL BE NO DISTINCTION THERE

John: Lead Voice & Guitar
Mike: Voice & Fiddle

There'll be no sorrow on that heavenly shore
There'll be no woes at the cabin door
We'll all be wealthy and the poor will all be there
We'll be rich and happy in that land bright and fair
There'll be no distinction there.

CHORUS:

There'll be no distinction there
There'll be no distinction there
For the Lord is just, and the Lord is right
And will all be white in that heavenly light
There'll be no distinction there

In the same kind of rainment, the same kind of shoes
We'll all sit together in the same kind of pews
The whites and the colored folks, the Gentiles and
the Jews

We'll praise the Lord together and there'll be no
drinking booze
There'll be no distinction there.

(CHORUS)

Oh, when we get to heaven, we will know and understand
No woman will be flirting with another woman's man
There'll be no trouble in that happy holy land
We'll play on golden instruments and shout to beat
the band
There'll be no distinction there.

(CHORUS)

We're never blue in heaven, nothing there to wreck
the mind
Everybody is our neighbor, all the folks are good
and kind
No aggravating women there to boss the men around
When we enter into heaven, we will wear a golden
crown
There'll be no distinction there.

(CHORUS)

SIDE I, Band 3: BREADLINE BLUES

Tom- vocal & guitar
Mike-Steel guitar

The latest news has struck me funny.
Says you have no friends if you haven't got money.
And all of us good folks in distress
But I'm gonna get something off a chest
1932 won't be long
And when you place your vote please don't vote
wrong
Vote away those blues, those breadline blues.

It's a rich man's job to make some rules
In order to rid our breadline blues
Now listen here folks and it aint no joke
We've got to do something or we're all going to
croak
We can't get a job we've all been robbed
We've got no money and the corn's all cob
We've nothing but blues, the breadline blues

If we had state rights, I'll leave it you
We could all have fun and better home brew
Says the long-eared mule standing over his box
To the big mouthed elephant, "You drink like an ox."
You've had 12 years, proved nothing but a curse
Instead of making it better, it's getting worse
and worse
Says the long eared mule "I ain't no fool"

The elephant said "You long eared mule
Well you shut your mouth you never been to school."
The mule said "Elephant, it ain't no joke
We've got to do something or we're all gonna
croak".
We ain't got nothing but a carload of tax
And the doggone load is just a breakin our backs.
We've nothing but blues those breadline blues.

SIDE I, Band 4: WHITE HOUSE BLUES

Mike-Vocal & Fiddle
John-Guitar

Look here Mr. Hoover, it's see what you done
You went off a fishin' let the country go to ruin,
Now he's gone, I'm glad he's gone!

Roosevelt's in the White House, doing his best
While old Hoover is layin' around and rest
Now he's gone (doghide) I'm glad he's gone!

Pants all busted, patches all way down
People got so ragged they couldn't go to town.
Now he's gone, I'm glad he's gone!

Workin' in the coal mines 20¢ a ton
14 long hours and your work's day is done
Now he's gone I'm glad he's gone!

People all angry, they all got the blues
Wearing patched britches and old tennis shoes.
Now he's gone (doghide), I'm glad he's gone!

Got up this morning, all I could see
Was corn bread and gravy just a-waitin' for me
And now he's gone, I'm glad he's gone!

Look here Mr. Hoover and see what you done
You went off a fishin', let the country go to ruin,
Now he's gone (doghide) I'm glad he's gone!

SIDE I, Band 5: FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S BACK AGAIN

John: Lead Voice & Guitar
Tom : Voice and Lead Guitar

(The original Bill Cox record of this song was
mastered on the week following the November 1936
presidential election)

Just hand me my old Martin, for soon I will be
starting
Back to dear old Charleston, far away
Since Roosevelt's been re-elected, will not be
neglected
We've got Franklin D. Roosevelt back again.

CHORUS:
Back again, Back again
We've got Franklin D. Roosevelt back again
Since Roosevelt's been elected, moonshine liquor's
been corrected
We've got legal wine, whiskey, beer and gin.

I'll take a drink of brandy and let myself be handy
Good old times are coming back again
You can laugh and tell a joke, you can dance and
drink and smoke
We've got Franklin D. Roosevelt back again.

CHORUS:
We've got Franklin D. Roosevelt back again
We'll have money in our jeans
We can travel with the queen
We've got Franklin D. Roosevelt back again

No more breadlines we're glad to say, the donkey
won election day
No more standing in the blowing, snowing rain
He's got things in full swing
We're all working and getting our pay
We've got Franklin D. Roosevelt back again

CHORUS:
Back again, back again
We've got Franklin D. Roosevelt back again
Since Roosevelt's been elected, moonshine liquor's
been corrected
We've got Franklin D. Roosevelt back again

SIDE I, Band 6: HOW CAN A POOR MAN STAND SUCH
TIMES AND LIVE??

Mike-Fiddle & Vocal
John-Guitar
Tom -Banjo

There once was a time when everything was cheap
But now prices nearly puts a man to sleep
When we pay our grocery bill, we just a'feel like
a'makin our will

CHORUS:
Tell me how can a poor man stand such times and
live?

I remember when dry goods were cheap as dirt
We could take two bits and buy a dandy shirt
Now we pay three bucks or more, maybe get a
shirt that another man wore

(CHORUS)

Well I use to trade with a man by the name of Gray
Flour was 50¢ for a twenty-four pound bag
Now it's a dollar and a half beside just like a'
skinnin off a flea for the hide

(CHORUS)

Oh the schools we have today ain't worth a cent
But they see to it that every child is sent
If we don't send every day, we have a heavy fine
to pay

(CHORUS)

Prohibition's good if 'tis conducted right
There's no sense in shooting a man 'till he shows
flight
Officers kill without a cause, then complain about
funny laws

(CHORUS)

Most all preachers preach for gold and not for souls
That's what keeps a poor man always in a hole
We can hardly get our breath, taxed and schooled.
and preached to death

(CHORUS)

Oh it's time for every man to be awake
We pay 50¢ a pound when we ask for steak
When we get our package home, a little wad of
paper with gristle and bone

(CHORUS)

Well the doctor comes around with a face all bright
And he says in a little while you'll be all right.
All he gives is a humbug pill, a dose of dope and
a great big bill

(CHORUS)

SIDE I, Band 7: KEEP MOVING

John: Vocal & Guitar
Mike: Harmonica

How can you keep on moving, unless you migrate too
They tell you to keep on moving, but migrate you must
not do

The only reason for moving, the reason why I roam
Is to go to a new location, and find myself a home.

I can't go back to the homestead, my shack no longer
stands

They said I wasn't needed, had no claim to the land
They said, you better get moving, it's the only thing
for you

But how can you get moving, unless you migrate too.

Now if you pitch your little tent along the broad
highway
The Board of Sanitation says, "sorry you can't
stay"
Move on, move on, get moving, is their everlasting
cry
Can't stay, can't go back, can't migrate, so where in
heck am I.

I can not stand the miseries that follow me as I roam
Unless I'm looking forward to a place I can call home.
So I think I'll round up all the folks and see what
we can do

Cause how can you keep moving, unless you migrate too.

SIDE I, Band 8: TAXES ON THE FARMER FEEDS US ALL

Mike: Fiddle and Voice

1st CHORUS:
If you'll only look and see, I know you will agree
That the taxes on the farmer feeds us all.

2nd CHORUS:
Farmer is the man, farmer is the man
Buys on credit until fall
Then they take him by the hand
And they lead him through the land
And the merchant he's the man that gets it all.

While the woman use the snuff and they never get
enough
But the farmer is the man that feeds them all
While the farmer's black and dirty but he works
like a turkey
Got good clothes a-hangin in the hall

(1st and 2nd CHORUS)

While the judge is on the banch, he will scratch his
head and wink
But the farmer is the man that feeds them all
But the lawyer I'll declare will tell and lie and
swear
But the farmer is the man that feeds them all.

(1st and 2nd CHORUS)

While the doctor hangs around and the blacksmith
works his iron
But the farmer is the man that feeds them all.
And the preacher and the cook they'll go fishin'
on the brook
But the farmer is the man that feeds them all.

(1st and 2nd CHORUS)

SIDE I, Band 9: SERVES THEM FINE

Tom: Guitar and Vocal
Mike: Mandolin
John: Banjo

Now people, in the year 19 and 20
The mills run good and everybody had plenty
Lots of people with a good free will
Sold their homes and move to the mill
We'll have lots of money they said
But everyone got hell instead
It was fun in the mountains a rolling logs
But now when the whistle blows we run like dogs.

REFRAIN:

It suits us people and it serves them fine
For thinking that a mill was a darn gold mine

Now in the year 19 and 25
The mills all stood but we're still alive
People kept a-coming when the weather was fine
Just like they were going to a big gold mine
As time passed on, their money did too
Everyone began to feeling kind of blue
If we had any sense up in our dome
We'd still be living in our mountain home

(REFRAIN)

Now in the year 19 and 30
They don't pay nothing and they do us dirty
If we ever do manage to get ahead
It seems like all of the mills go dead
We're down in a hole, getting deeper every day
If we ever get even, it'll be Judgement Day
There's no use to colic, no use to shirk
There's more people loafing than there are at work

(REFRAIN)

Now all you mountaineers that's listening to me
Take off your hats and holler "Whopee".
I'm going back home to the land of the sky
Where they all drink moonshine and never do die
I'll take my dogs while the moon shines bright
I'll hunt 'coon and 'possum the whole darn night
If you can't get the money to move away
It's too bad folks, you'll have to stay.

(REFRAIN)

SIDE II, Band 1: NRA BLUES

Tom - Guitar & Vocal
Mike- Mandolin
John-Banjo

I work down in the old sweat shop
(Sweet thing, sweet thing)
I work down in the old sweat shop
I work like a mule and I never stop
(sweet thing, yes baby mine)

When (we)(you) gonna join the NRA
I never have heard the big boss say.

CHORUS:

I've got the blues, I've got them NRA blues,
Lord I've got them NRA blues

When pay day comes and I draw my check
All I get is a little wee speck

When we all join the NRA
We'll get short hours and get same pay

(CHORUS)

The rich men's all on easy street
The poor man can't get enough to eat

When we all join the NRA
We'll all feel happy and all feel gay.

(CHORUS)

SIDE II, Band 2: DEATH OF THE BLUE EAGLE

John: Voice and Guitar
Mike: Fiddle

The other day my papers come,
I sat and scratched my head
While turning through the pages boys,
Here is what I read.
The Blue Eagle it is ailing,
The little writer said.
But when he finished writing
The Eagle he was dead.

They took him to the graveyard
In the merry month of May
Said who will solve our problems now
There's no NRA

But there's a man in Washington
Roosevelt is his name
And how he's mourning o'er the bird
It is an awful shame

He told Hugh S. Johnson,
And Johnson said "my God,
What will the miners ever do
Without their blue mascot"

But we have an order boys
The UMW of A
And we must stick to it
Until the Judgement day
But if you're undecided boys,
And don't know what to do
Just think how much a day you got
In 1932.

SIDE II, Band 3: JOIN THE C.I.O.

Mike: Voice and Banjo

I am a union woman
Just as brave as I can be
I do not like the bosses
And the bosses don't like me

CHORUS:

Join the CIO
Come join the C.I.O.

I was raised in Kentucky
In Kentucky borned and bred
And when I joined the Union
They called me a Rooshian Red

(CHORUS)

When my husband asked the boss for a job
This is the words he said
Bill Jackson I can't work you sir
Your wife's a Rooshian Red

(CHORUS)

If you want to join a Union
The strongest one can be
Join the dear old NMU
And come along with me

(CHORUS)

If you want to join a union
Step in and come along
We'll all be glad to have you
We're many thousand strong.

(CHORUS)

We are many thousand strong
And I am glad to say
We are getting stronger
And stronger every day.

(CHORUS)

If you want to get your freedom
And gain your liberty
Join the dear old C.I.O.
Also the I.L.D.

(CHORUS)

Just join the dear old I.L.D.
And come along with me
The workers are all protected
By the dear old I.L.D.

(CHORUS)

The bosses ride their big fine white horse
While we walk in the mud
Their flag's the old red, white and blue
And ours is dipped in blood.

(CHORUS)

SIDE II, Band 4: OLD AGE PENSION CHECK

John: Voice and Guitar
Tom : Steel Guitar
Mike: Mandolin

When the old age pension check comes to our door
We won't have to dread the poor house any more
Though we're old and bent and gray
Good times will be back to stay
When our old age pension check comes to our door.

When our old age pension check comes to our door
Dear old grandma won't be lonesome any more
She'll be waiting at the gate
Every night she'll have a date
When her old age pension check comes to our door.

Grow a flowing long white beard and use a cane
 'Cause you're in your second childhood don't complain
 Life will just begin at sixty
 And we'll all feel very frisky
 When our old age pension check comes to our door.

Powder and paint will be abolished on that day
 Ankle skirts will then be brought back into play
 Faded cheeks will be the rage
 And old maids will tell their age
 When our old age pension check comes to our door.

All the drugstores will go bankrupt on that day
 For cosmetics they will all be put away
 I'll put the flapper on the shelf
 And get a grandma for myself
 When our old age pension check comes to our door

There's a man that turned this country upside down
 With his old age pension rumors going round
 If you want in on the fun
 Send your dimes to Washington
 And the old age pension man will be around.

SIDE II, Band 5: SALES TAX ON THE WOMEN

Tom-Hawaiian Guitar & Vocal
 Mike-Guitar & Vocal

You may sales tax the flour, the lard, and the meat
 Take the pennies 'way from me and my pals
 You may sales tax everything that we have to eat
 But don't you put a tax upon the gals

CHORUS:
 One cent, two cents, three cents in cash
 That's the way my money goes a spending (spinning)
 But take off my hat and hit me with a bat
 If you put the sales tax on the women.

Don't you put the taxes on the good looking girls
 Although I know the pennies have to go
 Well I wouldn't have it done for
 'Cause the boys wouldn't stand a bit of show

(CHORUS)

I love the little girls with their lovely little
 curls
 If that is wrong I hope I will repent
 I would sure be sore and I couldn't love no more
 If I had to pay the taxes as I went

(CHORUS)

That's the way it goes, Uncle Sam knows.
 He'd just a torture me and my pals
 We would die with the blues without any shoes
 If you put the sales tax on the gals.

(CHORUS)

Well I don't mean any harm when I step out at
 night
 Happy times with the ladies I've spent
 Sales tax on the kisses just wouldn't be right.
 In my pockets I would never have a cent

(CHORUS)

SIDE II, Band 6: WRECK OF THE TENNESSEE GRAVY TRAIN

John: Lead Voice and Banjo
 Tom : Voice and Guitar

The people of Tennessee want to know who wrecked our
 gravy train
 The one we thought was run so well and now who can
 we blame
 They want to know who greased the track and started
 it down the road
 This same ol' train contained our money to build
 our highway home.

CHORUS:

But now we're up against it and no use to raise a row
 For of all the times I've ever seen, we're sure up
 against it now
 The only thing that we can do, is do the best we can
 So follow me good people, I'm bound for the promised
 land.

Now I could be a banker, without the least excuse.
 But look at the Treasurer of Tennessee and tell me
 what's the use
 We lately looted Tennessee for just five million
 bucks
 The bonds were issued and the money tied up and now
 we're in tough luck

(CHORUS)

Some lay it all on parties, some blame it on others
 you see
 But now that you can plainly tell what happened to
 Tennessee
 The brakemen pulled the throttle, the conductor rang
 the bell
 The engineer hollered "all aboard" and the banks
 all went to hell.

SIDE II, Band 7: LOVELESS C.C.C.

Tom: Guitar
 Mike: Harmonica

Why did I join the C.C.C. (3)
 The old hard labor is killin' me.

They treat me like a dirty dog
 I have to slave down in a log
 They treat me like a hog
 Oh, why did I join the C.C.C.

I have to work most every day
 Five bucks a month is my pay
 I'm just a wasting my life away
 Oh, why did I join the C.C.C.

SIDE II, Band 8: BOY'S MY MONEY'S ALL GONE (Instrumental)

Mike: Fiddle
 John: Guitar
 Tom: Banjo

SIDE II, Band 9: ALL I GOT'S GONE

Mike: Fiddle & Vocal
 Tom: Banjo
 John: Guitar

I'm a gonna sing you a brand new song
 She's a dandy as sure as your born.
 Everything just a runnin' in rhyme
 Sings all right considering these times

CHORUS:

All I got's gone! All I got's gone!

All of the people bought automobiles
 Didn't know how they was going to feel
 Rollin' around so grand and proud
 Notes come due, they couldn't pay it out

(CHORUS - using "they" for "I")

All of the people own nice little farms
 Doing pretty well, didn't do no harm
 Sold their farm bought an auto too
 The notes come due they had to skidoo.

(CHORUS - using "they" for "I")

I went to the bank to borrow some money
 I tell you right now, didn't find it funny.
 Banker said I got none to loan
 Get your hat and pull out a home

For ... CHORUS (using "use" for "I")

Whole lot of farmers want to ride and plough
 Had to buy a tractor to find out how
 When they broke a piece, them poor white fools
 Better of kept a walkin' and a plowin' them mules

For ... CHORUS (using "they" for "I")

Country dudes a'riding in cars
 Tailor-made suits and a'smokin' cigars
 Running to the barber shop a'powderin' and a'rubbin'
 I bet you right now they're a'plowin' and a grubbin'

For ... CHORUS (as in V)

Don't like to see the women a'wearing satin dresses
 Husband's bankrupted and in great distresses
 Better been a'home a'washin' the dishes
 A'patchin' their dresses with their husbands old
 britches

For ... CHORUS (as in VI)

Me and my partner both went to bed
 A jug of white light'ning under my head
 I waked up and the stopper was pulled
 The jug was empty but my partner was full

For ... CHORUS (as in I)

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