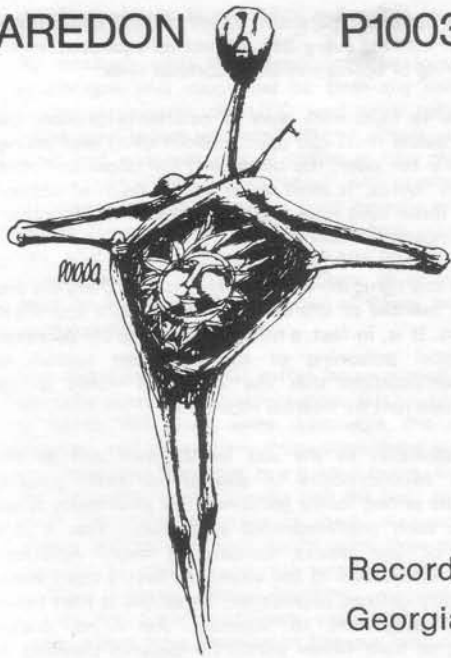


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**Songs of the GI Resistance
Sung by Barbara Dane
with active-duty GIs**

Recorded at Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Benning,
Georgia; and Fort Bragg, North Carolina

EDITED BY IRWIN SILBER



Barbara Dane at The Oleo Strut, Fort Hood, Texas
Photo by Carolyn Mugar

ABOUT THE GI MOVEMENT

by Irwin Silber

Soldiers in the U. S. Army, stationed at Fort Gordon, Georgia, organize a "War Crimes Commission" to investigate the American military machine.

More than 100 GIs, held prisoner in the stockade in Fort Lewis, Wash., sign a petition supporting the Vietnam Moratorium Day and stage a mess hall boycott for one day.

Hundreds of U.S. Marines march in an anti-war parade through the streets of Oceanside, Calif., home of Camp Pendleton, largest Marine training camp on the West Coast.

GIs at Fort Hood, Texas, mimeograph copies of the political program of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (formerly the National Liberation Front) and distribute them to onlookers and participants in a peace demonstration in Houston.

The Commanding Officer at one of the largest military bases in the U.S.A., Fort Dix, New Jersey, confines his own troops to barracks during an anti-war demonstration for fear they will join the demonstrators. He polices the action with MPs flown in from another base, figuring his own Military Police might be too sympathetic to the protestors.

19 stockade prisoners at the Presidio in San Francisco, California, sit down in the center of their enclosure and sing "We Shall Overcome" as a protest against inhuman treatment of GIs.

More than 40 military bases throughout the country cancel traditional Armed Forces Day celebrations (May 16), concerned that anti-war demonstrators will "invade" their bases and propagandize the GIs.

Incidents such as these, only occasionally publicized in the U.S. press, are occurring daily at the camps, bases and installations of the self-proclaimed most powerful military machine on the face of the earth. Widespread disaffection right within the ranks of the U.S. military has become one of the major political and logistical problems for the Pentagon, whose policy planners have become the High Command of international counter-revolution.

It is a problem they did not anticipate. Just as the orthodox military mentality has no way of coping with the realities of "people's war" in Vietnam, so the elite officer corps of the U.S. brass, contemptuous of their own enlisted men in the first place, cannot comprehend the depths of alienation and outright political opposition which have infected every branch of the armed forces.

The source of this development is not hard to find, however. Every imperialist power which has tried to conduct a colonial war with a mass army has encountered the same problem. Non-mercenary armies can and will conduct themselves with bravery and loyalty when their land is invaded or when their lives and security of their loved ones are threatened. But all the rhetoric in the world cannot disguise the fact that America's war of aggression in Vietnam is a "dirty" war, a genocidal war, a war which cannot inspire the kind of motivation a disciplined army requires.

What is at stake in Southeast Asia is the hegemony of U.S. imperialism. This means not only markets and sources of raw materials. It also means the urgent necessity to stem the tide of national liberation which has become the most powerful force on the planet in the second half of the 20th century—and I mean here

genuine national liberation, which, as the neo-colonial world is learning every day, cannot be separated from a re-ordering of economies along socialist lines.

In order to fight such wars of counter-revolution, the United States must call upon millions of its own young, especially the poor, the black, and the disenfranchised. In other words, it must enlist in the form of cannon fodder those who have the least stake in the "success" of the imperialist machine.

Seen in this light, the amazing thing is that there are any sizeable number of GIs at all willing to fight and die in Vietnam. It is, in fact, a tribute of sorts to the pervasive ideological poisoning of the American system of mind-manipulation that the American Army is not completely rent by internal rebellion.

But opposition to the war in Vietnam and to the military superstructure in general has been growing inside the armed forces for some time until today it has reached such unprecedented proportions that it is a matter of the gravest concern at every American military installation in the world. At first it was a vague and poorly defined opposition. Three GIs at Fort Hood refusing assignment to Vietnam. An Army doctor refusing to train Green Berets for duty in Vietnam. A private attempting to start a soldiers' union.

Then, almost three years ago, as anti-war GIs began to realize that almost no one except lifers and the brass were in favor of the war, the dissent began to take on an organized form. GIs at various bases began publishing their own underground newspapers. Salty, outspoken, increasingly political, there are more than 50 such papers regularly published today. Some of them have a circulation as high as 15,000 copies per issue. The papers appear everywhere—including some which are published in Vietnam, Germany and Japan. Stockade rebellions, protesting the Army's racist system and the inhuman treatment accorded military prisoners, broke out in dozens of camps—including posts in Vietnam, Germany and Japan.

Desertions from the U.S. Army reached an all-time high, while AWOLs sky-rocketed to the point where the military conceded there were more than 150,000 such cases in 1969 alone. GIs began organized letter campaigns and petition movements in opposition to the war, in support of the struggles of blacks, Mexican-Americans, students, working people and others in the civilian population, and in protest at the brutalizing conditions within the armed forces. Mess hall boycotts, sick-call strikes, and various other "on the job" actions spread throughout the ranks—particularly in conjunction with coordinated mass civilian anti-war actions.

The movement is more than one of spontaneous dissent, however. The basis for a widespread movement exists in the reality of the oppression of the ordinary GI, and particularly his victimization as the one who is asked to give up the most—his life—for the least. But it also took the conscious and concerted efforts of politically motivated activists to help this movement find its voice and its organizational forms.

One of the most effective devices for helping the growth of organized protest in the Army has been the "GI coffeehouse." This idea was launched early in 1968 by a young anti-war activist, Fred Gardner, who together with a group of friends opened a small coffee house in Columbia, South Carolina, home of Fort Jackson. The UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) as it was called, was first of all an alternate-culture center for off-duty GIs who were fed up with the bars, drug stores, magazine stands and other traditional Army town enterprises designed to separate a young soldier from his monthly

paycheck as quickly and deftly as possible.

By contrast with the B-girl infested joints openly encouraged and supported by both the military and civilian authorities, the UFO (and other coffee houses which have grown up since) offered simple, wholesome food and a decent cup of coffee at low prices. More important, they combined an atmosphere of relaxation—escape from the brass harass—with a hi-fi record player and the kind of recordings young people like, plus people willing to listen and to talk about real things. And all of this takes place in an atmosphere more in keeping with the mood of young people than anything else in town.

Not surprisingly, the GI coffee house turned out to be the only place in town where many GIs could really feel at home. The prices were reasonable, the mood was low-key, and the civilians there cared about him not just as a cash customer, but as a human being. In addition, the GI coffee house usually had the best show or the most interesting program in town. Anti-war singers, theater groups, and rock bands came from all over the country to perform on the simple stages of the GI coffee houses. Black Panthers, members of the Conspiracy, labor organizers, civil rights fighters and many others have engaged in free-swinging open-ended discussions with GIs about the war, racism, imperialism, and the nature of the class struggle. Folksinger Barbara Dane, who has performed at just about every military base where a coffee house or some other kind of organizing project has been initiated, has worked together with GIs to begin creating a new song literature has grown directly out of this movement. Today, at army bases from North Carolina to Washington, GIs are singing such songs as "Insubordination" — "Don't want nobody over me, Don't want nobody under me. . . Subordination is a drag, Liberation is my bag" — and "Bring 'Em Home" — "GIs fight and GIs die, Some get rich while Nixon lies." But the most enthusiastic response from GIs comes when Barbara sings:

I am a GI rebel,
As brave as I can be,
I don't like the Army brass,
And the generals don't like me.

Join the GI movement,
Come and join the GI movement.

Other artists who have performed for GIs in the anti-war coffee houses include actress Jane Fonda, singers Pete Seeger, Mabel Hillary, Bernice Reagon and Phil Ochs, and theater groups such as the Bread and Puppet Theater and the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Films produced by Newsreel, the radical documentary film-making collective, and American Documentary Films are probably the main cultural-political staple of the coffee house circuit.

Within a year of the opening of the UFO, GI coffee houses were operating at a number of bases, among them Fort Hood, Texas (The Oleo Strut), Fort Lewis, Wash. (The Shelter Half), Fort Knox, Kentucky, Fort Dix, N.J., Fort Ord, Calif., and Fort Carson, Colorado. At other sites — including naval training stations, marine camps and Air Force bases — FBI and military intelligence harassment prevented coffee houses from opening, so organizing projects in an inventive variety of other forms were started.

Holding this movement together have been a number of individuals—ex-GIs, anti-war activists, radical lawyers, and other civilian supporters. Through an organization called The United States Serviceman's Fund (USSF), they have raised many tens of thousands of dollars. This money has been used to launch the various coffee houses, to finance GI newspapers (approximately \$5,000

a month is spent in outright grants to GI newspapers), to supply literature, magazines, posters, films, speakers and performers for the coffee houses, etc. Other groups have raised money to supply civilian organizers with a subsistence wage and with minimum allotments for food and rent. (At the Fort Hood project, civilian organizers function on the basis of a 25¢ per day food allotment. Collective cooking, naturally, has become a way of life.) Not the least of the money raised by these support groups has gone for legal fees. Organizing projects have tried to provide legal assistance to GIs whose anti-war and organizing activities have resulted in harassment and court-martials. Lawyers have been constantly on call to defend both the coffee houses and the civilian organizers, both of whom have been the targets of increasing attack by the military and civilian establishments.

At first, the response of the military was low-key. The brass was annoyed, but they were afraid of over-reacting for fear of giving GI dissent helpful publicity. So, for the most part, base commanders satisfied themselves by assigning Military Intelligence personnel to infiltrate the projects in order to find out who the most active GIs were and what they were up to. Meanwhile, the local civilian authorities would initiate a campaign of petty harassment.

But as the movement grew, as the GI papers began to have increasing influence, as more and more GIs began questioning the premises of the war and their own involvement in it, the military grew more concerned. During the past year, the military counter-attack against the GI movement has been stepped up considerably. GI activists are transferred to other bases arbitrarily—where they usually start new organizing projects. Some are sent to Vietnam or Korea, a few of them actually shanghaied in leg-irons. Others are given hasty dishonorable discharges. The stockades in almost all bases are filled to overflowing, frequently at double and triple capacity, leading to more protests, more rebellions. Court-martial proceedings have been instituted against GIs for distributing copies of newspapers at their bases, for conducting pray-ins for peace, for organizing petition campaigns, for conducting barracks meetings and discussions.

Attacks on the coffee houses themselves have become more open and blatant. In Columbia, the UFO was closed up by the civilian authorities and its organizers arrested on charges of conducting "a public nuisance." In an Alice In Wonderland trial, the UFO was fined \$10,000 and three of the organizers sentenced to prison terms of six years each.

At Muldraugh, Kentucky, adjacent to Fort Knox, civilian organizers have been the victims of a coordinated campaign of harassment and intimidation in which they have been arrested several times over on such charges as "littering" (because leaflets they were distributing were subsequently found on the streets). The coffeehouse here has never been able to obtain required business licenses and the building has been fire-bombed several times by the Ku Klux Klan.

At Fort Dix, a bomb was thrown into the coffee house completely destroying the entrance area and injuring several GIs and civilians. Fort Hood GIs, travelling to Austin for a peace demonstration, were shot at with automatic weapons by the KKK. In Oceanside, Calif., local right wing vigilantes shot into the GI organizing project house and wounded a black marine. In Tacoma, Wash., the Army declared the coffee house adjacent to Fort Lewis "off limits," until public and even Congressional protest forced the military to drop its action.

But despite the harassment and the various kinds of

pressures brought to bear, the GI protest movement has grown until today it is a political factor of great significance. For public consumption, the organs of the U.S. government call GI dissent "insignificant" and try to reassure the public with the notion that the "boys in uniform" are still the willing servants of the system. The movement, in an organized sense, is still relatively small. There may be no more than ten or twenty thousand GIs who, to one degree or another, actively participate in anti-war activities. But the organized movement is only the tip of the iceberg. Down below, supporting that tip, is the almost universal sentiment in the American armed forces which increasingly views the Vietnam war as a meaningless fight, as a "dirty" war without moral or political justification, and which has lost respect for the authority structure which carries on that war.

Only a few years ago, the American "peace" movement was unable to distinguish between the military establishment and those average and ordinary American boys who were forced to fight and die for a system in which they themselves had no stake. The "heroes" of the peace movement then were the draft-dodgers and draft-refusers who chose exile or prison rather than service in the armed forces. And surely those who said "Hell no! We won't go!" were on the front lines of resistance, deserving of the support and encouragement of all who opposed the war.

But there was a class factor operating in the situation, too, and it was this that the peace movement did not

understand. The armed forces of the U.S.A. are composed primarily of working class youth. The number of black, Chicano (Mexican-American) and Puerto Rican youngsters in uniform is much greater than their percentage of the population as a whole. It was precisely these youth who were least able to obtain educational deferments from the draft which enabled many of their white middle class contemporaries to avoid service. An unusually high percentage of enlistees in the army came from working class backgrounds; having little expectation of a decent job or a higher education, anticipating the inevitability of the draft, many of these working class youth were prey to the blandishments of the military recruiters who promised them their "choice of service" and a chance at special educational training.

And it is these young men—working class youths who voluntarily enrolled in the Army—who provide the backbone of the GI resistance movement. This is a fact which always comes as a surprise to those who first become involved with helping GIs to organize themselves, but it is a pattern in every area of the country. In many ways it is the most hopeful development of all for the American Left—since it is from the ranks of the young GIs that the desperately needed working class leadership of the American movement may finally come.

Alaska GIs In Anti-War Action

1,000 MARINES

MARCH in OCEANSIDE

GI'S UNITE!

1000 GI'S

**FORT RILEY
REBELLION**

MARCH CLOSES FT MEADE

GIs Put Military on Trial

IF THIS BE TREASON . . .

by Barbara Dane

If you think of a town like Killeen, Texas, with its strings of greasy spoons, pawn shops, loan sharks, used car lots and motels, without even a decent movie or bookstore to offset the pin-ball palace and the pool room, you can understand what a place like the *Oleo Strut* can mean. First, the walls have posters of Malcolm X and John Sinclair, Huey Newton and Che Guevara. Then, you hear the Fish or Judy Collins on the turntable, or Jimi Hendrix. A pile of magazines and newspapers features the *Village Voice*, the *Guardian*, *Ramparts*, *Los Angeles Free Press* and *Rolling Stone*, along with free copies of GI newspapers put out by the men themselves on several bases throughout the country. And the prices are next to nothing. You can sit and play chess, or talk, or just get your head together, and nobody bothers you. In other words, you are respected as a person here, and you can be left alone or you can get help if you need it, to organize your brothers, put out a newspaper, or apply for Conscientious Objector status.

Such places were also opened in Columbia, South Carolina (The UFO, near Ft. Jackson), Tacoma, Washington (The Shelter Half, near Ft. Lewis) and in Wrightstown, New Jersey (near Ft. Dix). Occasionally, one of a small fraternity of cultural workers who understood the importance of relating to these guys showed up in person. Phil Ochs, Pete Seeger, Mable Hillary, Joe MacDonald, Norman Mailer, and street theatre people like Mike Alaimo from the Gut Theatre, or the San Francisco Mime Troupe, have visited. Barbara Garson, author of *Macbird*, is working full time in one coffee house. There is little publicity and no money in doing your work for GIs, but there is no more urgent need for relevant songs, poems, speeches, plays or pictures anywhere.

I've spent the last year and a half travelling to the coffee houses, and would like to tell you what it is like to sing for soldiers in the time of America's cruelest war. The first surprise is that suddenly all the good and real old songs become relevant. Every people's song has a bearing on what has brought our country to its present state. The people in the audience are from so many different backgrounds that every style and language of music touches someone. My few Spanish songs mean a great deal, I've found, to the Puerto Rican kids shanghaied out of their mountains into the U.S. Army with such a limited knowledge of English that the phrase "no entiendo" (I don't understand) has become a standard part of bitter GI humor. Woody Guthrie's songs speak so well about problems that still aren't solved that I do more of them all the time. Sharp commentary like "Lyndon Johnson Told the Nation" made the men stand up and cheer last year, and now you only have to mention that while the face has changed, the policies have kept getting worse. The GIs know, even if the public is fooled, that far more replacements are being sent to Vietnam than the highly publicized withdrawals could counterbalance. And they all have personal knowledge of friends who have been kidnapped to Nam in leg irons after all the Army's deceptions had failed.

All this has had its effect. And now the bread has risen. The stockades are scandalously overcrowded with uncooperative soldiers, sailors and marines — most of them guys who went AWOL, voting against the war with their feet. At Ft. Hood, 43 black GIs refused to be used against the people in Chicago at the Democratic Convention police riot. A couple of times, the riot training itself has backfired into full scale actions against the brass. The Pentagon admits to over 70,000 desertions last year. And I've sung with numbers of them up in Canada who send one three-word message to

their friends back at the bases: "Come on up!" Perhaps what is most striking of all is the feeling that you never seem to run into any GIs who feel the army is where they want to be!

On October 12, 1969, in their first joint demonstration at a post, more than 5,000 civilians and off-duty soldiers marched right onto the Ft. Dix drill field to ask for the release of 38 men court-martialed by a kangaroo court for speaking out about the medieval conditions there. The aftermath of a riot which had broken out in the stockade recently, after prisoners were forced to stand at attention a full summer afternoon in the sun and were then refused drinking water. In the past, prisoners had endured routine deprivations, beatings, and even torture (documented by stockade doctors), the most infamous of which was "the straps," where a man is tied with his wrists behind his ankles and then dropped from a height onto his face. When they felt alone and without support, few dared to complain. But the presence in the nearby town of a meeting ground, and sympathetic, resourceful friends, made all the difference. What kind of songs will come of it? Before we marched onto the base at Ft. Dix, we sang a song to the tune of "The Patriot Game" which starts out "I'm going to prison so I can be free." We sang "Join the GI Movement" . . . and "In-sub-or-din-a-tion"!

The army, of course, is prepared to go pretty far with their intimidation and harassment in attempting to stop this. Landlords have torn up leases after being visited by FBI who told them not to deal with "those people, or else."

The UFO staff was arrested and tried for "creating a public nuisance" by local authorities, who ended up sentencing three of them to six-year sentences. The coffeehouse was fined \$10,000 and padlocked permanently.

The Ft. Dix coffeehouse was bombed and the landlord evicted the group. Ft. Knox's coffeehouse was never granted licenses to serve any refreshments, was firebombed several times by local vigilantes, and the organizers jailed on bench warrants every time they showed up on the streets. Marines meeting quietly in a home near Camp Pendleton, Calif. were shot at through the window, badly wounding one. But that story begins last summer.

The coffeehouse organizer at Oceanside had been refused a license by the city. I sent word that I'd come anyway, if they could prepare something in a park, streetcorner, or anywhere so we could make some contact with the Marines. A "cultural guerrilla attack" was decided on . . . in the USO!

A local friend went to the USO in the YMCA and said there was a blues singer coming to town who would like to entertain the boys. The lady in charge was delighted. Some leaflets were quickly prepared and passed out on the nearby streets about a half-hour before starting time. About 90 bored-looking "skin heads" showed up, tired of looking over the *Stag* and *Archie* comic magazines in the drugstores, expecting nothing.

Part of me wanted to tell someone to keep the motor running near the stage entrance. I didn't know what to expect either. These were "Joe Heroes" from off the street, not anti-war GIs in a coffee house . . . and this was Ronnie Reagan country. We were about to find out some things.

I started out slow, with a blues. Then I said something about how hard it's always been to be in California without any money, and sang Woody's "Do-Re-Mi." "Yeah, the merchants really get their hands out when you've got short hair and it's Pendleton payday," I said.

There was applause for that, and some knowing laughter. I sang about Pretty Boy Floyd and about how some men will rob you with a six-gun, and some with a fountain pen. A new look was spreading over their faces now. Someone was talking to them as if *they mattered!* The USO lady just beamed. . .and counted the points we must be making.

I decided to step up the level of reality. "I was in Mexico City last year," I said, "and people everywhere were talking about how the students were getting together and organizing, trying to begin solving the serious problems facing poor people there. Then they held a big demonstration, and the government called out the troops. The order was given to shoot, and more than 400 people were killed." I paused for a moment. "You know, it's a terrible thing when an army is used against its own people." And now it began to sink in. "That's right," said one marine, and the murmur of shock, of self-recognition went through the hall. Then I sang a recent Mexican version of an Ecuadorian song which ends, "And if I die, bury me like a revolutionary, with my rifle in my hand and wrapped in a red flag." When you hear a few score Marines cheering those sentiments, you know what's keeping the Pentagon lights burning late.

At this point, I introduced Don Duncan, the Green Beret Sgt. who quit, to say a few words. Don's articles in Ramparts and his public statements elsewhere have freaked out the brass, and he knows more about the Green Berets than John Wayne and Creighton Abrams put together. He told the audience how he had become aware of how he and his buddies were being misused in Vietnam, and he talked about how they were being equally misused here at home. He spoke about the problems getting the coffee house started. The USO lady was beginning to get the message. She sent word that we only had a few more minutes. "Time for two more songs," she shrieked. It was nearly nine o'clock and we had been scheduled to go on until ten.

I sang "Last Drink with Don," a poem written by Fred Gardner for a good friend who was in the Air Force under orders for Vietnam, because it speaks in a loving and manly but firmly challenging way about the biggest decisions military men face. . .and also because it is one of my longest songs. The Marines were intensely quiet now, not missing a word. Then I sang about Richard Campos, a young Chicano (Mexican-American) who was killed in Vietnam. . ."But should a man have to kill in order to live like a human being in this country?"

The Marines stood and cheered—not for me, or even so much for the song, as for the fact that their humanity had responded when the songs spoke to them.

The USO lady tried to get her janitor to turn out the lights. But the "boys" were still clapping and shouting for more, so I launched into a new version of Aunt Molly Jackson's old "I Am a Union Woman":

I am a GI rebel, as brave as I can be,
And I don't like the army brass, and the
gen'ral's don't like me.
Join the GI Movement,
Come and join the GI movement.

Now they were stomping their feet, and clapping, singing along while they smiled as if their faces would split! The USO lady came striding across the room, and we figured we'd leave now. My son Pablo, who had made an exciting guitar obbligato to the whole program, grabbed the guitars and we made for the door. Suddenly we were surrounded by Marines. . .shaking hands, thanking us, and asking questions, as anxious as we were to go where we could really talk. Here's where the organizers' skills came through. They had arranged a place, and cars to take a lot of people, and we all made

an instant party, with local grape-strikers, Vista worker friends, and anti-war neighbors who all had plenty to say to each other.

Later that night we re-ran some of the best quotes: "I been in the movement all my life and didn't know what to call it!", "I just can't believe this! Just can't believe it!", "There's somebody big at the bottom of all this, and I'm going to find out who won't let us open up a coffee house," and the gut reaction from a young guy in the front row earlier, when I had asked "What you gonna do about all this?" . . . "Shoot the lifers!" (career military men).

A couple of days later, guys were calling the organizers and asking if they could come over and help with anything. They wound up making signs and marching in the demonstration at Nixon's summer White House at nearby San Clemente, along with 10,000 other anti-war Californians!

No, yearning for peace, working for peace is not treason. With the Moratorium Days and with mayors, even U.S. Senators, and all kinds of "celebrities" identifying themselves with that sentiment, it's positively respectable. (Wonder where they'd be, though, if the Vietnamese hadn't resisted and fought us to a standstill and caused their war to go lousy on them?) But encouraging the disaffection of the fighting men? Insisting that GIs have rights just like every other human being? Helping soldiers understand that when they are being insulted, "broken" to military discipline, shanghaied, harassed and even tortured by their own hierarchy it's not some weird mistake or accident, but an extension of a whole system which has no more respect for GIs than it does for Vietnamese peasants or Dominican students (or, for that matter, Kentucky miners and Detroit factory workers)? Helping soldiers and veterans organize into a decisive force in the anti-war movement? That's what sort of "crime" has been happening in the GI coffee houses. And we have done our best, some of us who are musicians and performing artists, to aid and abet. We're fighting for their lives by lending moral support to soldiers who may decide *not* to accept orders for Vietnam. And we're proposing to help get America off the backs of the world—and off our own. We aim to see America out of the hands of the military and back in the hands of the people, by saying our say, singing our songs, marching our marches, and when all that fails, by any means necessary, like the brother said. And as Patrick Henry said in America's first Revolution, "If this be treason, make the most of it!"



About the Songs:

JOIN THE GI MOVEMENT: Back in the early '30s a great singing organizer in the bloody mine battles was Aunt Molly Jackson. She was the sister of two other great people's singers and fighters, Jim Garland and Sarah Ogan Gunning. The whole family was blacklisted from work because of their union activities, and they finally had to move away from Harlan County just to live. But their legacy of songs has stayed with us and keeps on being useful, wherever people are finding the strength and courage to fight for their rights. It seemed to me that this old chorus which used to be "Join the CIO" would help the guys who are discovering that it's important to get together, the same way it helped the miners in those days. Only thing is, now we stay a little shy of hierarchical organizations, having watched people get tricked and double-crossed by their own leaders so often in the past. Now we say, everyone a leader, and everyone a follower in his turn. . .only do it *together!*

HALLELUJAH, I'M A BUM! The minute Mr. Nixon put his foot between his molars with this one, Irwin (Silber) and I started coining verses for the old standby. . .only to find that others had the same idea! Well, I've sung this same tune since I was in Sunday School, at demonstrations and with different words over the years, and it seems to get more bitter and less funny as the time passes.

BALLAD OF RICHARD CAMPOS: This is one of two existing versions of this idea, both written by brothers. Luis Valdez is the director of the Teatro Campesino, a marvelous people's theatre which came out of the California grape strike. His brother Danny was a young musician trying to make it in the big city, who quit and joined the Teatro when he saw how important this cultural extension of the strike could be to his people. Danny wrote this song and then Luis wrote another of the same theme in Spanish, to show how empty the idea of "making it" in the Army or in any phase of present-day American life today could be. They wanted to address the "machismo" concepts in Latin culture too, and put to rest the idea that the only way you could be a man, please your woman, or honor your mother, was to do as "the man" says. Apart from the obvious things in the song, they wanted to say that it is far more manly to fight for your own people, your own dignity, than to be duped into fighting against your own best interests. Both Danny and Luis, and hundreds of other Latin brothers and sisters, are working every day to help educate and organize Chicano (Mexican-American) people in the Southwest and all along the Central Valley of California to fight for their own, just as Latin brothers in the Army are beginning to find each other.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN: I first sang this song during the voter registration rallies of "Freedom Summer," when dozens of us went to Mississippi, partly as a reaction to Robert Kennedy's suggestion as Attorney General that people not make freedom rides, which caused the violent reaction from up-tight Southern whites of shootings, jailings, and burning of buses, but rather should register blacks and *vote* out those who would defy the Constitution. In other words, the great summer of hope that the system could be changed by orderly means. Then, Goodman, Chaney and Schwerner were murdered, four little black girls killed by a bomb while they sat in church, later Malcolm, King, and Robert Kennedy himself were shot down, ending for millions of young people the idea that we would be allowed to make orderly, non-violent progress toward making our Constitution live and work for the present time. The song has an honorable history all the way from slavery times, being made up of several parts of other songs popular among black people then. In the civil rights organizing days, we sang about "Who's

that dressed in blue? Must be the registers comin' through" (referring to our habits of wearing denims and cambric work shirts) and "Who's that dressed in red? Must be the children Bob Moses led" referring to the quiet man who later began to use his mother's last name, Parris, because he was embarrassed about the Biblical hero-image he had become. Our changes in the song reflect the changes in our heads. Not that everyone's a Maoist, but that more of us are determined to be free by whatever means necessary.

JUST ANOTHER DAY: The writer of this song is a draft resister, an advanced student in chemistry, and one of the first songwriters to express a genuine sensitivity to the situation of the Vietnamese in the late '60s. Most of us have had so much conditioning the other way that when I sing this song people are very conflicted about how to respond. GIs will clap rather self-consciously, and one room full of atomic-energy scientists couldn't clap at all. I wish we had a better-recorded version of such a good song, but since all of us who worked on the album are activists, we were all rushing off to other pursuits by the time we found out this was suffering from out-of-phase mikes and other troubles. But it's too good a song to leave off.

WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED: I learned this song as a young activist in Detroit, while we tried to help the auto workers win their strikes for higher wages and less speed-ups. Over 25 years of singing for people in movement, I've collected more verses than I could sing at one time. I sing as many as I do, varying on every occasion, as a way of restoring some of our history that has been stolen from us. I believe in history, and the power of it to teach us and give us strength to face what's up ahead. I know that the system believes in it too, otherwise why has it gone to so much trouble to leave out the slave rebellions, the strikes which won tremendous economic gains and protection for working people, campaigns for women's right to vote, the anti-monopoly struggles of the midwestern farmers of the 1880s and '90s, and the character of genuine national liberation which infused the battles which Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, etc., waged to free themselves from Spain into which the U.S. government later introduced its cultural, economic and even military subversion? Yes, Vietnam is not the first time our powerful oligarchy has intervened in the internal struggles of other countries. But as we learn about that, we also learn who has benefited in reality. And those who have done the fighting and dying, without reaping the benefits, are beginning to realize they are brothers with the ARVN veterans who today are fighting in the streets of Saigon to get housing, food, and simple rights from the corrupt regime they served out of ignorance. And they shall not be moved.

RESISTANCE HYMN: This song was made up for draft resisters, and that's how it got its name. But since then, a whole blossoming movement of resisters *inside* the Army has come to light, and this song has served there too. I'll never forget the night I was teaching it to a meeting of sailors and marines in San Diego, who were organizing a new branch of the Movement for a Democratic Military, early in 1970. Inside the little store-front meeting place, I was telling the guys not to sing the part in the chorus wrong where it says "I've got something I'll die for, what else can *they* do." It's drummed into people's heads so hard, during basic training, that their own lives are worth nothing, that I wanted to remind everyone that now that they'd begun to find out what was really worth living for, the solidarity and strength and love of people willing to fight together for their own dignity, it was terribly important not to just be wasted, but to go out fighting if necessary. Just then the doors were smashed in by the San Diego police and the Shore Patrol walked in and ripped off a guy they claimed was AWOL! They were

such a new group, they weren't prepared with a response. But next time?

INSUBORDINATION: How do you spread your ideas when the radio, the television, the newspapers, the schools, and even the streetcorners seem to be controlled by the people who are controlling *you*? Start an Alternate U., or a guerrilla theatre, or make up chants that can be easily remembered and passed on. The best music, in a real functional sense, has always been made without any instruments, arrangements, or rehearsals. This song has all the room you need for new verses, with the essential couple of anchor points of popular agreement. Nobody ever told me afterward that "Yes, I *do* want somebody over me (or under me), so I won't sing that."

LAST DRINK WITH DON: Probably we should have recorded this song with some electric instruments and lots of echo and things, to make it easier to reach out for it from the electronic fantasy world of today's records. But I have a personal crusade going to bring back the sound of the *human voice*. Unretouched, spliced, or vibed up. It's one small battle I fight on the side, probably growing out of the fact that so many times when it's important to go ahead and sing something that will help to change, teach, heal, or move people there just isn't any mike or stage. So even when you're exhausted from marching and rallying, and speaking and travelling, you just go ahead and do it. Another small battle is against the notion that there is something less than manly, or womanly, or just plain humanly, in trying to sensitively express your deepest thoughts to another person. The so-called cultural revolution is partly about that too, but millions of Americans are still in the thrall of twenty years of Bobhope-Artlinkletter-Richardnixonism and find it very hard to be real. So go write a poem to your best friend or your mother, who may, incidentally, turn out to be one and the same.

BRING 'EM HOME: This recorded version of the song came very late at night, singing with GIs who had been up all week before dawn doing "the man's" mickey-mouse trip. But as the song wore on, and the guys who had actually been with us on the bus to Houston got the rest of the group turned on to singing, we picked up strength. When we're singing together, at the centers of GI organizing, sometimes the sense of release and happiness is almost tangible in the room. I can see the chains of loneliness, isolation and alienation fall away, ever so subtly, as the voices venture out into the silence to find each other, each one hearing even as he expresses it himself, the note of common hope and the newborn will to struggle, for each other and for ourselves. Resignation and self-defeat gradually give way to feeling together, and as that happens we can begin to move together. People who have never spoken or acted before on their own behalf can find the strength to move when they find they are not alone. A few little songs can't do it, or one or two actions of a couple of people. But people who never learned to sing are singing now, and will be singing louder and clearer tomorrow. I want to be in that number.

**THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED
IN THIS PAPER ARE NOT
NOT NECESSARILY THOSE
OF THE DEPT. OF THE ARMY!**

Side I Band 1:

JOIN THE GI MOVEMENT

Words by Barbara Dane

Based on Aunt Molly Jackson's

"I Am a Union Woman" (1931)

I am a GI rebel,
As brave as I can be,
And I don't like the Army brass,
And the gen'ral's don't like me.

(chorus)

Join the GI Movement,
Come and join the GI movement. (2x)

The damndest situation
The Army ever saw:
We're beaten by our officers
And framed up by the law.

If you won't be a killer,
If you won't make that grade,
You'll wind up sleepin' on the floor
Down in the old stockade.

I tried to read an Article
That was the Army's rule.
The C.O. slapped me up and down
And called me a god damn fool.

We had to sign petitions
And put up such a fight,
Just to pass around a paper
That contained the Bill of Rights!

I was raised in old Kentucky,
Kentucky born and bred,
But when I joined the movement,
They called me a Chinese Red!

The gen'ral's ride fine horses,
While we walk in the mud.
Their banner is the dollar sign,
While ours is striped in blood!

Side I Band 2:

HALLELUJAH, I'M A BUM

New words (1970) by B. Dane and Irwin Silber

Oh bums of the earth,
You got nothin' to lose. . .
But your chains and their tear-gas,
And the Dick Nixon Blues.

(Chorus)

Hallelujah, I'm a bum,
Hallelujah, who are you?
Hallelujah, keep on breathin',
You can be a bum too!

When he first called us bums,
Didn't know what he meant,
But the Guard has defined it
On the campus at Kent.
(chorus)

But Dick loves his soldiers,
And he always will,
And that's why he's sending you
Off to be killed!
(chorus)

"Why they're all our kids,
And they stand straight and tall..."
Yeah, but one of these days,
There'll be no more at all!
(chorus)

Well Cordier and Brewster,
You can say what you like,
But just tell Mr. Nixon
Us bums are on strike.
(chorus)

From Austin to Boston,
And Haverford, too,
From Berkeley to Brooklyn

And Kalamazoo.
(chorus)

Why, Spiro's no bum,
You'll agree that is true,
But he sits up nights wonderin'
What Kim's gonna do!
(chorus)

Well I hate the system,
And the system hates me,
And that's why I'm fighting
For my liberty!
(chorus)

Well Mexico is hot,
And (they say) Canada's cold,
So I'll stay here and fight,
If I *never* get old!
(chorus)

Well, power corrupts,
We all know that by heart,
But you got to admit
Nixon had a head-start!
(chorus)

Well some say his name
Is Slippery Dick:
Well I guess he's no bum,
But he sure is some President!
(chorus)

(found on a bathroom wall:)
Well we could spring Huey
And Bobby from jail,
With Julie and Tricia
For ransom and bail!

Side I Band 3:

BALLAD OF RICHARD CAMPOS By Danny Valdez

In a terminal in Oakland,
Lies the brown body of a man,
Dead at 27, dead and gone to heaven,
Killed far away in Vietnam.

So they shipped you back to where you came from,
Like a dummy you were tossed around in an air-o-plane,
Back to the hell from which you tried to escape,
Back to the so-called free United States.

(chorus)
But should a man, should he have to kill,
In order to live like a human being,
In this country? (2x)

You never had an old man,
And your mother died just tryin' to keep you alive.
Year after year, she worked so hard and long,
But the money she made was somehow never enough.
What was her reward?

Welcome home, Richard Campos, welcome home.
Welcome home to a hero's grave.
You have done your duty, you have killed and destroyed,
Now let there be no grieving for this Mexican boy,
Let America honor his name!
(chorus)

They will come, Richard Campos, they will come.
They will come for your body soon.
Your military fathers will pay their respects,
They will all come around, be looking their best,
They will bury you this afternoon.
(chorus)

You are dead, Richard Campos, you are gone.
You are dead, and I bid goodbye.
But now that you're gone, there's a doubt in my mind:
What would have happened if you never would have died?
Would they treat you the same?
Or send you on your way, with a medal stuck in your hand,
Saying "Thank you boy, thank you very much,
You have paid your debt to Uncle Sam!"
(chorus)

Side I Band 4:

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN Freedom Song from Mississippi 1964 (built on old models) Brought up to date by B. Dane

Chorus:
Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere,
Go tell it on the mountain,
To let my people go!

1. Only one thing that we did wrong,
Stayed in the wilderness a day too long.
2. Only one thing that we did right,
Was the day we began to fight!
3. Who's that, children, dressed in black?
Must be the Brothers fighting back!
4. What's that book all bound in red?
Must be the words the Chairman said!



Side 1 Band 5:

JUST ANOTHER DAY

Words and music by Bill Frederick

There is a little haze in the morning air.
The almond smell of cyanide is everywhere,
And it's so quiet.
And the crying of the babies is no more.
Well it's just another day, just a little war . . .

There are some funny men, they look like men from Mars,
The brave technicians in experimental wars,
All in their gas-masks.
And they told the people here to hold their breath.
Well it's just another day, just a little death. . .

There is a roaring sound in the evening sky.
At forty thousand feet the heavy bombers fly,
And there is no place
For the children in the village square to hide.
Well it's just another day, just another town. . .

We have a master plan, the professor said,
Our germs and gas will mingle with our army's lead,
And we will free you
When the last Vietnamese is pacified.
Well it's just another day, just another lie. . .

Now there is not a sound on the jungle trail,
But in every tree an angry man is waiting now,
And then a twig snaps,
And the blood of the invader soaks the ground
Well it's just another day, just outside of town. . .

Side 1 Band 6:

WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED

We shall not, we shall not be moved.
We shall not, we shall not be moved.
Just like a tree that's planted by the water,
We shall not be moved!
(repeat pattern throughout except as noted)

We're not afraid of gun thugs!

The union is behind us!

Henry Ford's a bastard, he should be removed! (2x)
Just like the garbage standing in the alley,
He should be removed!

We're walking for our freedom!

We don't want Polaris!

(Italian)
Basi nucleari, rispondiamo no!
Per gli Americani, rispondiamo no!
E se lo Yankee un fucile ci dara,
Rispondiamo no!

(translation:
Nuclear bases, we say no!
For the Americans, we say no!
And if the Yankee tries to give us a gun,
We say no!)

(Italian—same pattern as English)
Carne dal cannone
(translation:
Meat for the cannons, etc.)

(Spanish)
Fuertes, fuertes, fuertes somos ya! (2x)
Como un arbol vive cerca al rio,
Fuertes somos ya!

(translation:
Strong, strong, strong are we.
Like a tree living by the water,
Strong are we.)

Viva Pancho Villa!
(same pattern)

Viva Che Guevara!
(same pattern)

Free Huey Newton!

We are the conspiracy!

Your jail walls cannot hold us!

We are the people!

We're comin' on to victory!

LONELY
IGNORANT
FOOL
EVADING
REALITY

Side II Band 1:

THE RESISTANCE HYMN

Tune: Patriot Game

Words: adapted by B. Dane from "The Hello People"

They say I was born in the land of the free,
But the home of the briefcase is all I can see.
With our houses and highways, we've covered the land,
But our freedom's a fable, if our conscience is banned.

(Chorus:)

So I'm going to prison so I can be free!
I'm going to prison for what I believe.
I've got something I'll die for,
What else can they do?
I've got something to live for,
And how about you?

From the Bureau of Justice the directives have come
To send out the G-men, round up everyone
Who puts human beings ahead of the state,
And who's preaching that love is better than hate.
(chorus)

Some call me a coward, some call me a fool.
The Daily News calls me a communist tool.
But I know you're my buddy, so you'll understand
I'll be true to myself, or I can't be a man.
(chorus)

Side II Band 2:

INSUBORDINATION

I know I'm guilty, and I'm proud,
I know I'm guilty, sing it louder,
Don't try to tell me any lies,
Cause you don't fool me with your jive!

Well it's in-su-bor-din-ation!
In-su-bor-di-nation, (oh yeah)
In-su-bor-di-nation, (a-hah)
In-su-bor-di-nation!

Well I don't want nobody over me,
And I don't want nobody under me,
I'm gonna tell it like it's gotta be,
You better have a little respect for me!

Well it's... etc.

Now you got your reason for your words,
And I got my reason to be heard.
Subordination is a drag,
And liberation is my bag!

Well it's... etc.

I don't want nobody over me,
And I can't use nobody under me,
And I'm gonna tell it like it's gotta be,
You gotta have a little respect for me.

Well it's a-hey, hey, hey, hey,
In-su-bor-di-na-tion etc. . .

(repeat as long as desired)

Side II Band 3:

LAST DRINK WITH DON

Words by Fred Gardner

Music by Barbara Dane

Here's to the butterfly in the tropics of Tonkin,
Poised and precise in waves of wind.
Here's to the trembling of his scissors pair of wings,
And here's to the green robe of his queen.
You wouldn't want to snatch a monarch out of flight;
That's not the way to be a king.

Here's to the Rooster,¹ the statue of pride,
His crown of blood, his shining spurs.
And here's to the gallantry and sureness of his walk,
And here's to the service he gives man and woman.
You wouldn't want to hit a bird that doesn't fly;
You'd rather help him feed the hens.

Here's to the color green, the forest and the grass,
And here's to the love within the sea.
Algae and grapes, the windows of the moon,
Cabbage and copper, life's tangled plumage.
You wouldn't kerosene the green from off the earth,
Leaving only lava on the stone.

Here's to the air:² we met once on the road.
He lent us his transparency.
We danced and we laughed, our laughter shook the leaves.
We lifted the sails on the masts.
You wouldn't want to make the air your deadly foe;
You wouldn't insult him with gas.

Here's to the wheels on the bike of a child,
Two circles on their way to school,
And here's to the chain that frees her tender feet,
And here's to the spokes, so unspoken and so unfamous.
You wouldn't dare to fly a mission on her bike;
You wouldn't care to see the flames.

So here's to the sky that is not filled with planes,
And here's to the sun and to the stars.³
Once one fell and I kept it for my own,
Throbbing, (throbbing) a diamond in my mind.
But then I couldn't do anything else but be that star,
And so I threw it back into the sky.
But then I couldn't do anything else but feel that star,
And so I threw it back into the sky.

1. The "Rooster" is the symbol of the University of South Carolina, which is near the first coffeehouse Fred started (in Columbia, near Ft. Jackson—the UFO).
2. This personified "air" is a reference to a poem by the great Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda.
3. The star seemed to me an abstract symbol until one night I was singing for soldiers and there it was, on the shoulder of an Air Force man.



Side II Band 4:

BRING 'EM HOME

Music and tag line by Pete Seeger

New words by B. Dane and GIs from Ft. Hood 11/9/69

(follow this form throughout)

If you love your Uncle Sam,
Bring 'em home, bring 'em home
Stop the war in Vietnam!
Bring 'em home, bring 'em home.

45 thousand dead and gone
And Uncle Sam is in the wrong!

We wanta end this war right now.
Don't take a genius to figure out how.

Let 'em fly, or let 'em float,
Pack 'em up in a bi-ass boat!

They said it was a freedom fight,
Well now that's just about half right!

There's just one big fallacy,
It's our own GIs that wanta be free.

GIs fight, and GIs die,
Some get rich while Nixon lies.

In Chicago or Vietnam,
They're tryin' to get *us* to be "the man".

Well buddy, I've got news for you.
I got better things to do.

We're goin' down to Houston town,
Turn this murderin' system 'round.

The gen'als would like us all to pray,
But it looks like marchin's the only way.

If they say that's not the way,
We'll give 'em one big "FTA"*

(verses not heard on record due to time:)

They call us a bunch of hippie kids,
But wait'll they find out what we did!

They say we blow our minds with dope,
But you know, our youth is our only hope!

I'm gonna let Vietnam alone,
Fight for my own rights here at home!

If you big brass don't know what to do,
We won't kiss your ass and fight for you!

Home of the brave, land of the free,
Let the Vietnam people be.

Wash the blood off of our hands,
Bring our men back to our land.

Well I may be short and I may be tall,
But I sure ain't shaped like a cannonball!

We been marching a long, long time,
But today we're marching with our *minds!*

*FTA=Army version: "Fun, Travel and Adventure"
GI version: "Fuck the Army!"

BRAGG BRIEFS

BRAGG BRIEFS is published in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. It is a free press published by active duty GI's stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina dedicated to establishing responsible alternatives to the current military system.

Discipline, Morale & Loyalty

GIs: CAUTION, Reading This Paper May Be Hazardous to Your

BARBARA DANE: SINGER FOR THE GI MOVEMENT

by Howard Levy

The GI Circuit extends from Newport, Rhode Island, to Oceanside, California. The stops in between include Wrightstown, New Jersey; Washington, D.C.; Columbia, South Carolina; Augusta and Columbus, Georgia; Muldraugh, Kentucky; Fayetteville, North Carolina; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Tacoma, Washington; Killeen, Texas; Seaside, California. The names of some of the clubs are the Fort Dix Coffeehouse, the DMZ, Haymarket Square, UFO, Oleo Strut, Shelter Half and Green Machine. The only singer who treks this circuit with regularity is Barbara Dane—political people's singer and GI Movement booster extraordinaire.

Gigs at a GI coffeehouse or project are not typical rock or folk concerts. None of the accoutrements are there—stages, curtains, lights. At best, the amplification system is primitive. But when Barbara Dane is appearing it doesn't matter; she steps, unannounced, to the microphone, and the rapport between herself and the GIs is established immediately.

This rapport is due in part to her artistic ability. But there's something more. The GIs dig Barbara because they know, quite simply, that she likes to be with them and that she is reliable and can be counted upon whenever they need her help. The sad truth is you can't say that about many other performers. But then again, Barbara is not merely a performer; she is a whole political and social being. That's saying something in an age of alienated millions. Barbara's integrated life is reflected in her performances. It is never a matter of politics interspersed between entertainment; rather entertainment and politics are one and the same. The model of a whole human being is important for GIs who are forced to divide their loyalties and very beings between orders to fight and their personal consciences and integrities which tell them that Southeast Asia is the last place in the world they ought to fight—and maybe die.

GIs are oppressed. They are oppressed by orders coming down from the brass; they're oppressed by American militarism, racism and male chauvinism—all of which the military perpetuates and encourages; and they are oppressed by an imperialist war which they are unwillingly forced to fight. Barbara sings and speaks to their oppression.

A typical Barbara Dane performance at a GI coffeehouse might begin with a series of songs which highlight and recall previous struggles of oppressed people. She sings union organizing songs and the refrains which reverberated through the Deep South during the Civil Rights movement. Her running dialogue connects these episodes in American history with the GIs' contemporary struggle—the GI Movement which aims to liberate the GI once and for all from the burden of fighting wars, none of the spoils of which will ever belong to him or his loved ones.

Barbara sings a plaintive ballad and the audience is plaintive; then a rousing song and the audience is aroused. Before long, it's apparent that there is no difference between Barbara and the GIs. She understands their problems, fears and hopes and they understand her. The understanding ensues because Barbara never fails to tell her own story—from working class family to singing for union organizations to the night clubs and commercial recording scene to becoming a Movement singer. She tells about her oppression as an up and coming pop entertainer and her oppression as a woman. And before the evening is over, the GIs have told her of their problems. The GIs know that they've encountered a friend. They dig it.

Towards the end of the evening Barbara is likely to sing "Insubordination." The GIs join in with gusto and before the rallying chant is over the place breaks out in pandemonium—voices raised, hands clapping, feet stamping and cups banging. The moment is alive and liberating. It creates the notion, perhaps for the first time in a GI's life, that maybe total liberation is possible—is worth fighting for. The GIs' faces tell the whole story—an admixture of joy in the realization that freedom can exist and anger at the realization that they are not really free. The connection has been made. Barbara has done her job. The next step is up to the GIs themselves.

Barbara Dane is, unfortunately, unique. We need not one but a hundred people's singers. But in the meantime the best we can say is sing on, Barbara, sing on!



"OK—you don't believe in killing. Have you any religious or moral objection to being killed?"



BARBARA DANE SPEAKS TO THE GI MOVEMENT

I'm going to try to answer the questions you asked. . .but instead of one by one, I'll make it hang together. It's a little long but so's my life! I was born in Detroit, Mich., in the same year Lindbergh made his first solo trans-Atlantic flight, in 1927. Now our B-52 bombers can deliver unheard of tonnages, and do, on Vietnam every day. A lot to think about. Am I tired or discouraged after running around all these years and struggling, talking and thinking? There are days like that. . .but truthfully since the days nearly two years ago when I began working with the movement of young GIs who are questioning, trying to understand and change things for themselves, their brothers and sisters and their country, I am filled with more joy and energy than when I was 23. . .at almost age 43.

When I was a kid, I loved to sing for teenagers, and made a big hit with marvy songs like "Blue Moon." I tried to get jobs doing that, and quickly found out how insultingly easy it is to get ahead in show business if you were "a smart girl with a little looks" who was willing to play by the rules: Look like and act like a Barbie doll, be for sale at a price, and complain about as much as Barbie if the male society sees you only as a cute commodity without ideas or feelings. I decided that the price was too high.

I tried a few weeks at college, where most of the students were just returned WW II Vets, sure that the courses would be exciting because so many older, experienced people were in them. I was mortally disappointed, as I had been with high school. When I asked the teachers whether I would actually be able to do the thing they taught me at the end of the course, the straightest answer I got was, "These classes are for credit. If you want to do the thing, just start doing it." So I asked for my money back, and went out to become a youth organizer.

I sang for the youth movements, the labor struggles which spread after WW II to most of the auto plants, and in the election campaigns of progressive and left candidates, as well as black candidates, in which case even a liberal was considered a threat to the status quo. I worked in factories and offices so I wouldn't have to mix singing with money making, but some times the organizations and unions could afford a few bucks in the name of building and supporting our own culture. Then I was able to spend full time organizing and singing. Now and then I was offered some "Golden Opportunity" but the more I saw of how little the system respected its artists, particularly when they were women, the less I was interested in buying the deal.

Then the fifties came. Repression of political ideas spread with the coming of the "cold war" and the Korean war. I remember being called a communist just for standing with my baby and groceries in front of a supermarket asking people to sign a petition which was against atomic testing. (Funny thing of it was, at the time I *did* belong to the Communist party, because they were more active than most groups against racism and for peace. But, they've changed, and I've changed and so have the times.) A young Jewish couple only mildly active in politics was framed up on a charge of "Atomic Spying." The secrets they were said to have passed on to the Russians were later exposed by experts to be common knowledge among scientists. But Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were sentenced to death, and they were executed. It threw everyone who ever *expressed* a difference of opinion with this government into cold

panic. There was a power-crazy politician named Joe McCarthy whose name stuck to a whole period because he screamed "red" at anyone at all to further his own schemes. Looking at it from the affluent '70s it may seem hard to understand why everyone ran scared of him, but people remembered the '30s and the Depression, and there was already a bad recession in progress with jobs hard to come by. And thousands *did* lose their jobs and small businesses because someone had once seen them at a demonstration or read their name on a petition against some policy of the government.

I decided the best thing to do was to keep on singing, as publicly and loudly as possible. And I always used my own name, in spite of the frequent visits from the "boy scouts" as we used to call the tall men in suits who flashed FBI badges and asked a lot of questions. We understood they were mainly trying to intimidate us, so we just told them to get out and don't bother coming back. Most of the organizations either fell apart or sank underground, and soon there was no place to sing or talk about what was on our minds, so some of the artists who wanted to find an audience to influence went into the nightclubs.

I became very interested in other forms of people's expression, like the blues and traditional jazz. I worked with incredible musicians like Jack Teagarden, Louis Armstrong, and Turk Murphy. Memphis Slim, Willie Dixon (who wrote most of Muddy Waters' stuff) were my group for a year, and I worked with Muddy himself. Brownie McGhee, Lightning Hopkins, Kenny Whitson, Wellman Braud, and Sonny Terry were some others. They showed the creativity of brotherhood and love amidst the very exploitive, racist atmosphere we worked in. Their music affirmed life, while the nation waged war in Korea, and the CIA ran massacres in South America and Indochina. I worked with social analysts and satirists like Lenny Bruce and Mort Sahl, who exhausted themselves trying to penetrate the curtain of apathy and helplessness that had fallen over the country.

I worked in many groovy and some lousy nightclubs and coffeehouses; I made a lot of records, did TV and radio work, and communicated in any way possible. The message was mostly through the blues: Life in the USA is a crying shame but we, the people, are real. We are as deep as the seas and as loving as the sunshine, strong as the mountains and determined as the wind. And we will prevail!

Instant overnight, Hollywood wetdream success kept flashing in my face, but it was creepy. And I never met a super star who was really able to enjoy what the stardom brought. Most of the well-known cultural workers I knew were so damned lonely from being on the road month in and month out, getting bored with repeating their greatest hits, and out of touch with ordinary pleasures like friends and family, had no idea what was going on from the political point of view and therefore didn't understand the effect of their work, and weren't really bringing home enough money to make it worth all that trouble. I was too stubborn to hire one of the greed-head managers, probably because I'm a woman who likes to speak for herself. I always made my own deals and contracts, and after figuring out the economics of it, I was free to chose when and where I worked, able to spend lots more time with my three children and doing political work, and even brought home more money in the end, by not going for the bigtime." I did make some really nice records, because

I was able to choose and work with wonderfully gifted musicians. Some of them are: TROUBLE IN MIND—with Don Ewell, Pops Foster and others on San Francisco Records. LIVING WITH THE BLUES—with Earl "Fatha" Hines, Benny Carter, etc. on Dot. WHEN I WAS A YOUNG GIRL—solo, folk songs just re-released on Tradition/Everest under a new title, "Anthology of American Folk Songs" #2072. I'M ON MY WAY—with Kenny Whitson, Wellman Braud, etc. on Capitol. BARBARA DANE AND THE CHAMBERS BROTHERS—on Folkways (Freedom Songs), BARBARA DANE SINGS BLUES with 6 and 12 string guitar, solo on Folkways. Only the last two are available, but you have to order them.

I started my own nightclub in San Francisco, so I'd have more freedom to sing when I wanted to and under conditions I could control. SUGAR HILL was an immediate success. I brought in Mose Allison, Brownie McGhee, Sonny Terry, Lightnin' Hopkins, Jimmy Rushing, Mama Yancey, T-Bone Walker, Jesse Fuller, Mance Lipscomb, and others and together we built the "home of the blues." But the sixties had come, and a whole new deal. JFK was in the White House, Joe McCarthy was dead, the Cubans had won their revolution, and a group of black students had decided it was time to stop being humiliated in silence. They staged the first sit-ins at a Woolworth store lunch counter. Support movements sprang up around the country, and I started singing on the streets again, and at benefits. From their inspiration, other student movements began, like the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley, where I lived.

One of the most thrilling things I did in Berkeley was one of the last before I moved away. I led songs from the top of a police car which was swamped in the middle of thousands of students sitting down to demonstrate and using the car itself as a Free-Speech platform! That was the University of California campus where only a few years before hundreds of teachers signed "loyalty oaths" rather than be thrown out of their jobs, and where a handful of others had conducted a fight for their right to teach as they saw fit, with their loyalty to be defined by their own conscience alone. . . and where thousands of students had kept their mouths shut to avoid trouble.

Well, history moves everything forward. I left Berkeley to go to Mississippi, where Freedom Schools were being set up all over the state. I sang in many of them, and in little wooden churches filled with ragged children and workworn old men and women who courageously sang and shouted about freedom while sheriffs with loaded shotguns and snarling dogs took down the numbers of every license plate outside. We were in the heart land of southern politicians like James Eastland, Mendel Rivers, and Richard Russell. We could see their proud white mansions sitting astride the rich black land upon which the people inside the prayer meetings had labored all their lives, and for which they're still being paid \$3.00 a day, sun-up to sun-down, and that only during planting and harvesting. The fat, sleek cars of the politicians would pass now and then, reminding us that they were on their way to and from Washington, where they controlled, and still control, the spending of these people's birthright for more ABM systems, anti-personnel weapons, B-52's, Napalm, poison gas, miniguns and a bigger army, while these little children inside the rickety freedom school could hardly stay awake from hunger and exhaustion.

You asked me why I got involved with the GI movement, and why I accepted the invitation to come to the Oleo Strut. Maybe some of the things I've said helped explain this, but to make it clear, it was because in my whole life I have seen one thread, then another,

of evidence to show me what is really wrong with this country. These experiences, together with reading and travelling abroad, have helped me see that my country, which was at one time the hope of the world because it stood for liberty, brotherhood, and an opportunity for all, has been gradually harnessed and changed into an obedient monster with very tiny eyes and ears, which is being guided by an ever-diminishing circle of incredibly powerful and ruthless men known as the military-industrial complex. They are more faceless but reach further than they or any one power clique have ever done before in history. And they intend to hold on to their power and expand it infinitely. Bertrand Russell's researchers came up with the information that with only 6% of the world's population, the U.S. controls over 60% of the world's natural resources. And that while billions of dollars in profits are gained by a few American corporations, 66 million Americans live in poverty. Military assets in the U.S. are *three times as great* as the combined assets of US Steel, Metropolitan Life Insurance, American Telephone and Telegraph, General Motors, and Standard Oil; the Defense Department employs three times as many people as all these companies put together.

America's greatest treasure is its young people, but this treasure is needed by the Military-Industrial complex for a few simple tasks, and so our young people may not have their own lives. You are needed as consumers of endless junk, as obedient workers in factories that produce the junk. You are tolerated as angry students as long as you quickly return to learning enough skills to help develop more profit-making gimmicks or death-dealing weapons. You are tolerated as doped-up drop-outs because you don't cause much trouble. But you are welcomed as co-operative cannon fodder for the endless succession of wars both abroad and at home which the death machine knows are ahead. And so are your sons.

Well, I happen to believe, along with probably millions of other Americans, that we all deserve better than this. We deserve to be able to get all the information about what really is going on, so that we may take part in the decision-making process. We deserve genuine power to control what happens to us, and to the material value we create with our labor. We deserve a system which would enable us to share our riches with the world as well as all our own citizens, and which can be organized by the people's own wisdom into a rational system before we destroy the ecology of this planet. To be very specific, I believe I deserve to see you who are now forced to be killers *freed* and encouraged to be builders, lovers, organizers and dreamers. I would gladly elect any one or ten or hundred of you to run this country instead of the people who are running it now. I will do anything in this world to help you take that power into your own hands, into the people's hands. The problem is, the few who are running the whole show now will not give up peacefully. This is why, for over a hundred years, they have been scheming ways of stamping out resistance in Latin America, the Far East and even Europe. Since World War Two they have converted their former enemies into junior partners in holding and exploiting abroad. Even Spain now looks like an American possession. Over 50% of our country's total expenditures is for military, and we have three thousand bases scattered all over the world. And when things get hot right here at home they send in the Airborne. A young soldier named Richard Chase, who is doing two years at hard labor for refusing riot control training, said, "When things get bad enough at home for so many people to be in the streets that the local police can't handle it, the reasons are probably good ones. And I'm not going to be sent to put down my own people demonstrating for just grievances."

I believe that people in the military, whether draftees or

volunteers, are in the best position in their lives to see how inhuman the system really is. You can also see the connection between many things which are harder to see at home. When you talk about a Military-Industrial complex to a high school kid, he'll probably say "huh?", but to a soldier it's an open book. Before you got into the Army, you could convince yourself that maybe "somebody high up cares about me" but in the service you know you're just a number and a body. The way the military has become scared of GI organizing proves, more than anything, that we are on the track. When they lie about the coffeehouses being off-limits, or the papers illegal, when they put civilian organizers in jail and hundreds of GI organizers or even sympathizers into the stockade or shanghai them to the Nam or Korea, it proves we're getting somewhere. The brass has probably read a little history too, and they know that an army can turn around and become the instrument of the people themselves taking power.

One of the reasons the police (which is just another branch of the oppressive military system these days) are so uptight they started an assassination campaign against the Black Panther Party is because the Panthers, too, are on the right track. For the first time in America, a militant black organization has been formed which genuinely intends to serve the people, by giving breakfast free to hungry kids, classes to knowledge-hungry teenagers, and protection to their own community. Too heavy! So they blow away some of the finest flower of young American manhood, just like they do every day in the Nam, by sending our healthiest, most intelligent and even most dedicated young men to fight a criminal war before they have enough information to figure out what they're doing. Boys grow up in the USA believing the fabric of lies they're taught in school and on TV about saving the world for democracy and they're shipped overseas with their hearts full of pride at being representatives of the nation so strong and so great it can rescue all the "little

guys" from communism. How criminally cruel to throw them into battle before they can look around enough to see that they are not wanted, that their country is despised and distrusted everywhere, and that they are, in truth, sent to crush a people's struggle for freedom more desperate than our own at Valley Forge. Fred Hampton found out early enough to turn around and refuse to go, to begin serving the hungry desperate people in his own community. So they slipped a triple dose of Seconal in his dinner and blew him away right in his own bed, without a chance.

No they will not give power to the people one day in a kind and noble gesture. They will use men in uniform whether in the guard, reserve, airforce, marines, army, navy, police, even men out of uniform in the FBI, CIA and god knows what else, to spy and sneak and kill in the night. They will blow away the Hamptons among us, and the Kings too. They'll even blow away some of their own, like the Kennedys, if they look like they're on our wave length. But we'll still keep coming. The people in the "forgotten" countries of the world will keep coming, putting their nations back on the map in Southeast Asia, South America, Africa, the Caribbean and everywhere as they throw off American domination, just as they've thrown off others before us. The people in Japan and Germany, Italy and France, Spain and Egypt, will keep on coming just the way we did in Washington, in Chicago, New York, Boston, Watts, Newark, Detroit, Birmingham, Memphis and Wilmington, and we won't be stopped. All the skills you are learning now as a slave of the "green machine" will come in handier every day when you get back home and find out what shape your town is in. Talk to your friends and your Mama, and think of your sons. Seize the time!

With all my love,
Barbara

PAREDON RECORDS exists because—

People's movements all over the world need to communicate and to define themselves free of the cultural manipulation and economic control of the system's media.

We are tired of contributing the innovations, style, and energy that this system is only too happy to bring to the marketplace and to use as its liberal window dressing. We are tired of legitimizing "the man's" instruments of cultural control through our own participation.

People's movements are finding voices to express their determination to survive and to prevail. This expression will soon become a torrent and must be made readily available to everybody, without exploiting such materials for individual profit.

We must put "the man's" technology to work on behalf of the people's struggles. We must respond to the networks of television and radio, bigger-than-life billboards, and wrap-around screens that surround us. We must use our intelligence to create guerrilla theater, plug-in-anywhere 16mm film, simple chants and shouts that can travel like seed on the wind—and phonograph records that can be made quickly and can travel from hand to hand.

Therefore, PAREDON RECORDS—

Will respond to the needs of people's struggles, and not to the demands of some corporate balance sheet.

Will seek out the music and speech, documentary or dialogue, that spring from the conscious artist who relates to people's movements, and which pour from all people in struggle.

Will never issue dividends or profits, but will use all money earned to produce other materials to help educate and define ourselves.

Will make it possible for groups and organizations to use materials issued to raise funds for their own work.

Will maintain open and honest relations with all individuals, groups and organizations—both here and abroad—and will conduct its affairs with a revolutionary morality.