

# I HATE THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM

BARBARA DANE

## DEDICATION

This recording is respectfully dedicated to the millions of hard-working people who really made America great, in the sure knowledge that one day they will gather up their strength, their courage and their wisdom, and they will come together to smash this decayed and dying system. They will use their inventiveness and industry to raise all our people to a decent living standard, and restore us to a place of respect among the fellowship of nations. They are the creators of history, and they will construct the socialist future.

Specifically, I want to dedicate these songs to my sister, Julia, who has recently entered that great school of life, the industrial working class. She has already learned that she is much more than the timid, ignorant housewife she thought she was, and more than the underpaid, isolated book-keeper and salesclerk she had to be. Now she knows she can operate powerful and dangerous machines, she can think through her problems and speak up against anyone who threatens her right to work and live. Every day new wisdom, new strength and beauty grow in her because she is no longer alone. She is part of the millions.

Barbara Dane

## INTRODUCTION

Barbara Dane says she has hated the capitalist system ever since she was a teen-ager helping out in the little drug-store her father operated in a Detroit working class community during the depression years. She saw her father extend credit he didn't have to the families of unemployed auto workers. She saw both her parents working 16 hours a day, seven days a week, for the little handhold on security their small enterprise represented.

Barbara Dane's family came to Detroit from Arkansas in the great wave of northern immigration that swept the south after World War I. The painful transformation of southern economic life from an agricultural base to one with nascent industries of its own drove millions of people -- both black and white -- off the land their forbears had worked for generations. Many went into the textile mills of Tennessee and North Carolina. Still others fled to the great northern urban centers fulfilling the time-honored role assigned to the displaced farmers and agricultural workers in the era of industrial capitalism -- that of providing the indispensable reserve army of labor now forced to sell their labor power to the owners

of the new technology.

But awareness of this would come later. Barbara Dane was not yet in school when the wife of a Kentucky coal miner, Sara Ogan, wrote the passionate cry of rage which is the theme of this record album, "I Hate the Capitalist System." But there are second cousins and aunts of Dane's who still live in those same Kentucky mountain communities today, still working for the same coal companies who killed Sara Ogan's baby and drove her and her family out of the state. Barbara Dane left Detroit many years ago, to pursue her work as a self-styled "outside agitator" in California and New York. By an ironic twist of geography, Sara Ogan's exile from the Kentucky coal fields brought her to Detroit where she now lives.

So there is a lot of Kentucky and Detroit in these sometimes bitter but always uncompromising songs. Surely it is appropriate to have the lives of coal miners and the lives of auto workers represent all American working people. The struggles of these workers have always been bellwethers of the militancy of the American working class. There is a cultural tie here, too, and one hears echoes of the great Anglo-Saxon ballad tradition in many of these songs. But of course, there is nothing esoteric about these ballads, just as the traditional songs, in their own time, were deeply-felt expressions of the outlook of poor working people of England, Ireland and Scotland.

There will undoubtedly be a certain inclination to see the songs recorded here -- especially those on the first side -- as "period pieces." Songs of children dying "for the want of milk?" Of black men languishing in jail for crimes they didn't commit? Of the super-exploitation of migratory farm workers? Of speed-ups in the auto assembly plants? Songs of labor unions that fought for the rights of the workers and of working people who fought back with all the means at their disposal -- even guns -- against the ruthless system of exploitation that paraded

itself before the world not as "capitalism" but as "democracy?"

The bitter truth is that these songs are as relevant today as when they were written.

These songs are a special kind of song. Terminology has been so abused by our advertising age that to describe these as "protest" songs or "people's" songs or "revolutionary" songs is to obscure their essential meaning -- although they are all of the above. To understand what they really are, however, it would be well to ponder Karl Marx's dictum that the dominant ideology of any epoch is the ideology of the ruling class. Ideology is an intellectual tool whose first function is to help organize and codify the existing social reality -- and to so control necessary changes in the existing structures of society that the underlying class relationships remain undisturbed.

These songs, however, are outside of that elaborate ideological infrastructure. They are not only about working people, they reflect the inherent class values of working people in terms of the most important, if not always recognized, aspect of working people's lives -- the class struggle.

But everything depends on time, place and circumstance. We have seen in our own time how the expressions of social protest, removed from their political setting and transformed into cultural commodities, are fundamentally changed. In some periods, the capitalist system suppresses such expressions with all the naked power of the state -- such as the banning of the music of Mikis Theodorakis in Greece by the military junta or the air-tight censorship exercised by the radio and television networks in the U.S.A. on any ideas that venture beyond acceptable liberal reform.

But suppression is hardly the only tool employed by the ruling class to combat revolutionary ideology. In recent years, capitalism has become increasingly adept at neutralizing revolutionary protest by objectifying the

cultural works that have given expression to political outrage. It is possible, for instance to look at the songs on the first side of this record album as folkloristic artifacts, musical antiques valued for their conformations of style rather than for the relevance of their passion. This is the sad fate that has overtaken the American folk song revival which once was the cultural well-spring for revolutionary struggle.

This record album is not offered as a folkloristic document, however. The album is roughly divided into time periods representing the past and the present in order to demonstrate both the continuity of a militant working class tradition in our country and the essential oneness of that tradition. The world of the seventies is not the world of the thirties. But the fundamental antagonism -- the struggle between the working class and the capitalist class -- is still the same, no matter what variations in form this struggle has undergone.

This record album has been produced as a weapon that, it is hoped, the working class and its allies can use in that struggle.

-Irwin Silber

#### ABOUT THE SONGS:

##### SIDE 1, BAND 1:

##### I HATE THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM (Sara Ogan Gunning)

When Sara Ogan wrote this song, she had just experienced the loss of her mother and her baby, and her husband was dying of tuberculosis. It was in the 1930s, in the part of Kentucky where the historic battles to organize the mine workers was raging, in the depths of the nation's worst depression. Her half-sister, Aunt Molly Jackson, her brother Jim Garland, and Sara herself wrote the strongest and clearest and most angry songs to come out of these times. Here is what Woody Guthrie wrote about Sara:

"She's a housewife and more than a housewife. A mother and more than a mother. She's worked and slaved

and fought to save the children of her own home, and to keep her own house, and she was so full of the Union Spirit that she found time to get out in the wind and rain and the hail of bullets from the deputies guns, and make up her own songs and sing them to give nerve and backbone to the starving men that slaved in the coal mines. ... (Her songs) are deadlier and stronger than rifle bullets and have cut a wider swath than a machine gun could.

"Sara loved her husband. He's dead from hard work in the mines. She loved her baby that died. She loves the two she's still got, and she hates the system that wrecked her family. Hates the set-up that robbed her kids' mouths. Hates the guns of war that aim at her songs and daughters. Hates all of these big Crooks and Greedy Rich Folks, reason is because she Loves what She Loves, and she'll fight to protect her Home.

"(The big rich guys) claim they own all of this stuff. Sara says they don't. Sara says it belongs equal and alike to all of us. I say Sara is right. It damn shore don't belong to no one special feller, nor no one special family, nor no few special families. It belongs equal and alike to all of us. Me, and you. Us."

I sing this song every time I can because I agree with her, with all my heart.





SIDE 1, BAND 1:

I HATE THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM (3:10)

Words and Music by Sara Ogan Gunning

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I hate the capitalist system,  
And I'll tell you the reason why:  
It has caused me so much suffering,  
And my dearest friends to die.

Well I know you all are wondering  
What it has done to me.  
Well I am going to tell you  
That my husband has TB

Brought on by hard work and low wages,  
And never enough to eat,  
From going cold and hungry,  
With no shoes upon his feet.

My husband was a coal miner  
Who worked hard and risked his life,  
Just trying to support three children,  
Himself, his mother and wife.

Well I had a blue-eyed baby  
Was the darling of my heart.  
But from my little darling  
Her mother had to part.

While the rich and mighty capitalist  
Goes dressed in jewels and silk,  
My darling blue-eyed baby  
Has died for the want of milk.

Well they call this the land of plenty,  
And for them I guess it's true,  
For the rich and mighty capitalist,  
Not for workers like me and you.

Well what can we do about it  
To these men of power and might?  
Well I tell you, Mr. Capitalist,  
We are going to fight, fight, fight.

SIDE A, BAND 2:

LONESOME JAILHOUSE BLUES

(Olen Montgomery)

In 1931 kids in their teens were jump-  
ing freights by the thousands, to get  
to some other town, some other place  
where there might be a job, or any  
kind of place for them. One freight

car pulled up into Scottsboro, Ala-  
bama, and out jumped two white girls  
and nine black boys, the youngest 13  
years old -- right into the arms of the  
railroad dicks. The girls were run-  
aways, and in their fear of punishment  
they screamed that they had been  
abducted and raped. All the boys were  
jailed and sentenced to death, but  
after a world-wide campaign, sparked  
by the Communist Party, drew attention  
to the frame up, the girls admitted  
that they had told a lie. Five of the  
boys were released then, but the other  
four were held for many more years  
of trials, mistrials and retrials. The  
last of them, Andy Wright, was finally  
released in 1950 -- a man well up  
into his thirties. One of the youngest  
wrote this song after he had spent five  
years of his teens in an Alabama  
prison.

This recording of the song was made  
in a little house in the fields outside  
Fort Benning, Georgia, during a small  
gathering of GIs in rebellion against  
the Vietnam war and the injustices to  
themselves in the US Army. Some  
of their friends had come to help them  
celebrate "Armed Farces Day" with  
a people's tribunal that afternoon in  
the local park, where the US govern-  
ment was held guilty of "crimes  
against the peoples of Vietnam and  
oppressed peoples everywhere in-  
cluding the USA," with sentence to be  
executed by the people "in due time."  
The date is May 17, 1970, and the  
visitors include indomitable black  
lawyer Florynce Kennedy and ex-  
Captain, ex-jailbird Dr. Howard Levy  
who had been convicted by the military  
for refusing to teach medical techniques  
to the Green Berets stating that the  
medical practice would be used in a  
political manner against the Vietna-  
mese.

Mark Lane is there too, having  
been invited to act as special "people's  
prosecutor." He's been travelling,  
along with photographer Carolyn  
Mugar, to a lot of Army bases, speak-  
ing and interviewing GIs about their  
attitudes about the war, and helping  
organize their anger into resistance.

All of us have been in similar situations together many times during these years, and feel like a family. So when I get into this song, near the end, you hear all of them begin to hum and then sing along with me. This hardly ever happens in a blues, but then this is a different sort of blues. The dogs barking off in the field didn't know how they were contributing to our momentary identification with the young man who wrote it, sitting in his lonely southern jail cell late at night, listening to the dogs outside. And the black GIs among us must have been thinking how little had really changed since the Scottsboro Boys, how little different the Army was for them from a southern jail.

SIDE 1, BAND 2:

LONESOME JAILHOUSE BLUES (4:05)

Words and Music by Olen Montgomery

All night long I sat in my cell and cried (2x)  
'Cause this old jail got lonesome,  
And I can't be satisfied.

I tried to eat my breakfast, but I  
couldn't for shedding tears. (2x)  
It almost breaks my heart  
Just to think of these five long years.

Oh lordy, lord, what am I gonna do? (2x)  
I have walked this old jail cell  
'Til I have worn out all my shoes.

I wouldn't treat a dog like some people  
are treating me. (2x)  
They treat me like some animal  
That they can't even see.

Well I don't know Alabama,  
'cause Alabama's not my home. (2x)  
But ever since I been here,  
I'm sorry for the day I was born.

Well I'm singing this song  
'Cause I want everyone to know  
How one poor boy feels  
Who has been held down so low.

SIDE 1, BAND 3:  
DETROIT MEDLEY

When I was a kid growing up in Detroit, all during the '30s, we skipped rope to songs burying Henry Ford. When I got old enough to go sing in front of the factory gates with strikers, some of the songs were to the good old tunes so that everyone could join in. The Soup Song was written by a lawyer who was close to the Flint Sit-in Strike and it's a Detroit classic. I truthfully don't remember where I learned the other songs, but I've sung them off and on more than twenty-seven years. I could probably pass them off to the militant young auto workers now as new songs, because the union bureaucracy has done a good job of seeing to it that members don't know much about their history. So now they are taking the trouble to find out for themselves. They're finding out a lot of things.

Andy Pitt is playing the lead guitar to my rhythm, and Andy and the engineer, Jonathan Thayer, are standing in for millions on the chorus.

SIDE 1, BAND 3:  
DETROIT MEDLEY (2:25)

SOUP SONG by Maurice Sugar  
Tune: My Bonnie

I worked twenty years at the factory  
To buy me some bread and some meat.  
Now I'm looking for work and I find none.  
I wish I had something to eat.  
S-o-u-p, s-o-u-p,  
They gave me a bowl of soup (2x)

GO TELL YOUNG HENRY  
by anonymous auto worker  
Tune: Go Tell Aunt Sally

Go tell young Henry, go tell young  
Henry  
Go tell young Henry the old Ford  
system's dead.

The one he's been saving, the one  
he's been saving  
The one he's been saving since  
Ford Plant was a shed.

## SPEED-UP SONG

by anonymous auto worker

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the  
making of the Ford.  
It is made under conditions that offend  
even the Lord.

Amid a mighty hurry, and amid a  
mad uproar,

Production rushes on.

(chorus)

Hurry, hurry, hurry up, John, (3x)  
(faster each time)

Production rushes on.

Be quick my mind to answer, and  
be merciful, my feet.

Be forty seven places every time  
my heart can beat.

And the whip that drives me onward  
is my family must eat!

(chorus)

## SIDE 1 BAND 4:

### PLANE WRECK AT LOS GATOS

(Woody Guthrie)

Woody Guthrie saw a newspaper story about this plane disaster, when a rickety transport rig crashed killing its load of farm workers, who had just paid a good piece of their earnings to get back home in Mexico after working out the season in the Northern valleys of California. He wanted to write a song without rhymes, so it would flow like emotions on the energy of its own anger.

One afternoon in 1964 I was with a few friends, including Lightning Hopkins, and Chris Strachwitz (Arhoolie Records) who had his recording equipment set up in a small cafe along San Pablo Avenue, a hot and dusty truck route which brings the produce of that same part of California down through Alameda County to the market. Lightning and I both sang a few tunes into the machine, and then improvised some blues together in a dialogue designed to get a few personal things off

our chests, not thinking about a record. (It later did become Arhoolie's "Lightnin' Hopkins and Friends"). We were just sort of saying goodbye to our friends, since I was leaving the area for good and Lightning going back to Texas.

Something about the constant rumble of the passing trucks made me see again the people I had seen so often while travelling up and down California's great agribusiness valleys, and I wanted to record this song right then. If I were doing the recording now, I'd probably want to go a step or two further with the idea. I suspect Woody would too. But history will write the answer to the final question -- the history being written by Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers, and everybody who helps bind the solidarity with them by keeping up the lettuce and grape boycott until they win.

## SIDE 1, BAND 4:

### PLANE WRECK AT LOS GATOS (5:30)

Words by Woody Guthrie

Music: Git Along Little Dogies

1961 Ludlow Music, Inc.

The crops are all in and the peaches  
are rotting.

The oranges are piled in their  
creosote dumps.

You're flying them back to the  
Mexican border

To pay all their money to wade back  
again.

(chorus)

Goodbye to you, Juan, goodbye Rosalita,  
Goodbye mi amigo Jesus and Maria.

You won't have a name when you fly  
the big airplane,

And all they will call you will  
be "deportee".

My father's own father, he waded  
that river.

They took all the money he made  
in his life.

My brothers and sisters came working  
the fruit trees,

And they rode in the truck til they took  
down and died.



Some are illegal, and some are  
not wanted.

Our work contract's out and we've  
got to move on.

Six hundred miles to the Mexican  
border.

They chase us like outlaws, like  
rustlers, like thieves.

We died in your hills, and we died  
in your deserts.

We died in your valleys and died on  
your plains.

We died 'neath your trees and we died  
in your bushes,

Both sides of the river we died  
just the same.

The sky plane caught fire over  
Los Gatos canyon,

A fire ball of lightning that shook all  
our hills.

Who are all those friends, all scattered  
like dry leaves?

The radio says they are just "deportees".

Is this the best way we can grow  
our big orchards?

Is this the best way we can grow our  
good fruit?

To fall like dry leaves and rot on  
your topsoil,

And be called by no name except  
"deportees."

SIDE 1, BAND 5:

GOODBYE TO COLD WINTER

For a few years I lived on a spot on  
Dwight Way off Telegraph, in Berkeley,  
which is now known as James Rector  
Park (carved out of the now-vacant lot  
after Rector was killed by police bullets  
during the People's Park demonstrations).  
Next door lived a wonderful strong woman,  
Bessie Mercer, from "Lincoln and Giles  
Counties, Tennessee," so she said --  
the place was too small to have its own  
name. She had grown up working in the  
bean rows on her father's farm, and  
remembers the one luxury in her life to  
be a five-string banjo her folks ordered  
from a Sears, Roebuck catalogue. Sing-  
ing every night, or in the cool spots at  
the end of the howed rows, she learned  
and stored up hundreds of songs. This

one, she recalled, got across the idea  
of the foolish but indispensable rite of  
courtship which was, at that time (60  
years or so ago), the only way young  
people of the opposite sex were sup-  
posed to carry on social contact. The  
girl was supposed to be "on display" so  
that the young man, or "buyer" could  
look her over. Bessie was coarse-  
featured and huge, beautiful to me but  
undoubtedly formidable to most young  
men and an embarrassment to herself  
at the age when they "came calling."  
She knew her own strength, though,  
and could rise above any rejection,  
like the woman in the song. It was  
hard for a long time, but eventually  
she took her two fatherless daughters  
to another place and raised them all  
alone, slaving away at a hundred  
menial jobs and keeping her great,  
warm and generous self between the  
girls and disaster until they made it  
into womanhood and California. If  
she's still around and ever sees this,  
I hope she'll let me know how they all  
are now.

SIDE 1, BAND 5:

GOODBYE TO COLD WINTER (0:50)

Traditional

Goodbye to cold winter, goodnight  
to white frost,

It's cheer up my spirits for my old  
beau I have lost.

But I can get another 'n 'fore he's  
gone far away.

If he's gone, let him go. Let him  
sink or swim.

If he doesn't care for me, why should  
I care for him?

Because I am a woman, he'll fool me  
all he can.

There's nothing in this world so  
deceitful as a man.

A many a long evening have we sit  
and chat;

But what more do you think I should  
love the fool for that?

The evening was so long, and the time  
passed all so slow,

I thought I'd have to tell the fool to  
get his hat and go!

SIDE 1, BAND 6:  
A SINGLE GIRL (Traditional)

There must be hundreds of verses to this song, because every undoubtedly legitimate complaint must have been sung to it over some dishwater somewhere. But it's hard to note them down when your hands are always busy trying to solve the problems. So the folklore books are a little lean on the real history of women's lives as told in the songs. I don't know who started this song, or where I learned it, but you can go ahead and finish it.

Andy Pitt adds some nice guitar here.

SIDE 1, BAND 6:  
A SINGLE GIRL  
Traditional

A single girl, oh lord, a single girl  
Goes dressed all so fine.  
But a married girl, oh lord,  
    a married girl,  
She wears most any old kind.

A single girl, oh lord, a single girl,  
Goes anywhere she please.  
But a married girl, oh lord,  
    a married girl,  
Got a baby on her knees.

Well a single girl, oh lord,  
    a single girl,  
Goes to the store and buys.  
But a married girl, oh lord,  
    a married girl,  
Rocks the cradle and cries.

SIDE 1, BAND 7:  
THE LUDLOW MASSACRE  
(Woody Guthrie)

The songs we hear today which pass themselves off as "social commentary" always seem empty to me, because they only describe the situation, for the most part. They hardly ever help us see through the details to the heart of the matter, and if they tried to offer us solutions we wouldn't trust them anyhow. That's the state of American Pop (popular? people's?) Culture in the year of Watergate.

When Woody Guthrie wrote about conditions, you could feel part of it, and when he wrote about solutions, they felt logical because they came out of life. You can't write songs like these sitting in a dormitory, or a penthouse, or a ski chalet. You have to live with the people you write about, at least enough to understand their feelings, and you have to feel so much a part of their problems that you can't separate them from your own.

Some people say that a song "can't be expected to do everything." In other words, you can't make revolutions with songs. I say you can't make revolutions without songs. And if you seriously think about it, you can't name any successful ones that were made without. This song was written long after the events in it, but it helps provide an important tool for making basic social changes: a knowledge of and identity with our legacy of struggle. It's as good as a film or a book for making us understand that we are not so far at all from the hungry, angry men and women who died at Ludlow, and a song is a lot cheaper and easier to reproduce.

Songs like this will not be allowed on the media today, that is clear. So the singers who pass them on will have to give up their romance with showbiz, or better still, they must be the kind of singers who never cared about that in the first place. There is an important job to be done by working people all over this country, which is to re-take and reconstruct their own cultural tools, to clear away the confusion about whose music that is coming out of the RCA-Columbia-EMI-Phillips-etc... machines. It's not a question of machine-made versus homemade music: it's a question of who owns those machines now, lock stock and barrel, from the Bolivian copper mines that go into the strings of the guitars to the exotic woods of Thailand and the Philippines that make the body of the guitar, right up to the vast monopolies that control the lives of the artists, and the CIA-connected gentlemen who sits on the Columbia Corp. board of directors.



We need to control our own culture again, just as badly as those miners needed to control their territory and the safety of their children. We've been taught to think of "culture" in two wrong ways: either as something too far above us, like the so-called classics, or as something frivolous, made for escaping our day-to-day problems. It's neither of these, but it's the stuff of which human communication is made, that which expresses the connection between us all. And as long as it is controlled by the same people who want to control and exploit us, they will use it to make us feel more separate, more apart, more ignorant, and weaker. Woody Guthrie saw how important it is for us to understand and express our unity, our intelligence, and our strength. We need to produce more singers and poets like him, and we will.

You can read all about the massacre in a great book called "Labor's Untold Story," by Richard O. Boyer and Herbert M. Morais, which you can get from the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) at 11 East 51 St. -- New York City 10022. This book has in it much of the history which has been left out of the textbooks. It's a history of the American people, rather than the handful who own the history-teaching machinery. You'll read about your forefathers in there, for sure, and about some of your brothers and sisters too.

When the nightmare events at Attica Prison erupted in New York State in 1971, when 43 prisoners and hostages were slaughtered by machine-gun from helicopters during their peaceful occupation of the prison-yard, I needed a song to speak about the callousness and probable culpability of Mr. Rockefeller, governor of New York State at the time. Since the grandfather of Nelson, old John D. owned the mines at Ludlow, and since the two events bore the same mark of ruthless, cold-blooded murder of people unknown to the

perpetrator, clearly for no other reason than to make firmer his grip on the handle of power and the protection of his class interests, I chose this song. What the song doesn't say is how far the miners went with their attempts to reverse the situation: after the murder of the workers, women and children, many of the mines began to burn and were destroyed. The mining interests had to move out of the area, even to other countries. What will be the eventual aftermath of Attica?

SIDE 1, BAND 7:

THE LUDLOW MASSACRE (3:50)  
Words and Music by Woody Guthrie  
© 1961 Sanga Music

It was early springtime, and the  
strike was on.  
They drove us miners out of doors,  
Out of the houses that the company  
owned,  
Moved into tents up at old Ludlow.

I was worried bad about my children,  
With your soldiers guarding the  
railroad bridge.  
Every once in a while, a bullet  
would fly,  
And kick up gravel under my feet.

We were so afraid you would kill  
our children,  
We dug us a cave that was seven  
foot deep,  
Put our young ones and a pregnant  
woman  
Down inside that cave to sleep.

That very night, your soldiers waited  
Til all us miners was asleep.  
They snuck around our little tent town,  
And soaked our tents with your  
kerosene.

They struck a match, and the blaze  
it started,  
They pulled the triggers of your  
gattling guns.  
I made a run for the children, but a  
fire-wall stopped me,  
And thirteen children died from  
your guns. (continued)

I carried my blanket to a wire  
fence corner,  
Watched the fire 'til the blaze died  
down.  
I helped some people drag their  
little belongings,  
While your bullets killed us all around.

I never will forget the look on  
the faces  
Of the men and women that awful day,  
As we stood around to preach  
their funeral,  
And to lay the corpse of the dead away.

We phoned the Colorado governor to  
phone the president,  
Tell him call off his national guard.  
But the National Guard belonged to  
the governor,  
So he didn't try so very hard.

Well then our women hauled  
some potatoes  
Up to Wallensburg in a little cart.  
They sold them potatoes, and  
brought some guns back,  
And they put a gun in every hand.

The state soldiers jumped us in  
the wire fence corner  
They did not know that we had  
them guns.  
And the red-necked miners mowed  
down them troopers.  
You should have seen them poor  
boys run.

We took some cement and walled  
the cave up,  
Where you killed our thirteen  
children inside.  
I said, "God bless the mine-worker's  
union"  
And then I hung my head and cried.

SIDE 1, BAND 8:  
I DON'T WANT YOUR MILLIONS, MR.  
(Jim Garland)

Jim Garland is the brother of Aunt  
Molly Jackson and Sara Ogan, and  
between them they make up one of our  
greatest song-writing families. He

was a member of the Kentucky coal-  
miners' strike committee in Harlan  
County, and the whole family was run  
out because of their work with the union.  
This song of his, composed to the old  
tune "Greenback Dollar," became  
famous and widely sung when the  
Almanac Singers carried it all over to  
union meetings and recorded it.

One day in the '60s, Jim paid us a  
brief visit in New York, and we talked  
about songs. "I'm glad that people  
have been singing them and put them  
to some good use," he said, "but most  
times these days they don't sing 'em  
angry enough. I never did say 'give  
me back my job again' but always  
'demanding back my job again'."  
Later on, I looked at some of his songs  
in the book "Hard-Hitting Songs for  
Hard-Hit People" (one of the greatest  
collections of people's songs ever  
made, with plenty of commentary  
written by Woody Guthrie) and dis-  
covered that other songs of this 1930s  
period had also been changed, and  
somehow softened, by the people who  
popularized them in the '40s. So I  
made up my mind to re-instate the  
original lyrics and to sing them as  
hard as possible. I did take the liberty  
of changing one line in this song,  
though. In the verse next to last, in-  
stead of "demanding back my job again"  
I sing "I want my country back again."  
O.K. with you, Jim?

Also, I took out the chorus repeti-  
tions for the record, but if you sing  
the song with friends you should put  
back in "I don't want your millions,  
Mr. I don't want your diamond ring,  
etc." after each verse. The rhythm  
I use is different from the old tune,  
just because I can get it out stronger  
that way. The harmonica is played  
here by a young man I have watched  
playing around with "harps" since he  
was walking around in size 8 Oshkosh  
overalls with a dirty face. He's my  
son, named Paul after Paul Robeson  
but now called Pablo because he lives  
in a Spanish-speaking country.  
Whenever he comes home on a visit,  
we get together to play music. I'd  
wish he didn't have anything else to

do but play harmonica and guitar with me, except that I'm so proud of what he's doing with his life.

SIDE 1, BAND 8:

I DON'T WANT YOUR MILLIONS, MR.

words and music by Jim Garland

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I don't want your millions, Mr.,  
I don't want your diamond ring.  
All I want, just the right to live, Mr.  
Demanding back my job again.

Now I don't want your Rolls Royce, Mr.  
I can't use your pleasure yacht.  
All I want is just food for my babies.  
Give to me my old job back.

Well think me dumb, if you wish, Mr.  
You can call me green or blue or red,  
But here's one thing that I can  
tell you Mr.,  
My hungry children are gonna be fed.

Now we worked to build this country, Mr.,  
While you enjoyed a life of ease.  
You've stolen all that we built, Mr.,  
And now my babies starve and freeze.

Well I know you have a land-deed, Mr.,  
The money all is in your name.  
But where's the work that you did, Mr.?  
I want my country back again.

Well I don't want your millions, Mr.  
I don't want your diamond ring.  
All I want is the right to live, Mr.,  
Demanding back my job again.

(spoken:)

Well, that's the way the old song said it,  
But I got more to say:  
I say, "I do want your millions, Mr.,  
But I think they should be divided up  
amongst all of us..."

SIDE 2, BAND 1:

THINGS ARE SO SLOW

(J. B. Hutto - B. Dane)

This song keeps on changing, like all good blues. I wrote some verses about Nixon and the elections, but after he

managed to steal his "landslide" I went back to the old reliable target: the boss. Couldn't resist getting another lick in on Nixon, though. The musicians in on the deal are: Robbie Merkin, piano; Andy Pitt, guitar; John Miller, bass; Dave Ellman, drums.

SIDE 2, BAND 1:

THINGS ARE SO SLOW (4:00)

Words and Music: J. B. Hutto

New words: Barbara Dane

©1954 Chance Records

Went to work this morning,  
All set to start.  
The boss comes up and says something  
That really broke my heart.  
He said "Things are so slow,  
We just don't need you any more."

Went home and told my man,  
He didn't fuss.  
But then the finance took the car,  
And we had to ride the bus,  
And now we're walkin' so slow,  
We won't be ridin' any more. (repeat)

Just one thing about it  
That really blows my mind:  
The boss is still selling what I made  
last week,  
And I can't even sell my time.  
Because things are so slow,  
They just don't need us any more.  
(repeat)

We told the President  
We need more jobs in the nation.  
Do you know what the fool said?  
"Unemployment stops inflation!"  
Well now the man is so slow,  
We just don't need him any more.  
(repeat)

We got to get ourselves together,  
Talk the whole thing down.  
Make a little plan  
For shakin' up the town.  
Because things are so slow,  
We just can't take it any more.  
Because things are so slow  
We just can't make it,  
Might have to break it,  
Don't try to fake it,  
We just can't take it any more.



SIDE 2, BAND 2:  
SONG OF MY HANDS  
(Bernie Asbel)

I first met Bernie when he came out to Detroit in 1946, to sing at a strike rally at the Ford local #600 of the U. A. W. I remember a story he told about the meeting, at which thousands of angry auto workers had gathered to vote on whether or not to strike. When the announcer had said, "Well, now we're gonna have a few songs before we get to the main speaker...", a restless grumble had come up from the crowd. But when Bernie hit it with "Now if you want higher wages, let me tell you what to do..." and the rest of Talking Union, they cheered their heads off. Lots of people there probably hadn't known until that minute how important the right song in the right place can be.

Bernie had written this song to take with him as he travelled around the country singing for the unions. He wanted workers to feel their strength and to know the source of it, and what is meant when we talk about the working class as the decisive group when we need a revolutionary change. Of course he knew that the workers would understand this in a fundamental way far better than any outsider, but spelling it out could help add to the courage needed for the battles ahead.

The bosses managed to subdue the militancy which grew out of the 1930s organizing drive with the no-strike pledges they said they needed during World War II. But all kinds of anger and frustration, bottled up during the war years, spilled over in the late '40s to become one of the greatest waves of strikes the country ever experienced. The Korean war years brought the McCarthy period and the Taft-Hartley act, designed to "clean the Reds out of the unions" and to take the teeth out of every militant technique invented by workers to fight for the rights. With the departure of "the Reds," or more class-conscious workers, the history and the songs were hidden back on a dusty shelf.

This song was one of the best loved back in the '40s, but almost no one knows it today. It's time for a revival!

SIDE 2, BAND 2:  
SONG OF MY HANDS (5:45)  
words and music by Bernie Asbel, ©1946

This is a song about working hands.

A lover sings of his own true love,  
A sailor sings of the sea.  
But what can I be singing of  
But of my only property:  
I'll sing you a song of my hands.

Hear the sound of the midnight train,  
Echoing down in the mines.  
The hiss of the steel, and the grind  
of the crane,  
And the rumble of the assembly line,  
That is the song of my hands.

I'll tell you why of my hands I sing.  
The kids at home eat what my hands  
can bring.

When towers of steel rose from out of  
the plains,  
Did you see my hands working there?  
Around us the tractors, the trucks  
and the trains,  
We laid stone upon stone upon stone  
in the air,  
And on top of the job were my hands.

My two hands are mighty hands.  
They're hard, they're strong, they're  
free.  
In all this world there's no man  
Can buy them in slavery.

My two hands, they're my take-home pay.  
They're how much milk at my door.  
Aand how many pounds will my  
children weigh?  
How will you figure the price before  
You tell me the price of my hands?

What is the value of my two hands?  
Appraise them as you've done before.  
They built your factories, tilled your  
land.  
They made your riches, and they'll  
make more.  
What will you pay for my hands?

Calculate carefully, ponder it well,  
And remember this when you do:  
That my two hands are mine to sell.  
They made your machines, they can  
stop them too!  
That is the power of my hands.  
(repeat)

SIDE 2, BAND 3:  
BITTER RAIN (Malvina Reynolds)

One of the things I hate most about the capitalist system is the way it has made middle-class people feel depressed and powerless, alienated even from the people who make the things they buy and use every day. In this song, Malvina has tried to speak for the people who have fought to maintain their connection with the people around them in less easy circumstances, and even with those being killed and dying half-way round the world on behalf of the exploiter's right to exploit. It must be remembered that much of the difficult work of organizing the rage against the wars in Indochina into an effective mass movement was done, after all, by middle-class students and adults who often had problems explaining to their neighbors why they felt so deeply involved. It's not necessarily the class you were born into, but what class you identify with which makes you a fighter for the needs of all people.

My oldest son, Nick Cahn, is playing the lead electric guitar over my 12-string. He also plays excellent drums, but he found out the world was currently experiencing a surplus of excellent musicians, so he became a welder, and he's a great one of those too. He lives in California, with his childhood sweetheart, our beautiful Tina, and her two fine little boys.

SIDE 2, BAND 3:  
BITTER RAIN (3:25)  
by Malvina Reynolds  
© 1965 Schroder Music

The world's too much for me.  
It's getting so  
Too much needs doing here that  
I can't do.

For me, it's not so bad, I can't  
complain.  
But somewhere a kid without a coat  
Stands in the bitter rain.

The world's too much for me.  
It's like the end.  
Too many helpless ones I can't defend.  
I can protect myself from cold and pain,  
But somewhere a hungry kid  
Walks in the bitter rain.

The world's too much for me.  
Although I've tried,  
Too much goes on, too much  
I can't abide.  
The old give orders, and the young  
are slain,  
And somewhere a bleeding kid  
Dies in the bitter rain.

SIDE 2, BAND 4:  
SONG OF THE COATS (Xuan Hong)

Written in the southern part of Vietnam in the early '60s, this song was printed in a little pocket songbook carried by the NLF fighters as one of their first gifts to people in the newly liberated villages. It celebrates the dedication of the people working in the little jungle workshops even under the constant threat of bombings and strafings to supply the needs of the fighters. I have had the privilege of singing it in Paris at the giant Tet celebration held in 1972 by the Vietnamese community there, in this English version, and while doing volunteer work with a group of Vietnamese women on a large farm in Cuba when I only knew how to sing the melody without words. Both times I was struck by the power of a song to seal the bonds of solidarity, to communicate love and respect for other people's culture. Just the humming of the melody together said more than any words.

This beautiful arrangement was made collectively by the artists who play it. Tim Scott's cello part was born when we performed it together in Montreal, at a conference with Vietnamese students. Andy Pitt on guitar, Robbie Merkin on Fender electric piano, and Dave Ellman

on the Chinese bell and tom-tom, worked out just the right simple but eloquent counterparts.

**SIDE 2, BAND 4:**

**SONG OF THE COATS (2:50)**

words and music: Xuan Hong  
English words: Barbara Dane  
©1968

Brothers brave the rain and sun,  
Heat of day and cold of night.  
Coats we sew for everyone  
Help to warm your will to fight.  
Brothers risking death each day  
As winter hurries on its way,  
Oh know that we will do our best.  
Faster, fingers, take no rest.

In the forest dark and green,  
Like a stream of silk our  
    vengeance runs.  
Little speedy sewing machines  
Move as one with distant guns.  
Oh my fingers, nimbly sew,  
That our fighter warmly may go.  
Oh know that we will do our best.  
Faster, sisters, take no rest.

Winter is come, the coats are done.  
One to warm each fighting girl and boy.  
We've sewn our love in every one,  
Filling them with courage, hope and joy.  
Early to the front they'll fly.  
But while we hold them in our hands,  
With every coat we pledge our lives  
To drive the invader from our land.

Early to the front they'll fly,  
But while we hold the coats in our hands,  
We pray the sun  
Soon will rise on free Vietnam.

**SIDE 2, BAND 5:**

**THE KENT STATE MASSACRE**  
(Warshaw-Dane-Garland)

The capitalist system, since its earliest days when little children were employed in the mills and sweatshops, has destroyed its young. In recent times it has demonstrated that it will not tolerate the most modest challenge to its power by murdering students during peaceful demonstrations on campuses.

There is a direct line of continuity from the murders at Orangeburg, S. C. of Sam Hammon, 18, Delano Middleton, 17, and Henry Smith, 18, to the murders at Jackson State in Mississippi of Phillip Gibbs, 19 and James Green, 17, to the murders at Kent State, Ohio. The line continues to the needless victimization of hundreds of thousands of their generation who were sent away to fight and die or come home maimed in body or spirit, or to become addicted to drugs in Southeast Asia or Watts and Harlem, Scarsdale and Des Moines.

I have been in Cuba and in China, and seen how enthusiastic and wholesome young people can be, even in 1973, when they are allowed a place in the building of a society, rather than converted into a byproduct of the death of a system. It is possible to get some idea of what it will be like when we have pushed our society up onto the next stage of human development, but we won't see how it will work out in the full flowering genius of our own peoples until we get there. One thing for sure and certain: the young people will stop being victims and become the hope and joy of everyone in those new times to come.

This story is something of a parallel to the original "Murder of Harry Simms" in that he, too, was full of idealism and he, too, was murdered in the first flight of his young hopes. In the words of Aunt Molly Jackson, "Harry Simms was a young Jewish organizer who was murdered on Brush Creek, Knot County. He was walking along the railroad track with another fellow -- they were going down to meet some writers who came to study the conditions of the miners -- when the gun thugs shot him..." He was a young communist who volunteered to leave his home in New York and go to work with the miners during the bloody organizing drive, and lost his life to ruling class violence at the age of 19. The last line of his song is the same as the last line of this one, because it is the only way we will see an end to that kind of violence.



SIDE 2, BAND 5:  
THE KENT STATE MASSACRE (3:35)  
by Jack Warshaw and Barbara Dane ©1970  
melody: Murder of Harry Simms  
by Jim Garland

Brothers, listen to my story,  
Sisters, listen to my song.  
Gonna sing of four young people  
Who are now dead and gone.  
Two of them were twenty,  
And two were just nineteen,  
Just stepping out to meet the world  
Like so many you have seen.

It was in Kent State, Ohio  
On a Monday afternoon.  
The air was full of springtime,  
The flowers were in bloom.  
It was a scene of terror  
That none will soon forget.  
Young students stood with empty hands  
To face the bayonets.

Alli Krause and Sandy Scheuer  
Marched and sang a peaceful song.  
Like Bill Schroeder and Jeff Miller,  
They did not think it wrong.  
They laughed and joked with troopers,  
And some to them did say:  
We march to bring the GIs home,  
And we are not afraid.

No warning were they given,  
No mercy and no chance.  
The air was filled with teargas,  
The troopers did advance.  
Suddenly they knelt and fired,  
The students turned and fled.  
Fifteen fell at that moment,  
And four of them were dead.

On the campus they were murdered,  
In the springtime of their lives.  
As angry sorrow swept the land,  
Their friends and parents cried.  
They'd hardly learned to struggle,  
But witness they will be.  
They died for those in Vietnam,  
Also for you and me.

(continued)

But while we march and mourn today,  
There's much more we must do.  
We must teach ourselves to organize,  
And see the struggle through.  
Blood flowed upon the 4th of May,  
And we'll know it's color well  
'Til we sink this murdering system  
In the darkest pits of hell.

SIDE 2, BAND 6:  
WORKING CLASS WOMAN  
(Boyd-Felczer-Dane)

Felczer had some problems. She told them to Boyd, who wrote a song which he showed to Dane. Dane added some of her own experience and hopes. Robbie Merkin invented a great arrangement of Boyd's tune, played it on the piano for Andy Pitt (guitar), Dave Ellman (drums), John Miller (bass), Pablo Menendez (guitar), Tim Scott (cello), Maidine Yee (violin), and they all volunteered to help record the song. We all hope it helps to give some courage and will-to-fight to some women who are just beginning to find out how many people understand and care about their struggles to win a full place in our so-called free society. Sara Ogan, in the first song of the album, shows us that she knows it's no particular man or men in general who oppress her and her family, but a whole system. This song is for her present-day sisters who understand it that way too.  
Unite and fight!

SIDE 2, BAND 6:  
WORKING CLASS WOMAN (6:30)  
Words by Peter Boyd, Jane Felczer  
and Barbara Dane  
Music by Peter Boyd  
©1973 Flintstrike Music

Joe Workingman's wife, that's how  
I was defined.  
As if that was my life, my hope and  
my mind.  
But I worked in a bakeshop, did the  
housework at night,  
There was no time to stop for a  
young bird in flight.

(Working Class Woman Continued)

And in time there were babies,  
had to make us a home.  
Joe was working two jobs, I was  
always alone.  
I needed some time, and just a little  
control,  
Just to keep my right mind, just to  
try to stay whole.

I wanted a partner, to be his friend,  
not just his wife.  
I'll work hard for my children, but  
they're my love, not my life.

Went to work in a factory, and  
its rough in this world.  
My kids are in high school, and  
the boss calls me "girl."  
But the woman beside me, as we sweat  
out the line,  
Says "Tomorrow is payday, and the  
next day is mine!"

It's a race for the strong, 'cause it'll  
grind up the meek  
When your money runs short, at the  
end of a week.  
And your car needs some tire, and  
your kid needs some shoes,  
For a working class woman that's an  
old kind of blues.

This system buys hands, but you  
must not use your head.  
It'll shake you and break you, 'til  
all your senses are dead.

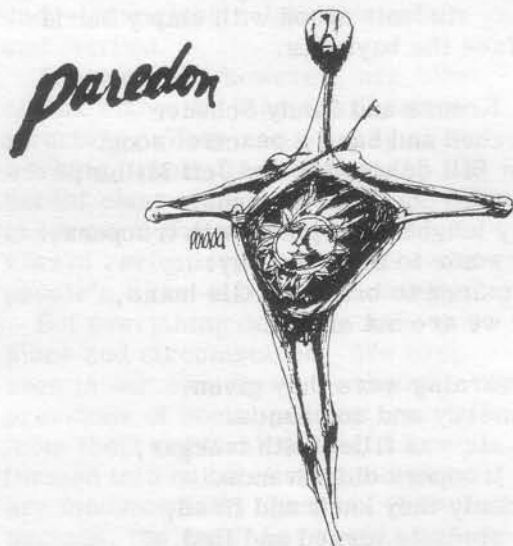
But I know there are answers,  
I gotta get to the source.  
I think me and this system gotta  
get a divorce.  
I can't make enough money, I can't  
find enough time.  
But I'm a hard-working woman, and  
the future is mine.

Well there's more where I come from,  
and we got anger to burn.  
And we're talkin' and movin', gonna  
study and learn.  
Build a unity train, on a straight-  
arrow line.  
If today is the bosses', I know  
tomorrow is mine.

And I know it takes lovin', and  
I know it takes time,  
But I'm a working class woman,  
and the future is mine.  
I'm a working class woman,  
and the future is mine!

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