Talking Vietnam Blues

Phil Ochs

Sailing over to Vietnam,
Southeast Asian Birmingham.
Well training is the word we use,
Nice word to have in case we lose.
Training a million Vietnamese
To fight for the wrong government and the American Way.

Well they put me in a barracks house
Just across the way from Laos.
They said you're pretty safe when the troops deploy
But don't turn your back on your house boy
When they ring the gong, watch out for the Viet-Cong.

Well the sergeant said it's time to train
So I climbed aboard my helicopter plane.
We flew above the battle ground
A sniper tried to shoot us down.
He must have forgotten, we're only trainees.
Them Commies never fight fair.

Friends the very next day we trained some more
We burned some villages down to the floor.
Yes we burned out the jungles far and wide,
Made sure those red apes had no place left to hide.
Threw all the people in relocation camps,
Under lock and key, made damn sure they're free.

Well I walked through the jungle and around the bend
Who should I meet but President Diem.
Said you're fighting to keep Vietnam free
For good old de-em-moc-ra-cy (Diem-ocracy).
That means rule by one family
And 15,000 American troops, give or take a few
Thousand.
American.
Troops.

He said: "I was a fine old Christian man
Ruling this backward Buddhist land.
Well it ain't much but what the heck

It sure beats hell out of Chiang Kai-shek
I'm the power elite. Me and the 7th fleet."

He said: "meet my sister, Madam Nhu
The sweetheart of Dien Bien Phu"
He said: "Meet my brothers, meet my aunts
With the government that doesn't take a chance.
Families that slay together, stay together."

Said: "If you want to stay you'll have to pay
Over a million dollars a day.
But it's worth it all, don't you see?
If you loose the country you'll still have me.
Me and Syngman Rhee, Chiang Kai-shek, Madam Nhu.
Like I said on _Meet the Press_
'I regret that I have but one country to give for my life.'"

Well now old Dien is gone and dead
All the new leaders are anti-Red.
Yes they're pro-American, freedom sensations
Against Red China, the United Nations.
Now all the news commentators and the CIA
are saying, "Thank God for coincidence."

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