

1973

Vietnam : a Poem by Leo Scanlon

Sinn Fein, Republican Publications

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VIETNAM

a poem by leo scanlon.



VIETNAM

O'er Vietnam the vultures fly
Their beaks are dripping red
With blood of children yet unborn
And thousands who are dead;
From napalm, shell and phosphorus,
From bullet and from tank,
The vulture is a cruel bird -
The vulture is a Yank.

*He comes to free the poor oppressed,
The workers and the slaves;
He brings with him, not freedom
But foul murder, hate and graves;
He comes from Selma and Detroit,
Those centres of good will,
And in the name of Liberty
He'll burn and raze and kill.*

He brings with him his chewing gum
His comics, flashy cars,
His coca-cola, juke-box too,
His dollars and cigars;
He brings with him the stench of death
Decay, corruption, hell -
He brings with him his deadly guns
His bombers, shot and shell.

He roams the skies, he wades the swamps
He wounds, he rapes, he kills,
He drops his high-explosive bombs
On schools, Red Cross and mills;
He rips the bellies of the young
The old, the lame, the blind,
He drenches children with napalm
No mercy in his mind.

They tell him the Vietnamese
Are not of flesh and blood,
But made of stone, of dirt and filth
Of excrement and mud;
They're only Orientals, Joe,
They're animals and lice,
They're rats and cats and dogs and such
They're beasts and skunks and lice.

They have no souls, no beating hearts
They're crooks and goons and Comms,
The only things they understand
Are basins-ful of bombs.
Hear this, Marine, the Hawks call out
You're fighting for your wife
Your Maw, your Paw, your Uncle Sam,
The Yankee way of life.

Hear this, G.I, the Prelates cry
You're fighting for your God,
For truth, for justice and fair play
And for your native sod.

*Vietnamese for many years
Had fought against the French,
Had starved and suffered in their fight
And died in bloody trench;
They fought barehanded, tooth and nail,
Nor reckoned up the sum -
Against the scourings of the globe
The Foreign Legion scum.*

*They smashed the foe at Dien-Phu
Collected up their dead,
Rehoused their people, tilled their soil
The hungry then they fed.
They wanted peace to live on earth
To build their lives again,
Not die in bitter, savage war
On mountain or in fen.*

*But many miles across the seas,
The hawks and vultures met -
They saw the land was rich and fair
With rice and rubber set;
With Tin and Ore and Manganese
And bases for their arms -
They set about preparing war
And sounding false alarms.*

*Now what excuse will we put forth?
Just what Big Lie will suit?
Ah yes! We'll tell the waiting world
We fight the Commie brute;
We fight to stem the Asian hordes,
To rout their Godless threat,
To raise 'Old Glory' in the East -
Repay our Country's debt.*

*To Wall Street and to Vanderbilt
Dupont and Henry Ford,
Who built our Nation, Now we'll pay -
With blood we can afford.
The blood of Nigger and of Wop.
Of Hunkie and of Spic,
Of Polack, Froggie, Yid and Kraut
And West Virginian Hick.*

*What's good for Gen'ral Motors, guys,
Is good for you as well,
Altho' you'll die in jungle deep
You'll know just why you fell.
You'll die for Nixon's millionaires
And at Chuck Abhrams nod,
For Cabot who but speaks to Lodge
Who speaks only to God.*

*You'll die that stocks and shares may rise,
That dividends may soar -
To clothe in furs, in silks and gems,
The parasite and whore.
You'll die that Negroes may be killed,
By gun or rifle butt,
Or live in filth and misery
Under the white man's foot.*

*You'll die that Mansions may be filled
With treasures and with gold,
That drones may live in luxury
'Mid massive wealth untold;
You'll die that strikers may be clubbed
By copper or by scab,
The Bill is being presented now -
You're picking up the tab.*

*The rich don't pay this bill in blood -
The workers always do,
Pacific Isle! - Korean Hill -
Are stained a bright red hue;
For what? - For what is this macabre play
Being written in life's tome,
Vietnamese are not the foe -
Your enemy's at home.*

*He doesn't fight this obscene war
His sons are playing games,
On Harvard's fields and campuses
Or squiring costly dames.
He lives in peace and opulence
Whilst you, poor brainwashed tools,
Are dancing to his deadly tune
To die in bloody pools.*

*Each bomb you drop to wound and maim
Means dollars for the boss,
Each bullet that you use to kill -
His profit and your loss.
Each tortured, screaming child you burn,
Means jewels for the wives,
Of those who sent you to destroy
God's precious human lives.*

*Each school and every hospital
Wrecked by your fire and steel,
Means you and yours are tighter pressed
Under the Iron heel;
Of wicked men whose only thought -
Is profit, spoils and gain,
Who fought you and your working class
From Florida to Maine.*

*Who turned machine-guns on your kin -
When they sought only bread,
And filled their bellies - not with food -
But searing, biting lead.*

Go home, Yank, take your guns and go,
You are not wanted there,
Go back and turn your wrath on those
Who fill the world with fear;
Destroy the vicious serpent
You are clutching to your breast,
Then only will you find content
Peace, happiness and rest.
Then only will you see the star
That shines up in the skies -
The star of hope, of man redeemed
From slavery and lies.

Go Elmer, Hiram, Hank and James,
Go Richard, John and Seth,
Preserve us from your way of life -
But more - Your way of death!

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