

# Talking Vietnam

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 fifteen thousand 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 lose 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 Diem 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."