

Sulphur Passage

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D C G
Come you bold men of Clayo-quot, Come you bold wo-men.

D G A D
There is a fire burn-ing on the moun-tain, the sting of smoke blow-in' in the wind.

C G D
Hear the blast of the whis-tle, hear the snarl of the chain hear the crack-ing in the heart-wood,

♩ (to 1st Coda) C G D A G D/F# Em A
hear it a-gain and a-gain and a-gain. Ch No pa - sa-ran, Me-gin Riv-er.

D A G D/F# Em A D A G D/F# Em A (to 2nd Coda) (after 2nd time DC al Segno, then to 1st Coda)
No pa - sa-ran, Clayo-quot Riv-er. No pa - sa-ran, Sul-phur Pas-sage.

1st D G A D C G
grouse, the thrush, the great horned owl. We'll stand with these ced-ars, stand with these bal-sam groves,

D G A D
stand with the her-on, the cou-gar, the ot-ter, Like the tree by the wa-ter, we shall not move

A G D/F# Em A D A G D/F# Em A
No pa - Me-gin Riv-er. No pa - sa-ran, Clayo-quot Riv-er.

D G D/F# Em A (DC al then to 2nd Coda)
No pa - sa-ran, Sul-phur Pas-sage.

2nd D A - 4 G D/F# Em A 5 G D/F# Em A D
No pa sa-ran, Flo-res Is-land Sul-phur Pas-sage.

Come you bold men of Clayoquot,
 Come you bold women.
 There is a fire burning on the mountain,
 The sting of smoke blowin' in the wind.
 Hear the blast of the whistle,
 Hear the snarl of the chain,
 Hear the cracking in the heartwood,
 Hear it again and again and again.

Chorus:

No pasaran, Megin River
 No pasaran, Clayoquot River
 No pasaran, Sulphur Passage

There is a valley torn asunder,
 There is a mountain stripped to bone,
 Grove of spruce, stand of cedar,
 The ancient garden sacked and burned.
 Hear the blast of the whistle,
 Hear the cracking in the heartwood,
 Hear it again and again and again.

Come you bold men of Clayoquot,
 Come you bold women,
 There is a cry deep within the forest,
 Hear the whisper in the wind.
 Hear the breath in the cedars,
 The sighing in the salal,
 The beating deep within the forest,
 The grouse, the thrush, the great horned owl.

We'll stand with these cedars,
 Stand with these balsam groves,
 Stand with the heron, the cougar, the otter.
 Like the tree by the water, we shall not move.

Repeat first verse

Final Chorus

No pasaran, Megin River.
 No pasaran, Clayoquot River.
 No pasaran, Flores Island.
 No pasaran, Vargas Island.
 No pasaran, Ursus River.
 No pasaran, Nesquiat River.
 No pasaran, Sulphur Passage.



Photograph by GWL

dering what we could possibly do against the juggernaut of the logging companies and the government. Yet more and more people got involved in their own ways, working, demonstrating, singing. Talk about the power of community. Talk about the folk process!

You mention community a lot. Do you just mean the community of people in British Columbia? How do you define community?

That's a good question, and I don't have a neat answer. But in practice, I suppose I define community as people with shared interests they hold separate from and, indeed in spite of, the onslaught of commercial and political propaganda raining down on us.

We live in a time and in a society that must be one of the most heavily and most successfully propagandized in history.

There is so much pressure to disavow our own communities' needs and experience (and indeed our own personal needs and experience) and substitute the proscribed attitudes churned out by the centre of money, power and mass communications.

For instance, these days many people, maybe even most people, really believe that the country is broke. We have been told that so often. We can't afford medicare, or unemployment insurance, or battered women's shelters because we're broke. It's propaganda, a posture that has nothing to do with our own experience. Just look around. Walk down Bloor Street in Toronto, 4th Avenue in Vancouver, walk through Kensington in Calgary, then tell me the country is broke! We are rich as Croesus. As a society, we can afford VCRs, handi-cams, CD players, cable TV, the Blue Jays, the Phantom of the Opera—but we can't afford medicare? In Ontario they reduce the income of welfare mothers to "fight the deficit," and then give a tax break to people who are better off to "stimulate the

economy." It is straight propaganda, self-serving, contradictory—but it is incredibly pervasive. It is damn hard not to be taken in, not to substitute the "wisdom" of the rich, articulate guys in suits who dominate TV and radio and the press. I mean, Geoffrey Simpson looks knowledgeable, he sounds knowledgeable and he is saying the same thing they are all saying.... If he thinks the emperor's new clothes are terrific, they must be.

But communities, whether defined by geography or shared concerns, do have their own real interests and histories. Stretched far enough, the veil of propaganda starts to tear, and those real interests, that real experience, comes back into focus. Inherent in the domination of public discourse by the rich and powerful is its antithesis, because in many ways we can feel that our own community values are not there. I think the next few years are going to see a very exciting fight over the soul of the country. I am not a Pollyanna about this. The bad guys are winning. If they get their way, and they very well might, they could do such damage to the fabric of the country, the fabric of our communities, they could so Americanize us, that it will take generations to recover.

The same forces are at play when it comes to music. The entertainment industry juggernaut has certainly marginalized folk music, just as the political juggernaut has marginalized community itself—the source of folk music. Being a folksinger was never an easy job, but now it is harder than ever. The cultural organizations that have played an important part keeping non-commercial culture enterprises afloat—including folk singers—are being cut to the bone. Meanwhile the commercial entertainment alternatives, from watching videos at home to spending \$100 to see *Showboat*, have never been more pervasive, more hyped. I seriously doubt whether Stringband could have kept going, had those days been like these. And yet, and yet ... people like you and me, people who like the music, who like the heart it has, feel the absence. And

given the opportunity, we will express our own community interest. That is what happened with Gabriola VORIXO.

When I decided to record again, after being away from the studio for something like 15 years, I wasn't very confident. Would an album by an old folksinger get any play? Would there be venues where I could perform? Would I be able to sell more than 200 copies to die-hard old Stringband fans? To be confident would have been to be foolish. So I decided to fundraise. I set out to raise \$5000, and I didn't, I raised \$25,000! It was the single most rewarding experience of my working life. It was my Academy Award. Of course it was flattering; it is wonderful to feel that appreciated.

But I think something else was going on: I think people saw a chance to fight back against the system, against the music industry, to express solidarity with their own community's music. And as a result of their intervention, I was able to once again put out songs expressing the values we share. I was able to express my (and our) equivocal thoughts about marriage and parenting in these times. I was able to make a song out of our anger and hurt at the destruction of the wilderness—and our determination to stop it. And those expressions go back into the community, and strengthen it against the rain of propaganda. That's what I do. That's what folk songs have always done.

I think now, as I get older, it is my fate to be fairly obscure, to be a marginal performer who has little impact on mainstream culture. What I do won't be the lead story in the entertainment section of *The Globe*, it won't get rotation on MuchMusic. I won't play the Glenn Gould Theatre or do a guest spot with Rita McNeill. Too bad. But I know how much effect my work has on people in my community, who take the energy of my songs and channel it into their work, and their work encourages someone else. That's the legacy of what I do, and that feels pretty good to me.



Readers will recall "Bossinware Party Tips" from 29.2 (June/Juin 1955). For those who do not have the opportunity to attend or host a Party, Bossinware is available by mail order. Among the items in the current Bossinware Catalogue are the video *Sulphur Passage*, which may be had for a donation ("at least \$10 plus, alas, \$3 for postage") and the CD/cassette release, *Gabriola VORIXO*, Bossin's most recent and ambitious studio effort (the song "Sulphur Passage" opens this recording). The most recent addition to the catalogue is *Old Folksinger's Pick*, an anthology of some of Bossin's favorite, but often overlooked, singers from Britain, the USA, and Canada. Performers on the cassette include Keith Bennett and Tin Sandwich, Ken Hamm, Veda Hille, Crow Johnson, Penny Laing, and Travels with Charley, along with several others. The basic price for this release is \$10 plus \$2 postage;

Bossin offers a variety of prices for most of the items he sells, *regular*, *supporter*, and *poor person's*, and is running a Christmas Special this year, so it's best to write, phone, fax, or email him for a complete and current catalogue and/or to be added to his mailing list.

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Bossin's recordings are also available via Festival Records (1-800-633-8282).