

The Ballad Of John Henry Faulk

Phil Ochs

I'll tell you the story of john henry faulk.
I'll tell you of his trials and the troubled trail he walked,
And I'll tell of the tyrants, the ones you never see:
Murder is the role they play and hatred is their fee.

On the tv and the radio john henry faulk was known.
He talked to many thousands with a mind that was his own,
But he could not close his eyes when the lists were passed around,
So he tried to move the union to tear the blacklist down.

His friends they tried to warn him he was headin' for a fall.
If he spoke against the blacklist he had no chance at all,
But he laughed away their warnings and he laughed away their fears:
For how could lies destroy the work of many honest years?

Then slowly, oh so slowly, his life began to change.
People would avoid his eyes, his friends were actin' strange,
And he finally saw the power of the hidden poison pen
When they told him that his job was through, he'd never work again.

And he could not believe what his sad eyes had found.
He stared in disbelief as his world came tumblin' down,
And as the noose grew tighter, at last the trap was clear:
For every place he turned to go, that list would soon be there
-- oh, that list.

And is there any bottom to the fears that grow inside?
Is there any bottom to the hate that you must hide?
And is there any end to your long road of despair?
Is there any end to the pain that you must bear?

His wife and children trembled, the time was runnin' short,
When a man of law got on their side and took them into court,
And there upon the stand they could not hide behind their eyes,
And the cancer of the fascist was displayed before our eyes.

Hey, you blacklist, you blacklist, I've seen what you have done.
I've seen the men you've ruined and the lives you've tried to run,
But the one thing that I've found is, the only ones you spare
Are those that do not have a brain, or those that do not care.

And you men who point your fingers and spread your lies around,
You men who left your souls behind and drag us to the ground,
You can put my name right down there, I will not try to hide --
For if there's one man on the blacklist, I'll be right there by his side.

For I'd rather go hungry to beg upon the streets
Than earn my bread on dead men's souls and crawl beneath your feet.
And I will not play your hater's game and hate you in return,
For it's only through the love of man the blacklist can be burned.