

“Mountain Crowns of Morning”—Story of a Song

*“When our lives were dawning
We were mountain crowns of morning
Mountain crowns of morning in our youth.”*

A great mentor of mine once said, “When the foot starts tapping, the mind starts re-programming.” Have you ever tapped your foot, or danced, to Guthrie’s “This Land Is Your Land”? Or John Lennon’s “Imagine”? Or Dylan’s “How Many Roads”?

Long before I (consciously) understood the importance of songs such as the above—as positive paradigm-shift tools—I was writing ballads with serious paradigm-altering potential. Unfortunately, or fortunately as the case may be, these were back-burnered between 1987 and 1995, a period in which I became totally involved in working out the many cultural implications of the new biology of Dr. Bruce Lipton.

After the turn of the century, my interest in songwriting was revived by an association with the talented composer/performer Jon Baroni. One product of that association was an album titled “Wake Up Calls” (see Bookstore). Another was the first recording and publishing of a song called “Mountain Crowns of Morning” in an album titled after the name of the band—“bloomline.”

I began the writing of “Mountain Crowns” back in 1972, when we were still involved in the ghastly war in Vietnam. It’s thirty-five years later. Some say we lost that war. I say we won—by losing. The U.S. and Vietnam are now good friends. Active partners in trade, and all that.

In 1972, the world of political parlance seemed to me a world of lies and deceptions. Where was “truth”? The only truth I could find was in nature. Nature was all we could really rely upon. And so, the opening lines ...

Somewhere in the jungle near Dakto
Billy fell in a fire-fight
The captain said he’d never known a man--
A man so full of inner light

He was born on an Appalachian morning
His heart ran like a mountain stream
‘Though he’s been gone these many years
He still speaks to me in dream

*Speaking of the pastures of our youth
Speaking of a time we walked with truth
When our lives were dawning
We were mountain crowns of morning
Mountain crowns of morning in our youth*

Have you ever seen mountain tops lit by the light of the rising sun? I did, fairly often, as I drove west to Ohio on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The same gloriousness lights the face of every young child.

For thirty-four years, “Mountain Crowns” remained unfinished—for the simple reason that I couldn’t come up with middle and concluding verses as good as the opening verse. Then, in 2006, Jon came to the rescue of the song....

“Look,” Jon said, “I can finish it. All we do is show the parallel between Vietnam and Iraq.”

“Go for it,” I said. The result of Jon’s work was, as indicated, the bloomline recording of the song. This version is excellent in many respects. However ... I still felt the song was unfinished. The middle was not entirely there, and the conclusion still lacked a final message that would resonate with the public, that might actually cause something positive to happen. I went back to the writing desk....

The result? Here are the finished middle and final verses:

Somewhere in the sands south of Baghdad
Billy and his best friend lost their lives
His captain wrote he’d never known a man--
--A man so fearless in a fight

Billy wrote, “If I don’t come back, Jon,
Please tell Mama not to cry—
And carve my name high on Panther Mountain
So I can catch the rays of morning light”

*“An’ look out on the pastures of our youth
Seein’ all the times we walked with truth
When our lives were dawning
We were mountain crowns of morning
Mountain crowns of morning in our youth”*

One Billy's name is on a wall in D.C.
Another's on a cliff in Tennessee
How many more must give their lives for oil?—
Before the Congress sets us free

*Speaking of the pastures of our youth
Speaking of a time we walked with truth
When our lives were dawning
We were mountain crowns of morning
Mountain crowns of morning in our youth
* * **

What pleases me most about the conclusion is that it offers an actionable suggestion to the public: Motivate Congress to get the U.S. off of oil and on to alternative energy.

Let me elaborate just a bit....

*Congress subsidizes oil and gas, do it not? Yes, it does. Big time. The “oilgarchy” has been in rule for much too long. Tell Congress to subsidize, in an equally big way, the many alternative energy generation resources we have in the works and on the drawing board. (Did you know the city of Reno, Nevada, is powered by geothermal?—via Tesla turbines. We have enough geothermal under the west coast to power the world!)

*Tell Congress to establish a committee of inquiry with the job of surveying, and reporting on, all existing plans, patents and prototypes having to do with energy efficiency and alternative energy generation, including those co-opted by the military and so-called *black-ops* agencies.

Personally, I'm aware of one patented invention we could surely use in Iraq, and here at home. This device, called the Inertia Power System (IPS) draws energy from ambient heat and stores it in a magnetically suspended flywheel. According to the inventor, who's given up trying to do anything with it, the IPS could be down-sized to service a home or up-sized to service a city. Why useful in Iraq? We can never succeed in Iraq if we do not provide the Iraqis with reliable electric. The power generation and distribution system now in use in Iraq can be easily disrupted by even a small number of insurgents.

*Tell Congress to establish a division within the Department of Energy with the job of assisting inventors with the patenting and prototype development processes, which have become far too costly for most inventors to handle.

To motivate yourself to motivate Congress, find and view the DVDs called “A Crude Awakening” and “The End of Suburbia.” Read *The Long Emergency* (James Kunstler) and *The Party’s Over—Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies* (Richard Heisberg)

If we don’t break our addiction to oil within the next few years, if we don’t show the rest of the world how to do it, we’re likely to find ourselves in a war against the rest of the world!—to control the planet’s last major reserve of oil, which is in the Middle East.

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