

Buffy Sainte-Marie

"My Country 'Tis Of Thy People You're Dying"

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Now that your big eyes have finally opened
Now that you're wondering how must they feel
Meaning them that you've chased across
America's movie screens

Now that you're wondering how can it be real
That the ones you've called colorful, noble and proud
In your school propaganda, they starve in their
splendor
You've asked for my comment, I simply will render

My country 'tis of thy people you're dying

Now that the long houses breed superstition
You force us to send our toddlers away
To your schools where they're taught
To despise their traditions

You forbid them their languages, then further say
That American history really began
When Columbus set sail out of Europe
Then stress that the nation of leeches that conquered
this land
Are the biggest and bravest and boldest and best

And yet where in your history books is the tale
Of the genocide basic to this country's birth
Of the preachers who lied, how the Bill of Rights failed

How a nation of patriots returned to their earth
And where will it tell of the Liberty Bell
As it rang with a thud o'er Kinzua mud
And of brave Uncle Sam in Alaska this year

My country 'tis of thy people you're dying

Hear how the bargain was made for the West
With her shivering children in zero degrees
Blankets for your land, so the treaties attest
Oh well, blankets for land is a bargain indeed

And the blankets were those Uncle Sam had collected

From smallpox-diseased dying soldiers that day
And the tribes were wiped out and the history books
censored
A hundred years of your statesmen have felt
It's better this way

And yet a few of the conquered have somehow
survived
Their blood runs the redder though genes have paled
From the Gran Canyon's caverns to craven sad hills
The wounded, the losers, the robbed sing their tale

From Los Angeles County to upstate New York
The white nation fattens while others grow lean
Oh the tricked and evicted they know what I mean

My country 'tis of thy people you're dying

The past it just crumbled, the future just threatens
Our life blood shut up in your chemical tanks
And now here you come, bill of sale in your hands
And surprise in your eyes that we're lacking in thanks

For the blessings of civilization you've brought us
The lessons you've taught us, the ruin you've wrought
us
Oh see what our trust in America's brought us

My country 'tis of thy people you're dying

Now that the pride of the sires receives charity
Now that we're harmless and safe behind laws
Now that my life's to be known as your 'Heritage'
Now that even the graves have been robbed

Now that our own chosen way is a novelty
Hands on our hearts we salute you your victory
Choke on your blue white and scarlet hypocrisy
Pitying the blindness that you've never seen

That the eagles of war whose wings lent you glory
They were never no more than carrion crows
Pushed the wrens from their nest
Stole their eggs, changed their story

The mockingbird sings it, it's all that he knows
"Ah, what can I do?", say a powerless few
With a lump in your throat and a tear in your eye
Can't you see that their poverty's profiting you?

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