

## The Temptations

### "War"

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[Drum roll intro.]

[Temptations:] War! Hunh!  
What is it good for?  
Nothin'!

[Temptations:] War! Hunh!  
[Paul:] Hmm-hmm, hmm-mm-mm.  
[Temptations:] What is it good for?  
[Paul:] Absolutley  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.  
[Paul:] Say it again.

[Temptations:] War! Hunh!  
[Paul:] Hmm-hmm-hmm-mm, yeah.  
[Temptations:] What is it good for?  
[Paul:] Absolutley  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.

[Melvin: chants, "hup, two, three four," behind the  
verse below.]  
[Paul:] War! I despise,  
'Cause it means destruction of innocent lives,  
War means tears in thousands of mother's eyes,  
When their sons go to fight and lose their lives.

[Paul:] I said,  
[Temptations:] WAR! Hunh!  
[Paul:] Hmm-hmm, hmm-mm-mm.  
[Temptations:] What is a good for?  
[Paul:] Absolutely  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.  
[Paul:] Say it again!

[Temptations:] War! Hunh!  
[Paul:] Hmm-hmm, hmm-mm-mm.  
[Temptations:] What is a good for?  
[Paul:] Absolutely  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.

[Temptations:] War.

[Dennis:] It's nothin' but a heartbreaker,  
[Temptations:] War.  
[Dennis:] Friend only to the undertaker.

[Melvin: chants, "hup, two, three four," behind the  
verse below.]

[Dennis:] War is an enemy to all mankind.  
The thought of war blows my mind.  
War has caused unrest within the younger generation.  
Induction then destruction. Who wants to die?  
OHHHH!

[Temptations:] WAR!  
[Dennis:] Good God.  
[Temptations:] Hunh!  
[Dennis:] Hmm-mm.  
[Temptations:] What is a good for?  
[Dennis:] You tell.  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.  
[Dennis:] Um-hmm-hmm-hmm-mm.

[Temptations:] WAR! Hunh!  
[Dennis:] Good God.  
[Temptations:] What is a good for?  
[Dennis:] Absolutely  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.  
[Dennis:] Good God.

[Temptations:] War!  
[Dennis:] Is nothin' but a heartbreaker.  
[Temptations:] War!  
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[Dennis:] Friend only to the undertaker.

[Melvin: chants, "hup, two, three four," behind the  
verse below.]  
[Dennis:] War have shattered many a young man's  
dreams,  
Made him disabled, bitter and mean.  
Life is much too short and precious,  
To spend fightin' wars these days.  
War can't give life, it can only take it away!

[Dennis:] OHHH, WAR!  
[Temptations:] Hunh!  
[Dennis:] Good God. Hmm-hmm-hmm hmm-hmm.  
[Temptations:] What is a good for?  
[Dennis:] Absolutely  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.  
[Dennis:] Hmm-hmm-hmm.

[Temptations:] War!  
[Dennis:] Good God, almighty. Listen  
[Temptations:] What is a good for?  
[Dennis:] Absolutely  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.  
[Dennis:] Yeah.

[Temptations:] War!  
[Paul:] It's nothin' but a heartbreaker.  
[Temptations:] War!  
[Paul:] Friend only to the undertaker.

[Melvin: chants, "hup, two, three four," behind all the lines below.]  
[Paul:] Peace, love and understandin',  
Tell me, is there no place for them today?  
They say we must fight to keep our freedom,  
But Lord knows there's got to be a better way.

[Paul:] I said,  
[Temptations:] WAR! Hunh!  
[Paul:] Hmm-mmm-mmm-oo-yeah-yeah.  
[Temptations:] What is a good for?  
[Paul:] Absolutely  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.  
[Paul:] Say it again.

[Temptations:] War!  
[Fade. ]  
[Paul:] Yeah-ee-ay-ee-ay-ee-ay-yeah.  
[Temptations:] What is is good for?  
[Paul:] Absolutely  
[Temptations:] Nothin'.  
[Paul:] Say it again.  
[Temptations:] WAR!  
[Paul:] Nothin' but a heartbreaker...

[WAR]  
[Written by: Barrett Strong & Norman Whitfield [1]  
Performed by: The Temptations [2] -1970 [3]  
Appears on: Psychedelic Shack-1970, Emperors of  
Soul-1994, The Real Thing:  
The Tempations-1998, Pshychadelic Soul-2003, Does  
Anybody Know I'm Here?  
Vietnam Through the Eyes of Black America 1962-  
1972-2005\*, Power to the  
Motown People: Civil Rights-2007\*, Discoveries 15-  
2008, The Complete  
Collection-2008 [4] , et al. (\*Compilations of various  
artists.)]

[1] Producer Norman Whitfield, who had been reinventing the Temptations as a psychedelic soul act since 1969, had co-written, "War" a strident anti-war protest song. It was recorded for the Temps' Psychedelic Shack LP released in 1970, and in spite of growing demand for a single release, Motown didn't want the Temps to take such an aggressive stance. So Whitfield recut "War," with Edwin Starr, and the resulting version was arguably the most incendiary song Motown ever released. Starr's rendition makes the Temptations' version seem sedate.]

[2] Originally recorded by the Temptations in 1970 See [1] above. Other covers include, Edwin Starr, BB Band, Boyz II Men, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Joan Osborne and Bruce Springstein.]

[3] The Temptations' version of "War," features Paul Williams (tenor) and Dennis Edwards (tenor) on lead vocals, and is much less intense than Edwin Starr's hit version that we're more familiar with. Williams and Edwards deliver the song's anti-war, pro-peace message over a stripped-down instrumental track, with Melvin Franklin (bass) chanting a repeated boot camp-like, "hup, two, three, four," in the background during the verses. Other back up vocals are by Eddie Kendricks (tenor) and Otis Williams (baritone). Instrumentation by The Funk Brothers.]

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