

Phil Ochs, Talking Birmingham Jam

Walkin' down to Birmingham,
way down south in Dixieland.
I thought that I would stop a while
Take a vacation Southern style
Got some Southern hospitality...down there in a Southern hospital.
Well, all the signs said Welcome in,
Welcome if you're white my friend.
Come along and watch the fights
While we feed our dogs on civil rights.
We believe in segregation...Negroes in one mob...
Policemen, politicians, dogs in the other
Well I've seen travel in many ways
I've traveled in cars and old subways
But in Birmingham some people chose
To fly down the street from a fire hose.
Doin' some hard travelin'...from hydrants of plenty.
Well a pack of dogs was standin' by
I walked up to them and I said "Hi"
Well I asked one dog what they all were doin'
He walked up to me and started chewin'
It was a black dog...seems everybody down there is prejudiced.
Well I said there must be some men around
There can't be only you dogs in town
They said "Sure we have old Bull Conner
There he goes, walkin' yonder
Throwin' some raw meat to the mayor...feedin' bones to the City Council"
Well I said "there's still something missing here,
You must have a governor somewhere."
Sure, he's doin' his duty, he ain't no fool
He's blocking out kids from our schools
Standin' in the doorway...crackin' jokes...gettin' re-elected.
So, I asked em' how they spend their time
With segregation on their mind.
They said if you don't like to live this way
Get outta here, go back to the U.S.A.
Live with all them Russians...New York agitations...yeah.
Some say they've passed their darkest hour
Those moderates are back in power.
But listen close with open ears
They'll help us out in a couple a hundred years.
But don't push 'em...whatever you do...
or else you get those extremists back in.
You see Alabama is a sovereign state
With sovereign dogs and sovereign hate
They stand for the Bible, for the Constitution
They stand against Communist revolution.
They say: "It's pinkos like you that freed the slaves."