

To the GIs that Served in Vietnam

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You brought guns to church.
They were guarded while you prayed.
Beside the "Amen Corner,"
They were safely locked away.

With sweat, you built an orphanage,
In church, you sang hymns,
In a tent, you treated children,
Your doctors ministered to them.

When in '68 my home was hit by rocket fire,
Your MP's soon were there,
Checking we were not harmed,
As a child, I felt you cared.

I was proud to see your Air Bases,
With their flying U.S. flags,
And shocked at "Big D" for Dallas,
A painted rock in the Da-Nang Hue pass.

The pounding thunder of your "hellies,"
Your striking B52's on bombing runs,
Splitting the sky with the color of lightning,
The retreating Viet Cong were out-gunned.

Later, tarmac-runway coffins met my eyesight,
Waiting for returning state-side flights,
For beside Vietnam's brave Red and Yellow-
Lay the gallant Stars and Stripes.

Red, yellow, white, and black soldiers,
With drawls from different states,
United brothers you bled one color,
Coming home, you met with hate.

What shame our country carries,
Betraying the drafted, the country turned,
"Hell no, we won't go" became the heroes,
While our brothers still screamed and burned.

Protesting citizens spit and rioted loudly,
Nixon's "Peace with Honor," a lie,
Debarking home, you walked a gauntlet,
Home became Hell, personified.

Now an adult, I am torn asunder,
Not knowing how to vote,
For the politician that sends you over oceans,
Or the politician that wants you home.