

HURRAH!
Ode to Philip

(c) 1991, by John Fox, MSgt, USAF (Ret)

They say the war is over, they say the time is now. They
say we all can come back home,
We say we don't know how.
We sat so long in darkness, afraid to see the sun.
So many times back in the past the promise came undone.

They say we all are heroes . . . the vets of Vietnam.
But I don't think they understand just what we have become.
So many lies and alibi's professed by those who stayed behind in power
So long as they looked down their nose . . . that long we were betrayed.

And what about our comrades who didn't quite survive?
They couldn't take the guilt and shame; they couldn't stay alive. Some
are living yet in solitude, still troubled and alone.
They came back to the USA, but never made it home.

Yeah, the war is finally over, and we can hold our heads up high.
America has forgiven us, and it doesn't matter why.
The blessing is upon us, and the curse is gone at last.
We're celebrated heroes now, but the time for that has passed.

Just let us be remembered in the statues and the songs,
As those who followed down the road of many rights and wrongs.
Like soldiers in those other-wars we fought the gallant fight,
But came back home to ridicule and had to stay the night.

John Fox
May/1991

EPILOGUE

PHILLIP

In light of somewhat recent (2-3 years now) realization by the Public at-large that we are no longer monsters, this poem is a reminder that for many it comes too late. It almost seems that our vindication is also a way for the public to forgive themselves; please forgive my bitterness but some of them couldn't wait that long. I tried to have this published in several other veterans publications. I decided that perhaps it was best that I stick with my own . . . the people I fought beside.

Philip was a victim of the, "after war." He was a Marine that marched down the long, lonely road, withdrawing daily from his family and friends. He finally ended it on an S curve in a too-fast sport car, a casualty of a lack of public support.

*John W. Fox, MSGT., USAF (Ret)
31st SPS Tuy Hoa 10/68-7/70
377th SPS Tan Son Nhut 12/70-3/71
483rd SPS Cam Ranh Bay 4/71-5/71
90 SOS (483rd ABGp) Nha Trang 5/71-10/71*