When this Pandemic is Over

TEN MORE SONGS TO SING

The Political Songster was first published by Birmingham Songwriter John Freeth in 1793

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It seems to me that this is a time for singing and
that we need songs. Songs that provoke and stimulate,
Songs that are tough, complex, violent. Songs that
destroy the verbal mystifications of clean bombs,
pre-emptive strikes, Western democracy, the
underdeveloped countries, law and order, pragmatism,
free enterprise, freedom of expression and the free
world. Songs. Not soothing sounds, not background
sounds. For this is a time for singing.

Leon Rosselson
Keep them Coming

Songs give us heart. Songs give us strength. Sing for the nurses, sing for our NHS. Sing and shout for a better tomorrow and no going back to an unequal world that is on its knees.

Ten more songs for you to sing at on-line sessions and meetings.

SEND US YOUR NEW SONGS so that the collection can grow and your songs can be heard.

Graham Langley

If you want to do a bit of a reading during your session this is a bit of Alice through the Looking Glass apropos business as usual

‘Now! Now!’ cried the Queen. ‘Faster! Faster!’ And they went so fast that at last they seemed to skim through the air, hardly touching the ground with their feet, till suddenly, just as Alice was getting quite exhausted, they stopped, and she found herself sitting on the ground, breathless and giddy.

The Queen propped her up against a tree, and said kindly, ‘You may rest a little now.’

Alice looked round her in great surprise. ‘Why, I do believe we’ve been under this tree the whole time! Everything’s just as it was!’

‘Of course it is,’ said the Queen, ‘what would you have it?’

‘Well, in our country,’ said Alice, still panting a little, ‘you’d generally get to somewhere else—if you ran very fast for a long time, as we’ve been doing.’

‘A slow sort of country!’ said the Queen. ‘Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!’
When this pandemic is over
No more nursing care for me
The Government has lied and failed to
Order stocks of PPE
No more carers in the care homes
No more nurses left to leave
I can’t kiss my friends and family
How I’ll miss them, how we’ll grieve

When this pandemic is over
Oh how happy they will be
They will tell us they’re the heroes
Try to make us all believe
That under-funding and bad planning
Is nowt to do with all the deaths
Blame will fall upon the poor folk
We killed each other with our breath

When will everyone get angry?
Call our leaders to account?
Do you think their clapping obscene
As we watch the death toll mount?
No-one witnessing their passing
No-one standing round the grave
Forty thousand’s just a number
Many of whom we should have saved

When this pandemic is over
No more Tory lies for me
Fully funded jobs and services
Oh how happy we shall be
What would we do with no NHS
We’d all be truly in a mess
They’re braver than me I must confess when they’re
Working night and morning

Nelson was a National hero
Lady Hamilton thought him a dear-O
Rather have the NHS here though
Working night and morning

Hillary climbed up Everest high
And he was praised up to the sky
Praise to our nurses standing by and
Working night and morning

To the Antarctic Scott did go
He braved the ice and fought the snow
More bravery in ICU I know, they’re
Working night and morning

Francis Drake fought the Spanish Armada
Lizzie told him he should guard her
Fighting the virus is much harder
Working night and morning

Nurses are wonderful MPs say
They’re in the frontline every day
But they didn’t vote them a raise in pay (though they’re)
Working night and morning

Those workers are doing so brilliantly
But there’s one thing occurs to me
Wouldn’t they be safer with some PPE when they’re
Working night and morning?
On the streets of Glasgow, Willy sleeps on the floor

The city is deserted, there’s no offerings for the poor

Of course I’m scared, I’m very scared, Willy says to his mate

No home or roof above our heads, how do we isolate?

No government relief, despite the media din

The homeless are forgotten thrown in the garbage bin

The Forgotten
Dave Rogers

Dave sings "The Forgotten" on David Rovics Pandemic Open Mic Mondays #2. His appearance starts 36 minutes into https://www.twitch.tv/videos/611098097
On the streets of Glasgow, Willy sleeps on the floor
The city is deserted, there’s no offerings for the poor
Of course, I’m scared, I’m very scared, Willy says to his mate
No home or roof above our heads, how do we isolate?

No government relief, despite the media din
The homeless are forgotten, thrown in the garbage bin

Locked away in Holloway, Sharifa finds no peace
One more pregnant woman, pleading for release
The ministry of justice confirms she is high risk
But she’s just another convict, who cares if she gets sick?

No government relief, despite the media din
Prisoners forgotten, lost in the viral spin

My life will not be saved, so said young Lucy Watts
The rules of this pandemic means she’ll be left to rot
The frail, the sick, the challenged are low on the viral queue
No right to decent health care or a ventilator crew

No government relief, despite the media din
Disabled folk forgotten, lives tossed into the wind

Café reservations were just not going right
The next thing Eric knew, it was all gone overnight
Jobs are disappearing, in Italy, France, and Spain
One more part-time worker, bottom of the chain

No government relief, despite the media din
The workers are forgotten—no union to step in

Flags, they fly in Liverpool for Elizabeth Glanister
She risked her life for others, so said the minister
Without frontline protection, three more nurses fall
Victims of a system that never was meant for all

No government relief, despite the media din,
Even heroes are forgotten – still no tests are in

Barbara lived a long life, so the story goes
Just another care home death, no one needs to know
She was asked to sign the order, do not resuscitate
Four thousand faceless figures, buried by the state

No government relief, despite the media din
The elderly forgotten, the mask is wearing thin

Whose lives are remembered? Whose lives are forgot?
Whose work is essential? Whose work will be lost?
Unless you’re rich and powerful, they’ll never see your face
You don’t count for nothing, if you’re outside the marketplace

No government relief, despite the media din
When the people are forgotten, the fightback must begin
Poverty Knock

Janet Wood

Tune from Tom Daniel, a Yorkshire weaver, collected by A E Green in 1965

Poverty poverty knock, my loom is a saying all day

Poverty poverty knock, gaffer’s too skinny to pay

Poverty poverty knock, keeping one eye on the clock

I know I can gut-tle when I hear my shuttle go poverty poverty knock

One hundred years and a score This song echoes from the mill floor

From factory workers to dri-vers and ser-vers The rich are still fleec-ing the poor
People living in more deprived areas of England and Wales are more likely to die with coronavirus than those in more affluent places, new figures suggest.

Office for National Statistics analysis shows there were 55 deaths for every 100,000 people in the poorest parts of England, compared with 25 in the wealthiest areas.

Poverty poverty knock, my loom is a saying all day
Poverty poverty knock, gaffer’s too skinny to pay
Poverty poverty knock, keeping one eye on the clock
I know I can guttle when I hear my shuttle
go poverty poverty knock

One hundred years and a score
This song echoes from the mill floor
From factory workers to drivers and servers
The rich are still fleecing the poor

Personal needs are a crime
When slaving for Amazon Prime
Working full throttle I’ll pee in a bottle
’Cos loo breaks are deemed idle time

Nine seconds to process a pack
It’s taking its toll on my back
I’m fighting off sleep, work all day on the cheap, think I’m having a panic attack

Three hundred items an hour
The joys of employment gone sour
Force of the market’s, impossible targets
The clock and the boss hold the power

So poverty, poverty knocks, its sound can be heard down the years
Poverty, poverty knocks, playing on family fears
Poverty, poverty knocks, still keeping an eye on the clock
It stalks in the dark before making its mark
Singing poverty, poverty knock
THE NEWS FROM NECKER ISLAND

Steve White

The news from Necker Island isn't good
Mr Branson's still not in a very good mood
In this time of global crisis
And plummeting global airline prices
He wants to spend our money, not his own
Mr Branson really doesn't want to pay
But he's the seventh richest person in the UK

The news from Necker Island isn't good
Mr Branson thinks he's been misunderstood
He wants to place his staff on furlough
But pay their wages with our dough
He wants to spend our money, not his own

Mr Branson really doesn't want to pay
But he's the seventh richest person in the UK

The news from Necker Island isn't good
It's a lovely place to visit if you could
It's a place to wash your conscience clean
It's a place with a zero-tax regime
It's the place that Branson's money calls his home

Mr Branson really doesn't want to pay
But he's the seventh richest person in the UK

It's the place that Branson’s tax-free money
Calls home
Boris and his blathering has put us all at harm
When he talked of herd immunity it set off the alarms
They made no preparations as the virus headed west
And now we drop like flies whilst Boris takes a rest

Chorus
Smash the rich and ruling classes
With direct actions by the masses
Women men and children all united black and white
An equal chance an equal share it’s the only reason to fight

The claptrap out of Downing Street, for business we must care
The impact of austerity, was clearly everywhere
From claptrap to a handclap, his hypocrisy makes you sick
But then, what more would you expect from that blonde Tory prick

Chorus

The packages he puts in place are riddled full of holes
With workers being bullied if their labour they withhold
But in this time of crisis, the rich hold out the plate
Whilst the hordes of low paid workers bravely step up to the plate

Chorus

It’s the nurses, cleaners, binmen, warehouse workers, drivers too
That are fighting on the frontline, they’re the ones to pull us through
And deep in our communities, we rise to organise
Caring for each other, united saving lives

Chorus

So when we’ve beat corona, and the crisis it has gone
We’ll have a celebration, and some lessons to dwell on
We know whose work we value, we know which side we’re on
And that life will be much better when those rich parasites are gone

Chorus
As I walked through the broken city
I saw tall towers gleaming in the sun
Where priests of Mammon hide their faces
And media gurus and their henchmen run
I saw the homeless in countless doorways
Human cast offs on a wealthy street
I heard the murmur of voices rising
The distant thunder of marching feet
I saw the sick, the maimed, the injured
In endless queues they wait for care
I saw the healers tired and weary
While rich men tell them: “No cash to spare”
Year on year they stole and plundered
Public service up for sale
Thatcher’s dogma the only answer
Cruel austerity must prevail
Chorus
You poor take courage, you rich take a warning
The tide is turning, our time will come
We walk with hope for new days a-dawning
Seize the day, turn to the sun

Now the virus sweeps the nation
I see the healers fight for life
I hear the hollow media chorus
“Health care heroes”, now they cry
But who spoke out on hospital shutdowns
Who spoke out when they privatised
Who spoke out for heroes shackled
By closures, cuts and PFI

“No cash”, they said, “the purse is empty
There is no magic money tree”
Empty tears for the poor discarded
Only crumbs to meet their needs
But now the lockdown city falters
The rich man’s market must be freed
Now there’s billions for their system
Now they find the money tree

We won’t go back to greed and profit
We will take back the public sphere
Cash for schools, for health, for people
Reclaim the city, our time is here
Rise like lions out of slumber
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Rise like lions in unvanquished number
Ye are many, they are few

Listen to Paul Foot on Shelley and Revolution
youtu.be/sUFy3GlatL4
When times are hard they dock our wages,
The bosses swear they’re not to blame,
They’ve ample food laid on their tables,
But that’s always been the same.

Chorus: Our soldiers fire on their own people,
Josh Heapy dying where he stood,
Cry shame for Peterloo and Newport,
Burslem cobbles red with blood.

Though Chartists have their own agenda,
We’re grateful for their help today.
But ‘Votes for All!’ is just a pipedream;
We march because they’ve cut our pay.

We’re miners, potters, textile makers,
‘A living wage!’ our battle cry.
It’s bread we want not revolution;
All the rest’s a downright lie.

Their lot control what’s in the ‘papers,
Support the bosses, not the poor,
They call us violent agitators,
But we’re not out to break the law.

One man is killed, scores more are wounded,
British troops, beyond the pale.
Fifty-four men get transported,
Three times more locked up in gaol.
Grain Langley

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They
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me
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In
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day
I’ve
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to
have
my
say

CHORUS
But
here’s
a
funny
thing
The
pencil
was
tied
to
a
string

Every
five
years
as
if
by
rote
They
give
me
the
right
to
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In
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polling
booth
on
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say

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of
fears
Just
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in
every
five
years
As
power
goes
it
felt
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small
In
fact
it
was
no
power
at
all

With
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one
cross
I
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All
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things
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want
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And
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A
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Will
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it
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loss
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made
Food
for
all.
The
planet
saved.

The
housing
crisis
could
disappear
A
New
Green
Deal
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so
near
Full
employment,
better
pay
Billionaires
would
have
had
their
day

Schools
would
be
places
of
education
Hunger
disappear
across
the
nation
Nuclear
weapons
could
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disarmed
And
new
jobs
made
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harm

I
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To
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Then
in
my
head
I
heard
a
PING
I
took
my
knife
and
cut
the
bloody
string

FINAL
CHORUS

Now
here’s
a
funny
thing
I’ve
got
the
pencil
and
the
string
Well my story's nothing special, it's much the same as yours
I might be twenty-seven or I might be sixty-four
You might be five weeks early or you might be ninety-five
But it won't be hope and glory that's keeping you alive
Oh yes, that's the ballad of the NHS
The ballad of the NHS

Well a sister from the NHS she held my mother's hand
The day I took my first breath, free at the point of demand
And when I had the measles when I bashed my knee
This doctor from the NHS she fixed my up for free
Oh yes, that's the ballad of the NHS
The ballad of the NHS

And though the pound devalues and up the Beatles break
But we knew that we could Carry On with matron Hattie Jacques
And it might just be a little prick to you but not to me
And when you're feeling Tom & Dick they treat you equally
Oh yes, that's the ballad of the NHS
The ballad of the NHS

Well you might be hoity-toity or you might be common as muck
But it shouldn't depend on the money you've got,
it shouldn't depend on your luck
Because everybody's body gets sick and tired and stressed
So everybody's body deserves the very best
Oh yes, that's the ballad of the NHS
The ballad of the NHS
So here’s to all the nurses, all the paramedic crews
The midwives, doctors, porters, all those cooks and cleaners too
And I’d like to see celebrities and politicians do
A day’s work half as useful and as low paid you do
Oh yes, that’s the ballad of the NHS
The ballad of the NHS

And despite the years of PFI and then austerity
And “Some of you will have to die for herd immunity”
Well you might be five weeks early or you might be ninety-five
But it won’t be “clap for Boris” that’s keeping you alive
Oh yes, that’s the ballad of the NHS
The ballad of the NHS

So let’s give Matt Hancock a trolley and no PPE
And then push it round the wards all day long
Like my next door neighbour John does for a living
Go on Matt, show us how it’s done
Oh yes, that’s the ballad of the NHS
The ballad of the NHS

Scumbag jailed for stealing PPE
Daily Express
They got money but they never worked a railway line
They got money but they never drove a bus
They got money but they never worked a hospital
They got money but all of that was us

So if you feel intimidated by a higher power
Just stop what you’re doing and right within the hour
You’ll see the power that we got
Is we can make the world stop

We can make the world stop and start again
We can make the world stop
We can make the world stop and start again

They make laws but their laws have never dug for coal
They make laws but have never cleaned a school
They make laws but their laws have never worked the land
They make laws but hey that was me and you

So if you feel intimidated by a higher power
Just stop what you’re doing and right within the hour
You’ll see the power that we got
Is we can make the world stop

We can make the world stop and start again
We can make the world stop
We can make the world stop and start again
We bloody well should
We bloody well should
We bloody well should

Every power that they hold
Every law or block of gold
Every policeman, every jail
Is guaranteed to fail
Everything that they demand
Is a powerless command
Unless we obey
Do what they say
But if we say no way

Is we can make the world stop
We can make the world stop and start again
We can make the world stop
We can make the world stop and start again

“We have it in our power to begin the world over again.”
Thomas Paine (Common Sense)