## Patriot Child

"Alienated", his elders exclaim aghast Peers knowingly note, "radicalized" They both speak of the same disturbed state Elders and peers both speak of the patriot child Perhaps you wonder how this sad state This dual status came to pass I will tell you a story and true The story of the patriot child Young, impressionable and in his school Taught to love America, Promised Land Just, free, democratic, brave, and humane Song of songs, words sung into his ears Teachers "turned him on" to America Land of the free and home of the brave Our heritage proudly laid before Eyes wide and sparkling in their wonder American independence claimed Feast your trusting eyes on its beauty The Constitution of America

Sacred, inviolable and true In their eagerness to captivate Parading before rapt attention Mortal men or gods, he knew not which Washington, Jefferson and Paine too When the loving task was done and over Their objective accomplished in full The patriot child was acclaimed Behold, see him glow with pride and love As he matured he never lost, not once Love for America, true believer Devouring volume upon volume Washington, Jefferson and Paine too Before coming of age, he noted Something was out of place, improper Hallowed principles, sacred ideals His school and teachers seemed exempt The image held and did not waver Well-executed plans like great art Never fall easily to time or strain

He left school to embrace America An old whore, ragged from her misuse Cracked, wrinkled hands slapped his face And, the world laughed at his disgrace Fool, fool don't you know you've been had America, America where is your face For freedom he inherits racism For justice he is shown poverty And, democracy courts dictators America, sweet land of liberty Unveiled, at long last, her hidden face Liberty eroded by conscription For the constitution, "law and order" In desperation, seeking lost love Stumbling in alleys of brooding hate Strange faces peer from dark recesses Senators, congressmen and presidents too Once he heard a song that asked "America, America where are you

Now that your sons and your daughters

Need you so?"

Perhaps you have heard it

He understands; why some are puzzled

America they answer in chorus

Why, America has been here all along

They don't understand the song

All good things, it is said, finally end

Prideful love becomes cynical disdain

And, that is the full story and true

The story of the patriot child.