

## **Political Rock II**

The “Political Rock” album in the D.L. Stieg Catalog is a collection of 14 songs, the lyrics for several of which are not really political at all in nature, and the lyrics for a few more of which are only indirectly political (the album was named after the song of the same name). By comparison, the lyrics for practically every song on the “Political Rock II” album are decidedly political in nature. The lyrics range between deadly serious (“Fate” and “Who Will Be There”) and semi-comical (“That Great Divide” and “Whose Country Is This Anyway”), with many moods and persuasions in between. In writing the lyrics, I tried to be as impartial and bi-partisan as possible, but I am by no means ignorant of political matters, and I have strong and well-considered views on a variety of political subjects. That said, I would probably not object if someone liked one of the songs, but wanted to make some changes or additions to the lyrics so as to make them more an expression of their own political point of view (hopefully not to the extent of standing my original meaning entirely on its head). One final note on the lyrics: “Fonder Memories” is subtitled “A Song To My Country”, and is my personal lament about various ways in which the America I grew up in has changed, especially in recent years.

For understandable reasons in light of the above, “Fonder Memories” is the only song on the “Political Rock II” album with a solo vocal. 8 songs employ a solo vocal/vocal duet scheme, and the other 3 employ a solo vocal/3-part vocal scheme. Every song on this album features a guitar duet, with the duets being fashioned in four different ways, For 3 songs, the guitars play the exact same chord fingerings, but in contrasting styles of play. For 4 other songs, the duet is made by using a capo on one of the guitars, thus allowing for contrasting chord shapes in the two guitar arrangements. For 1 other song, D standard tuning (every string tuned two half-steps lower) is used for one of the guitar

arrangements, which similarly results in contrasting chord shapes. For the other 4 songs, the guitar duet is made by using an alternate tuning for one of the arrangements, but each time in a rather counterintuitive way:

“Gerrymandering...” is played in open G tuning in the key of D; “Posing and Posturing” is played in low D tuning in the key of F; “The Distance Between Us” is played in D pedal tuning in the key of G; and “We Are America” is played in open D tuning in the key of E.

I continued my experimentation with unusual meters, begun on the “Songs in Alternate Tunings” album, by likewise including two songs on the “Political Rock II” album (“Fate” and “Gerrymandering...”) that have uncommon irregular meters (7 and 5 respectively). A third song on the “Political Rock II” album (“That Great Divide”) employs an unusual meter that can really only be described as 18, consisting of a straight 6 meter (6/4 rather than 6/8), but with ternary division of the beat. This meter would be expressed in staff notation with the time signature 18/8. One final note: the song “Political Babble” is set to the same guitar music (actually the exact same recording tracks) as the song “Political Rock” from the “Political Rock” album in the D.L. Stieg Catalog. As one would expect, the two songs go together well, but I’m not sure if I’ll ever release the recording I made of the two songs together, because I suspect it would sound rather confusing to mostly everyone besides me.