Big Muddy

Big Muddy
(Pete Seeger)

It was back in nineteen forty two,
I was part of a good platoon.
We were on maneuvers in a-Loozianna,
One night by the light of the moon.
The captain told us to ford a river,
And that's how it all begun.
We were knee deep in the Big Muddy,
But the big fool said to move on.

The sergeant said, "Sir, are you sure,
This is the best way back to the base?"
"Sergeant, go on; I once forded this river
Just a mile above this place
It'll be a little soggy but just keep slogging.
We'll soon be on dry ground."
We were waist deep in the Big Muddy
And the big fool said to push on.

The sergeant said, "With all this equipment
No man'll be able to swim."
"Sergeant, don't be a nervous nellie."
The Captain said to him.
"All we need is a little determination;
Men, follow me, I'll lead on."
We were neck deep in the Big Muddy
And the big fool said to push on.

All of a sudden, the moon clouded over,
We heard a gurgling cry.
A few seconds later, the captain's helmet
Was all that floated by.
The sergeant said, "Turn around men,
I'm in charge from now on."
And we just made it out of the Big Muddy
With the Captain dead and gone.

We stripped and dived and found his body
Stuck in the old quicksand.
I guess he didn't know that the water was deeper
Than the place he'd once before been.

Another stream had joined the Big Muddy
Just a half mile from where we'd gone.
We'd been lucky to escape from the Big Muddy
When the damn fool said to push on.

Well, maybe you'd rather not draw any moral;
I'll leave that to yourself
Maybe you're still walking and you're still talking
And you'd like to keep your health.
But every time I read the papers
That old feeling comes on:
Waist deep in the Big Muddy and the
Big Fool says to push on.

Waist deep in the Big Muddy
And the Big Fool says to push on
Waist deep in the Big Muddy
And the Big Fool says to push on
Waist deep! Neck deep!
Soon even a tall man'll be over his head
Waist deep in the BIG MUDDY!
AND THE BIG FOOL SAYS TO PUSH ON!

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Note: The song was certainly written with a WW II event in mind. However, while not allegorical, relevance to Vietnam was not lost on Seeger. Mark Twain quote on the evils of political war. AJS
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