Tchepone

Tchepone
(Toby Hughes)

I was hangin' round ops just a-spendin' my time
Off of the schedule and not earnin' a dime
When a colonel comes up and he says, "I suppose
You fly a fighter by the cut of your clothes."

"You got me right, and a good one," I say,
"Do you happen to have me a target today?"
He says," Yes I do, and a real easy one,
No sweat, my boy, it's an old-time milk run."

I gets all excited and I asks where it's at,
He gives me a wink and a tip of his hat.
"It's three-fifty miles to the northwest of home,
A small peaceful hamlet that's known as Tchepone."

Oh, I sure love Tchepone.

I go gets my G-suit and straps on my gun
Helmet and gloves, out the door on the run.
Fire up my Phantom and take to the air,
Tubes tucked in tight, we haven't a care.

In forty-five minutes we're over the town,
Twenty-eight thousand and screaming on down.
Arm up the switches and dial in the mill,
Rack up the wings and roll in for the kill.

We feel a bit sorry for folks down below
Of destruction that's coming, they surely don't know.
The thought passes quickly, we know war is on
Downward we scream for peaceful Tchepone.

Unsuspecting, peaceful Tchepone.

Release altitude and the pipper's not right
I'll trim 'er a little to lay 'em in tight.
Tickle them beauties at two-point-five grand,
Starting my pull when it all hits the fan.

A black puff in front and then two on the right

Then six or eight more, and I suck it in tight.
Small-arms and tracers and heavy ack-ack
It's scattered to broken with all kinds of flak.

I jink hard to right and head up to the blue,
My wing man says, "Lead! They're shooting at you!"
"No bull!" I cry as I point her for home,
Still comes the fire from the town of Tchepone.

Dirty, deadly Tchepone.

I make it on home with six holes in my bird
With the colonel that sent me I'd sure like a word.
But he's nowhere about, though I look near and far,
He's gone back to Saigon to help run the war.

Well I've been in this country for many a day
And I've seen the things they are throwin' my way.
I know there are places I don't like to go
Down in the Delta and in Tally-ho

But I'll bet all my flight pay the jock ain't been born
Who can keep all his cool when he's over Tchepone.

Oh, don't go to Tchepone.

To the tune of Strawberry Roan
From recording The Longest Year

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