



Songs of hope  
for dark times

## Description

# Tragic events have often inspired songwriters

By Byron Toben

March 24, 2022

I am indebted to Westmounter **Richard Orlando** who reminded me of a poem by **Berthold Brecht** which went:

In the dark times  
Will there also be singing?  
Yes, there will also be singing  
About the dark times.

To this, he attached a [video](#) of a little girl in bombed-out Ukraine singing a refrain from the musical film *Frozen*.

This set me to thinking, what examples are there of popular songs echoing this theme. Three immediately came to mind. After scanning about 20 other candidates on the internet, I still favour my original three. Two were popularized in 1942 by **Vera Lynn**. They were *The White Cliffs of Dover* and *We'll Meet Again*. I covered Vera and those two songs in my article [We'll Meet Again brings back VE-Day](#)

The other, from the 1945 **Rogers and Hammerstein** musical hit *Carousel*, is *You'll Never Walk Alone*. Here is a version from **Gerry and the Pacemakers**:

I also considered **Irving Berlin's** *Always*, here sung by **Phil Collins**.

Both Vera Lynn and **Eric Bentley** (who translated Brecht into English) died at 103. Irving Berlin lasted until 101. Brecht passed at only 58. I don't know if there is a moral in this factual like, do the song, don't just observe it, but



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anyway, viewers are encouraged to nominate their own candidates for songs during dark times... or write their own.

Feature image: Ukrainian refugees, [manhhai](#) via [StockPholio.net](#)

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**Byron Toben**, a past president of The Montreal Press Club, has been WestmountMag.ca's theatre reviewer since July 2015. Previously, he wrote for since terminated web sites Rover Arts and Charlebois Post, print weekly The Downtowner and print monthly The Senior Times. He also is an expert consultant on U.S. work permits for Canadians.

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### Category

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### Date Created

March 2022