

Althea Romeo-Mark

REVOLUTION AND REGGAE (LIBERIAN COUP 1985)



Daylight is changing guard with night
and the radio blares "*Get up, stand up*
Stand up for your rights"
No national anthem.

Suspicion is soon confirmed
a monotone voice interrupts
the laid back reggae tract
"The people's Revolutionary Party
has taken over the government
stay calm, stay indoors."
"*Get up, stand up*
stand up for your rights."

Bob Marley doesn't know
His song has been hijacked
And drummed into heads
Knees weak from fear
Do not allow us to stand up.

We gather round a kitchen table
uneasy because of the rat-tat-tat of gun fire
and the singing of drunk "patriots"
prematurely celebrating the coup d'état
celebrating the climb of tribesmen to power
counting on nepotism to rise in stature
to climb the social ladder.

We pray to ride out the storm

'cause a revolution like a hurricane can
change direction, leave death and destruction
in its path as it fights to stay alive.

We switch the radio off
some standing up for their rights
are taking men away
to unknown destinations
despite the pleas of wives and children.

The change brings death for some
Slaughtered by men putting them in their places
Showing who is the boss, exercising their rights
In the name of destiny and "*Get up stand up,
Stand up for your rights,*" newfound anthem
Hostage of a nebulous cause.

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