

Revolutionary Tea Party

All poems/lyrics by Lillian Allen
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I FIGHT BACK - 4:20

ITT ALCAN KAISER

Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce
these are privileged names in my Country
but I AM ILLEGAL HERE
My children scream
my grandmother is dying
I came to Canada
and found the doors
of opportunities well guarded
I scrub floors
serve backra's meals on time
spend two days working in one
and twelve in a week
Here I am in Canada
bringing up someone else's child
while someone else and me in absentee
bring up my own
AND I FIGHT BACK
And constantly they ask
"Oh beautiful tropical beach
with coconut tree and rum
why did you leave there
why on earth did you come?"
AND I SAY:
for the same reasons
your mothers cam
I FIGHT BACK
They label me
Immigrant, Law-breaker, Illegal, Minimum
Wager
ah no, not Mother, not Worker, not
Fighter I FIGHT BACK
Like my Sisters before me
I FIGHT BACK

NELLIE BELLIE SWELLY: 4:19

Nellie was thirteen
Don't care 'bout no fellow
Growing in the garden
Among the wild flower
She momma, she dig an' she plant
Nurtured her sod
Tend her rose bush
Tend her rose bush
In the garden pod.
Lush leap the garden fence
Pluck the rose bud
Bruk it in the stem
Oh no please no
was no self defence
Oh no please no
without pretence
offered no defence
to a little, little girl
called Nellie.
Nellie couldn't understand
Mr. Thompson's hood
So harsh, so wrong
in such an offense
Nellie plead Nellie begged
Nellie plead Nellie begged
But Mr. Thompson's hood
Went right through her legs.
Knowing eyes blamed her.
Pst, pst, pst, pst, pst, pst
Nellie disappeared from sight
And the news spread wide
As the months went by
Pst, pst, pst, pst, Nellie belly swelly
Nellie belly swelly, Nellie belly swelly
Children skipped to Nellie's shame
Nellie belly swelly, Nellie belly swelly
Nellie belly swelly, Nellie belly swelly

Later

Nettie returned from the night
She gave up her dolls
and the rose bush died
Nellie momma cried, Nellie momma
cried
Little Nellie no more child again.
No sentence was passed
on this menacing ass
who plundered Nellie's childhood.
In her little tiny heart
Nellie understood war
She mustered an army within her
strengthen her defence
and mine the garden fence
No band made a roll
The skies didn't part
for this new dawn.
In fact, nothing heralded it
When this feminist was born
Nellie.

RIDDIM AN' HARDTIMES: 4:56

An' him chucks on some riddim
an' yu hear him say
riddim an' hardtimes
riddim an' hardtimes
Music a prance
Dance ina head
Drumbeat a roll
Hot like lead
Mojah Rasta gone dread
Natt up natt up Irie Red
Riddim a pounce wid a purpose
Truths an' Rights
Mek mi hear yu
Drum
Drum Drum
Drum beat
Heart beat

Pulse beat
Drum
Roots wid a Reggae resistance
Riddim
Noh dub them call it
An' him chucks on some riddim
an' yu hear him say
Riddim an' Hardtimes
Riddim an' Hardtimes
Dem pounce out the music
crav out the sounds
Hard hard hard like lead
An it bus im in im belly
an a Albert Johnson
Albert Johnson dead dead
But this ya country hard eh?
And wey wi come ya fa?
Wi come here fi better
Dream times
Jah signs
Drum beat
heart beat
Pluse beat
drum beat
Riddim an' hardtimes
riddim an' hardtimes
Riddim an' hard
hard
hard

REVOLUTIONARY TEA PARTY: 5:34

You who know what the past has been
You who work in the present tense
You who see through to the future
Come mek wi work together
Come sit here with me

an mek wi drink tea
a mek wi talk
a mek wi analyse
You who've been burned by vanguardism
Come mek wi give you little nurturing
come sit awhile
A mek wi drink tea
A mek wi talk
A mek wi strategise
You who believe in the future
and in transforming by your labour
Let the future be in good favour
We who create the wealth of the world
and only get scrapings from them in control
When wi siddown and look at the system
Check out the way that things have been
Wi haffi say, wi haffi say
It rank how the system stay
Wi haffi say, wi haffi say
the system in a really bad way
A way it a defend
You who see for peace a future
You who understand the past
You who create with yu sweat from the heart
Let's talk. Let's make art. Let's love. Dance
Rebel in the streets if that's the beat
Rebel in the streets if that's the beat
Demonstrate protest chant
You who see for us a future
come sit here with we
Mek wi drink tea
Let's talk
Mek wi analyse
Mek wi strategise
Mek we work together

RUB A DUB STYLE INNA

REGENT PARK 5:58

Monday morning broke
the news of a robbery
Pam mind went
couldn't hold the load
dem took her to the station
in a paddy wagon
screaming
her Johnny got a gun
from an ex-policeman
Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, eh ya.
A wey dis ya society a do to wi sons?
Rub a dub style
Inna Regent Park
Mon a dub it inna dance
Inna Regent Park
Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, eh ya.
"Forget yu troubles an dance"*
Forget yu bills dem an irie up yusef
Forget yu dreams gathering
dust on the shelves
DJ rapper hear im chant
pumps a musical tract
for im platform
Cut it wild, sey de system vile
dubbing it inna dance
Frustration pile
Inna different style
Inna Regent Park
Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, eh ya.
Could have been a gun
but's a mike in his hand
Could have been a gun
spilling out the lines
but is a mike
is a mike
Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, eh ya.
Riddim line vessel im ache

from im heart outside
Culture carry im past
an steady im mind
Man take a draw and feeling time
Words cut harsh and try to find
explanations for the sufferings of the times
Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, eh ya.
"Forget yu troubles an dance"*
Forget yu bills dem an irie up yuself.
Forget yu dreams gathering dust, dust dust
Is a long time we sweating here
Is a long time we waiting here
to join society's rites
Is a long time we beating down yu door
Is a long time since wi make the trip
'cross the Atlantic
On the slave ship ship ship
Is a long long time wi knocking
An everytime yu slam the door
sey no job discrimination injustice
a fell the whip lick
An' its the same boat
 the same boat
 the same boat
Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, eh ya.
DJ chant out, cutting it wild
Say man hafti dub it inna different style
When doors close down on society's
rites
Windows will prey open
In the middle of the night
dashed hopes run wild
in the middle of the night
Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, Oh Lawd, eh ya.
* Bob Marley

THE SUBVERSIVES 4:51

You've abstracted from me
an abstraction of your likeness
piled bouquets of approval at my feet
You made me a uniform
a place in line
stick me in the dictionary
legitimize your understanding
I exist as a definition
the in-transitive verb in a line
I break from your sentence
write a paragraph of my own
create new forms Space
I dig laneways to jump your highway ride
turn gutters into trenches
...Ida is a higgler in the market place
Rita is a drummer in the band
Heather is part of the Incite collective
and Sheila, she's a woman identified
woman
You have taken my abstraction
broken my images
carved images of broken on my mirror
data processed needs
Packaged dreams on TV
Separate me from self
from race, from gender from history
We who create space
who transform what you say is
Send you scurrying,
scurrying to the dictionary
to add new words
We, we are the subversives
We, we are the underground

BIRTH POEM 3:25

This little girl mi call Anta
This little girl mi call Anta
This little girl mi call Anta Ah ah ah
Mi pregnant in mi belly
An mi head full a jelly
An mi vomit an mi sleep
An mi eat an mi sleep
An mi sigh LAWD
Jah alone know Jah alone know
Mi never know it so rough
Mi never know sey it so tough
An this little girl, she wouldn't
Come the minute before she
ready fi born
An the months them past
An mi outview lost, lost lost...
An mi labour an mi labour
An mi bawl Whai
It hot yu see / It dread yu see
But this little girl wouldn't come the
minute before she ready fi born
An mi labour an mi labour an mi
labour an mi labour an mi labour
An mi push an mi push an mi push
AN MI PUSH
An baps! she born
an it nice yu see
an she sweet yu see
This little girl we call Anta Ah ah ah
Women do this every day



Revolutionary Tea Party

Musicians:

Billy Bryans* drum and drum programs; Dave Gray* guitar; Terry Lewis bass guitar; Quammie Williams, congas and percussion

Guest Musicians:

Laurie Conger* keyboards on *I Fight Back*, *Rub a Dub Style*, *Birth Poem*, vocals on *The Subversives*; Sherry Shute, guitar on *The Subversives*; Elaine Stef guitar on *I Fight Back*; Billy Bryans* guitar on *I Fight Back*; Lorraine Segato* vocals on *The Subversives*, *Birth Poem*; Julie Masi* vocals on *The Subversives*;

Keir Brownstone*, Quammie Williams, Dave Gray* background vocals on *Birth Poem*; The Toronto All-Girls Subversive Chorus on *The Subversives*; Ringo Junior, Screecher Nice on *Rub a Dub Style* *Special thanks to The Parachute Club.

Revolutionary Tea Party LILLIAN ALLEN

**DIS WORD BREEDS MY RHYTHM
DIS WORD CARRIES MY FREEDOM
DIS WORD IS MY HAND
: MY WEAPON**

This album is dedicated to Anta and her little friends: Andrea, Lucas, Robin, Dawn, Terry, Tammy, Ansel, Keisha, Yoola, LaRoux, Gugsy, Munchy, Revelon, Toussaint and all the rest. We are the future who stand up! Very very special thanks to the many supporters and friends who stood firmly beside me on this journey in support of my work and this project...too numerous to list here but you know who you are....Thanks!

Executive Producer: Lillian Allen

Produced by Billy Bryans

Engineered by Jeff McCulloch

Additional engineering: Roger Slein

Studio Assistants: Dina Brands, Scott Johnson

Poetry to Music Concept: Lillian Allen, Billy Bryans, Dave Gray

Additional Arrangement Concept: Quammie Williams

Recorded and mixed at Wellesley Sound Studios, Toronto, Ontario 1986

Mastered by Peter Norman at McClear Place, Toronto, 1986

Art Direction: Sunday Harrison

Cover Art inspired by David Fighter/Wallflower Order

Redesign for CD version: Carol Auld 1998

Re-Mastered by Noah Mintz for Music Manufacturing Services, Toronto 1998

Also available by Lillian Allen... **Conditions Critical**, 1988 Juno Award Winner,
Nothing But A Hero (for children and young people); **Freedom & Dance**, 1998

JUNO AWARD WINNER

Lillian Allen

REVOLUTIONARY
TEA
PARTY

