

Phil Ochs

"Ringing of Revolution"

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In a building of gold, with riches untold
Lived the families on which the country was founded
And the merchants of style, with their red velvet smiles
Were there, for they also were hounded

And the soft middle class crowded in to the last
For the building was fully surrounded
And the noise outside
Was the ringing of revolution

Sadly they stared and sank in their chairs
And searched for a comforting notion
And the rich silver walls looked ready to fall
As they shook in doubtful devotion

The ice cubes would clink as they freshened their
drinks
Wet their minds in bitter emotion
And they talked about
The ringing of revolution

We were hardly aware of the hardships they beared
For our time was taken with treasure
Oh, life was a game, and work was a shame
And pain was prevented by pleasure

The world, cold and gray, was so far away
In the distance only money could measure
But their thoughts were broken
By the ringing of revolution

The clouds filled the room in darkening doom
As the crooked smoke rings were rising
How long will it take, how can we escape
Someone asks, but no one's advising

And the quivering floor responds to the roar
In a shake no longer surprising
As closer and closer
Comes the ringing of revolution

Softly they moan, please leave us alone

As back and forth they are pacing
And they cover their ears and try not to hear
With pillows of silk they're embracing

And the crackling crowd is laughing out loud
Peeking in at the target they're chasing
Now trembling inside
The ringing of revolution

With compromise sway we give in half way
When we saw that rebellion was growing
Now everything's lost as they kneel by the cross
Where the blood of Christ is still flowing

To late for their sorrow they've reached their tomorrow
And reaped the seed they were sowing
Now harvested
By the ringing of revolution

In tattered tuxedos they faced the new heroes
And crawled about in confusion
And they sheepishly grinned for their memories were
dim
Of the decades of dark execution

Hollow hands were raised, they stood there amazed
In the shattering of their illusions
As the windows were smashed
By the ringing of revolution

Down on our knees we're begging you please
We're sorry for the way you were driven
There's no need to taunt just take what you want
And we'll make amends, if we're living

But away from the grounds the flames told the town
That only the dead are forgiven
As they vanished inside
The ringing of revolution

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