

Revolution

(The Beatles)

[Verse 1]

You say you want a
revolution Well you know
We all want to change the
world You tell me that it's
evolution Well you know
We all want to change the
world But when you talk about
destruction
Don't you know you can count me
out

[Chorus]

Don't you know it's gonna be alright
Alright, alright

[Verse 2]

You say you got a real
solution Well you know
We'd all love to see the
plan You ask me for a
contribution Well you
know
We're doing what we can
But if you want money for people
with minds that hate
All I can tell you is brother you have
to wait

[Chorus]

Don't you know it's gonna be
alright Alright, alright

[Verse 3]

You say you'll change the
constitution Well you know
We all want to change your
head You tell me it's the
institution Well you know
You better free your mind instead
But if you go carrying pictures of
Chairman Mao
You ain't going to make it with
anyone anyhow

[Chorus]

Don't you know it's gonna be
alright Alright, alright

[Outro]

Alright,
alright
Alright,
alright
Alright,
alright
Alright,
alright

"Revolution" is a song by the Beatles, written by John Lennon and credited to Lennon–McCartney. Inspired by political protests in early 1968, Lennon's lyrics expressed doubt in regard to some of the tactics. When the single version was released in August, the political left viewed it as betraying their cause. The release of the album version in November indicated Lennon's uncertainty about destructive change, with the phrase "count me out" recorded differently as "count me out, in". In 1987, the song became the first Beatles recording to be licensed for a television commercial, which prompted a lawsuit from the surviving members of the group.

In early 1968, media coverage in the aftermath of the Tet Offensive spurred increased protests in opposition to the Vietnam War, especially among university students. The protests were most prevalent in the US, but on 17 March, several thousand demonstrators marched to the American embassy in London's Grosvenor Square and violently clashed with police. Major protests concerning other political issues made international news, such as the March 1968 protests in Poland against their communist government, and the campus uprisings of May 1968 in France.

By and large, the Beatles had avoided publicly expressing their political views, with "Taxman" being their only overtly political track thus far. During his time in Rishikesh, Lennon decided to write a song about the recent wave of social upheaval. He recalled, "I thought it was about time we spoke about it [revolution], the same as I thought it was about time we stopped not answering about the Vietnamese war. I had been thinking about it up in the hills in India."

Despite Lennon's antiwar feelings, he had yet to become anti-establishment, and expressed in "Revolution" that he wanted "to see the plan" from those advocating toppling the system. The repeated phrase "it's gonna be alright" in "Revolution" came directly from Lennon's Transcendental Meditation experiences in India, conveying the idea that God would take care of the human race no matter what happened politically. Another influence on Lennon was his burgeoning relationship with avant-garde artist Yoko Ono; Ono attended the recording sessions, and participated in the unused portion of "Revolution 1" which evolved into "Revolution 9".

Count me out if it's for violence. Don't expect me on the barricades unless it's with flowers.
– Statement made by Lennon in 1980 about how "Revolution" still stood as an expression of his politics.

Politically, the release of "Revolution" prompted immediate responses from the New Left and counterculture press. Ramparts branded it a "betrayal", and the New Left Review said the song was "a lamentable petty bourgeois cry of fear". The far left contrasted "Revolution" with a song by the Rolling Stones that was inspired by similar events and released around the same time: "Street Fighting Man" was perceived to be more supportive of their cause. Others on the left praised the Beatles for rejecting radicalism and advocating "pacifist idealism". The song's apparent skepticism about revolution caused Lennon to become the target of a few minority Trotskyist, Leninist and in particular Maoist groups.