

Sittin' on Your Status Quo
music & lyrics by Harold Rome 1937

TEACHER 1:

Are you ready to hear your lesson for today?

ALL: Yes Teacher, yes Teacher

Are you ready to learn what history has to say?

ALL: Yes Teacher, yes Teacher

Then take your books and follow me
to seventeen seventy-six A.D.

And as the History pages turn,
we will see what we can learn.

In seventeen seventy-six, Tom Paine
Was writing books with might and main.
The Tories said: "Now man, alive!
Stop giving out with this here liberty jive!"

ALL: No giving out with that there liberty jive.

Don't sing out people's rights that way;
They might believe in what you say.
So stop your song, it's not polite,
Pipe down or you will start a fight!"

Uh-uh! Then Tom Paine looked ahead,
And to those Tories, Tom he said:
No! No! No! No! No! No! No! No!
When you've got to go, you've got to go.
ALL: Cuz you got to go you got to go

You can't stand still on freedom's track.
If you don't go forward, you go back.
You can't giddyap by saying "Whoa"
And sitting on your Status Quo!

ALL: Yes Teacher, speak Teacher
Speak Teacher, speak Teacher

TEACHER 2:

In eighteen forty one A.D.
A freed man speaks against slavery
Folks warn Douglass 'watch your back
This freedom racket's really not for the blacks
ALL: That freedom racket's really not for the blacks

They tried to stop Miss Tubman's train
They told Miss Parks she must refrain
At Doctor King they aimed the hose
Kept freedom locked inside ghettos

ALL: What happened next, do you suppose?

Well all those folks just looked ahead
And to those forces they all said
No. no, no, no

ALL: No. no, no, no

When you've got to go, you've got to go.

ALL: cuz you got to go, you've got to go.

You can't stand still on freedom's track.

If you don't go forward, you go back.

You can't giddyap by saying "Whoa"
And sitting on your Status Quo!

TEACHERS 1 & 2:

So, students now you're hep, don't stop.
Keep stepping to that freedom hop,
Although those folks will beef and blow
To keep you sitting on your Status Quo.

ALL: don't like to sit down on my Status Quo

STUDENT 1: When they say, "Let's stand still a bit,

STUDENT 2: Give up some rights, no harm in it,"

TOGETHER: Remember, those are just the tricks
That did not work in sev'nty-six.

ALL: Now ain't that right, the same old tricks.

STUDENT 3: Though those folks talk, don't be misled,

STUDENT 4: Just say what all those others said:

ALL: No! No! No! No! No! No! No! No!

Cuz we got to go, we got to go.

When you've got to go, you've got to go.

We can't stand still on freedom's track.

If we don't go forward, we go back.

Won't giddyap by saying "Whoa"

And sitting on your Status Quo,