Bob Dylan – The Times They Are A-Changing (1964)

01. The Times They Are A-Changin' – 3:12
02. Ballad Of Hollis Brown – 5:03
03. With God On Our Side – 7:05
04. One Too Many Mornings – 2:37
05. North Country Blues – 4:31
06. Only A Pawn In Their Game – 3:29
07. Boots Of Spanish Leather – 4:36
08. When The Ship Comes In – 3:15
09. The Lonesome Death Of Hattie Carroll – 5:44
10. Restless Farewell – 5:32

Personnel:
- Bob Dylan – vocals, acoustic guitar, harmonica

Bob Dylan released his third album, The Times They Are A-Changin' in 1964. This album of all original compositions was a stark, dark, and socially conscious affair dealing with such topics as racism, war, and prejudice. It would be Dylan's most politically oriented album. It was embraced by the protest movement and thus became an important release in 1964. Joan Baez would lament that it was his songs that were active in the protest movement rather than the man himself.

Despite the content of the lyrics, the beauty of the music would shine through. Dylan would develop a knack for melody that would begin to dominate his compositions and serve to accentuate the increasing sophistication of his lyrics.

The title song, “The Times They Are A-Changin’” was a call to the youth of America and a warning to the establishment that change was on the way. It would become one of Dylan’s most famous songs and an anthem to a generation. This enduring song was performed by thousands of singers in its day and listened too by millions more.

The socially conscious songs would dominate the album. “Ballad Of Hollis Brown” is about a father killing his children. “Only A Pawn In The Game” probed the murder of Medgar Evers. “The Lonesome Death Of Hattie Carroll” is the story of a black woman being killed by a white man who only received six months in jail for manslaughter. “North Country Blues” is the saga of an unemployed minor but Dylan tells the story from his wife’s point of view. These songs find an angry Bob Dylan ranting against the events of the day. They would strike a resonant and powerful chord in 1964 but sound a little dated today.

The Times They Are A-Changin’ contained a number of personal songs that stand the test of time well. “One Too Many Mornings” is a gentle song about time passing and loss with only his guitar in support. He would later take this simple love song electric and change it around into something entirely different. “Boots Of Spanish Leather” is a beautiful and haunting love song. “Restless Farewell” found him looking to the future and leaving the protest movement behind for new directions and challenges. The most powerful song on the album, in light of Dylan’s subsequent career, may be “When The Ship Comes In.” While it was originally accepted as a protest song; it was delivered almost like a sermon. It would look ahead to the religious period of his career. ---David Bowling, blogcritics.org

The Times They Are A-Changin’ was an important document in 1964 and served as a rallying point for the protest movement of the time. Dylan quickly moved beyond the content of this release and as such today it remains a wonderful musical artifact.

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