For Michael Smith

Jamaica —
of Maroon — resistance — gun and struggle

In my country too
‘Anyone’ can become president
but not an alien

in the land of ‘truth and justice’
our people fought not to die on welfare

In my country too
Seargent Majors grow fat
in seat of office.

In my country too
whole villages are wiped out
of election fever

In my country too
missiles are hurled
at the heads of the dispossessed

In my country too
they fill the mouths with silence
of the silent majority

If poets could be stifled
the whole world would choke
on the thoughts muffled in their throats.

But we have our poets — our griots —
the captive minds unfurl —
the silence now erupts
in quiet mumbling corners —
the voices join our own
join with others
rise and rise again
encircle and begin again

that same breath which gave life to thought
inspires

Iyamide Hazeley