



Respect – Dancehall Against Discrimination and Intolerance

We hereby explicitly disassociate ourselves from any and all discriminatory and intolerant views. There have been misunderstandings that led to misrepresentations. We are a non-violent, tolerant and respectful community where differences are just as appreciated as similarities. All of those who identify with these guiding principles are more than welcome to celebrate with us. Feel free to find out for yourself. Pull up!

As it is difficult to balance the views of so many different people, we would prefer to let Bob Marley do the talking. He had much to say.

BM: Every man got the right to decide his own destiny.

Everyone has the right to live his or her life in his or her desired way, without the fear or threat of persecution, discrimination or violence. Since the formation of the reggae scene as a countercultural movement, we have and will continue to live in accordance to the principle *Live and let live*.

BM: Prejudice is a chain, it can hold you. If you prejudice, you can't move, you keep prejudice for years. Never get nowhere with that.

We're a diverse scene with people of different ages, classes, origins, ethnicities, gender, religions and sexual orientation. A project like this only works when you accept others being different. We reject intolerance and discrimination, be it in form of racism, sexism or homophobia.

BM: Reggae is a music that has plenty fight. But only the music should fight, not the people.

At least since the emergence of dancehall, the notion of reggae as pure feel-good music has lost its credibility. Dancehall is much more aggressive than Roots reggae, both musically and content-wise. Along with Olaf Karnik from Riddim Magazine, we understand homophobic lyrics metaphorically; in the context of the Sound System Clash Culture that appears warlike altogether. Sound Systems metaphorically burn and kill *Babylon* (and each other) verbally until not a stone is left standing.

BM: The first thing you must know about me is that I always stand what I stand for. Good? The second thing you must know about yourself listening to me is that words are tricky. So when you know what me a stand for, when me explain a thing to you, you must never try to look 'pon it in a different way from what me a stand for.

It's next to impossible to understand statements outside of their original context. In Jamaica, homophobia is culturally, religiously and even lawfully fixed. Fortunately, this doesn't go for Germany, or at least certainly not to the same degree. It also doesn't mean that we approve of that fact. But we are listening to Jamaican music after all – and we don't listen to it because it's homophobic (and that's just a very small part of it, anyway!), but because we love the music. In order to fully understand any music, one needs to closely examine its culture of origin, and this can even initiate reflection.

The good times of today are the sad thoughts of tomorrow.

It still makes you stop and think when people point out that homophobic hate-crimes frequently occur in Jamaica. Therefore, somebody who's singing along to Battyboy-Tunes today, tomorrow could be wondering what happened to Brian Williamson, co-founder of J-Flag (Jamaican Forum of Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays). He was killed in 2004. He was neither the first nor the last victim of anti-gay violence in Jamaica, nor in Germany, and this is horrible.

Therefore, we have to ask ourselves: What do we do here with statements that call for hate and violence, that contradict our principles? The situation in Germany is in our hands, and to be able to keep celebrating Reggae and Dancehall parties and concerts under these circumstances, we have to find alternatives to banning Jamaican artists from German stages.

BM: Free speech carries with it some freedom to listen.

Hence: We do away with the Battyboy-Tune* in Germany.

For the artists, that means to stick to the Reggae Compassionate Act. For the soundsystems, it means not to play those songs. For the fans, not to buy them. And for those reggae clubs that haven't already done it, to come to clear agreements with the artists.

* This includes those tunes, that spread homophobic agitation, as well as speeches and announcements of such content.

BM: No man can lead man, we have to have unity.

We attached three sign-up lists for you to publicly identify with us: One for fans, one for professionals, and one for artists.

If you'd like to comment, discuss, argue: You're welcome to use the forum on www.u-club.de. But please, even with contrarian views:

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