

MARLEY'S LEGACY

by Roger Steffens

Bob Marley had it all: the looks, the passive-aggressiveness, the conscious lyrical poetry that spoke to the downpressed in everyone, and a melodic gift to carry that message throughout the planet.

When his campaign ended, he was only 36 years old. He left behind a massive body of work that covered twenty years of growth, literally from slum to palace. He spent his formative years in the fetid ghetto of Trench Town, and his later years touring the world relentlessly, lionized by the very kings and politicians who were often the butt of his admonitory and scornful lyrics. He was a man of awesome contradiction, who somehow strode like a dreadlocked Colossus across the narrow orb, and we petty men can only marvel at his accomplishments.

A couple of years before the end, an African ambassador to the United Nations presented Bob with a Peace Medal "on behalf of the five hundred million Africans," and it was hardly an understatement. So respected was he that when Zimbabwe became free, it was Bob Marley who was chosen to headline the Independence Celebration, the repatriated African returning to the birthplace of all men. "Reggae is *Black* music," he would spit, and yet insist, "Me don't dip on the black man's side nor the

white man's side, me dip on God's side, the man who create me, who cause me to come from black and white, who give me this talent." "Unity is the world key," he said later, "and racial harmony. Until the white man stops calling himself white and the black man stops calling himself black we will not see it...all people on earth are just one family."

"To speak of Bob Marley is like trying to take a sip from the ocean," said the Western leader of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Maimi, at one of Bob's funerals. He was a musical figure to be sure, but in truth he was much, much more.

As Elvis Presley symbolized the Fifties, and John Lennon the Sixties, so did Bob Marley epitomize a new generation of forward-looking people, who built upon the ideologies of the previous decades. Marley was an Elvis/J.D./"rude boy"/Lennonesque street punk intellectual, a first rate poet, and a self-confessed womanizer. He had eleven children by several women, explaining, "You mustn't give your strength to the woman. A woman is to loved and appreciated. Woman is an earth, the mother of creation. Must love woman, but don't fall in love. No falling out of love. Just love. Love so much me look hungry. Pure love dat."

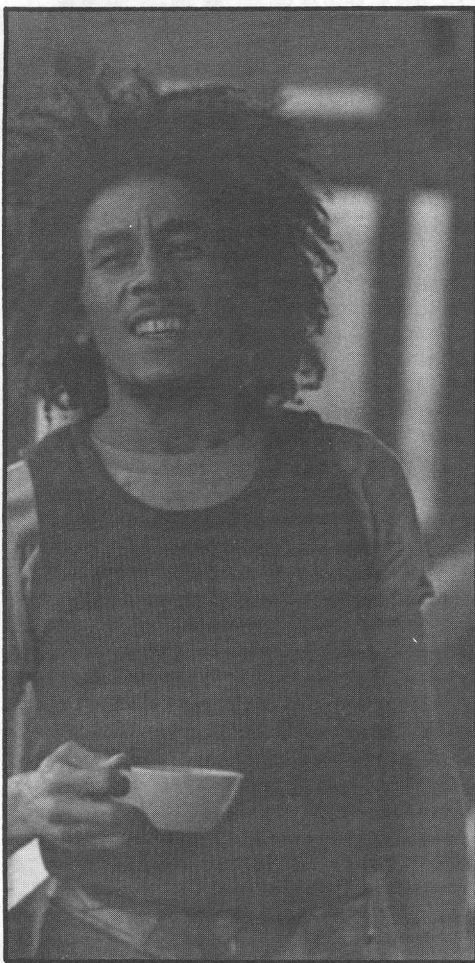


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Yet it is an apocalyptic standard-bearer that Marley is best known. Not in the United States, but in the rest of the world, where he was regarded as a Biblical Prophet and champion of the inevitable freedom and unity of Africa. He was not, to most people, as trivial as a rock star, but rather more closely akin to a Marcus Garvey or a Martin Luther King, an eloquent rapsy voice preaching "without any apology" about the divinity of a diminutive African monarch, and the achievement of an earthly paradise known as Zion where the righteous will live forever in the flesh.

Marley's wry cynicism often turned the tables on those who thought they understood him. Imagine the surprise of Chris Blackwell of Island Records when he spent huge sums of promotion money on lavish press conferences and excursions, only to find his budding star avoiding all talk of his latest Lp or single, insisting that people raise their consciousness to an awareness of the mass depravity and imbalance on the planet. But his prophecy, it is said, is the most gratuitous form of error. Only history can prove him right or wrong.

What can be considered now is the bulk of his musical accomplishment. Supposedly, Island has a full Lp in the can, and doubtless

more lost or unknown sessions will come to light, because Marley recorded for a dozen or more producers, on labels in England, the U.S., and Jamaica. Each period has its rewards, and nearly all are discoverable on American releases, or easily available English imports.

Marley's earliest recordings, as a solo artist in 1961, for Beverly's Studios, are virtually impossible to come by. A Jamaican who grew up with him even told me of private recordings that Bob made just for his friends. His first sessions yielded "Judge Not," "Terror," and "One Cup of Coffee." None was successful.

Two years later, Bob had fallen under the influence of groups like the Impressions and the Moonglows and the Drifters. He was living at the time in the household of Bunny (Wailer) Livingstone, and together they joined with Beverly Kelso, a very promising lead vocalist named Junior Braithwaite (Braithwaite), and a "tall and boastful" rude boy named Peter McIntosh who went then by the name of Peter Touch.

"From the first I met Bob," Tosh recalled after Marley's passing, "I feel the formation of the Wailers was the idea of the Father, because the group was so spiritual. No man no say mek we do this, we just sing along

and man just love how it sounds, so we say mek we music!"

The first hit the Wailers had was called "Simmer Down," an uptempo ska. "It means just that: simmer down, calm down, cool down. You mustn't exalt yourself too much." It was produced by Clement Dodd, known as Sir Coxson, who cut every major artist in Jamaica in the Sixties except the bizarre singing satirist Roy Shirley. Years later, Coxson recalled the early days of the Wailers: "Marley used to come in and sing a song for two or three hours, then two weeks later he'd come in and work on the same song. He had a chance to develop without a lot of pressure. I worked with him on punch lines and harmonies." By 1966, the group was down to a trio of Bunny, Bob and Peter, the lineup to which people refer when they say "Original Wailers." They had a couple of sensational years in '65 and '66, with hit after hit. In '66 they had the numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7 records on the same chart. But come Christmastime, Coxson paid Marley a mere \$150 for his string of chart-toppers. Depressed, Marley left the island for Delaware, where his mother was living.

The Wailers by this time had recorded

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about fifty different tracks for Coxson, some 20 of which are available on the Calla label in an lp called *The Birth of a Legend*. They are remixed, simulated-stereo versions of most of the tracks on the two import Coxson lp's which surface occasionally, *The Wailin' Wailers* and *The Best of the Wailers*. They are a bit too sanitized for my taste — there's something unnatural about hearing clean ska or rock steady (like hearing the Sun Sessions in fake stereo) — but the power, passion and range are all represented. From the R&B cover of Harvey and the Moonglows' "The Ten Commandments of Love," to the strained vocals of "Do You Remember?" and the heartbreaking pathos of Marley's "first serious song," "Lonesome Feeling," the *Birth* d1album runs the gamut from the sublime to the very dated. The first appearance of the often-used chorus "Who Feels It Knows It" is on the record, composed by Bunny and sung by Bob; also here is a magnificent "Dancing Shoes" superior still to the more recent remake on Bunny's Mango Lp *Sings the Wailers*. If you don't mind doo-wop-style harmonies and primitive recording conditions, then this album is definitely worth investigating.

Marley stayed in Delaware less than a year, working for a while on the night shift of a Chrysler plant. He composed: "It's Alright (Night Shift)" as a result of this experience,

as well as "Bend Down Low." Returning to Jamaica, he found Bunny in jail for possession of herb. Soon, however, the trio was back in Coxson's Studio One, recording on brand new equipment which he had just brought back from England. Coxson released "Bend Down Low" and its sequel "Nice Time," both of which were hits, but again the Wailers saw no remuneration. Their first attempt at self-production was a label called "Wail'n Soul'm," but they were better at singing than promotion, and the effort folded quickly.

At one point in the late Sixties, Marley left the business, seeking solace in the verdant valleys of his childhood in St. Anne's Parish. By day, Bob farmed the marlstrewn fields, but at night he was drawn back to the music, writing several songs that came to the attention of American soul singer Johnny Nash, who recorded Marley's "Stir It Up," "Guava Jelly" and "Bend Down Low," among others.

There is an extremely quirky Lp of some of Marley's demo sessions for Nash, called simply *Bob Marley and the Wailers* on Magnum (MR-601). One track, in fact, is really Nash, singing: "You Can't Do That To Me." The rest include a vomitous version of "Soul Rebel" drowned in orchestra and chorus. "Hammer" appears here, a single that Tosh released in 1980, on his own Jamaican label, Intel-Diplo. "There She Goes" is the opening track, but it's not as strong as the original 45 by the Wailers and the Vikings. (That one was the cause of the rumor of a supposed Wailers and Maytals collabora-

tion, because when Island UK started releasing Jamaican singles in the early Sixties, they labeled a bunch of Toots and the Maytals records as "the Vikings," the name of an actual backing band in JA. The real Vikings were the band on the Wailers 45, which dates to 1965.) Judy Mowatt's hit: *Mellow Mood*: appears here in demo form by its composer, and so does "Put It On," the latter a raw interpretation compared to the later onew produced by Lee Perry and Chris Blackwell. In all an album for collectors and fanatics only.

This takes us up to 1969 when two of Jamaica's masters of innovation began recording the Wailers - Leslie Kong and Lee Perry. Kong's sessions have never been "officially" released, but several labels like Hammer and Ala have put out versions with names like *Shakedown*. Whatever the titles, the collections usually include the prime work that pioneer Kong did in his Beverly's



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studio with Bunny, Bob and Peter. This includes "Caution", "Back Out", "Do It Twice", and "Soul Shakedown Party", one of the all-time great party records (Janie's in the back yard/Doing the outside dance.) Kong also produced versions of Tosh's "Soon Come" and "Stop The Train". To round things out, the trio did the old spiritual "Go Tell It On The Mountain" over Peter's plaintive lead. The *Shakedown* sessions are essential listening, and well worth seeking out.

It was with the Frank Zappa of reggae, Lee Perry, however, that the Wailers really hit their stride, and created some of their most memorable and important music. Perry is a five-foot-tall producer whose continued goal is "to hijack the earth". His bumpity riddim and cave-dark echoes lent a haunting edge to the Wailers' sound. "Is Mr. Brown controlled by remote?" teased one song menacingly. Another featured nursery rhymes, but was called "Brain Washing". Trojan has a pair of albums of Perry material still in print; the first is called *Soul Rebels* and its cover features a topless woman guerilla with an automatic rifle in her hand and a tropical waterfall in the background. Later, "Mr. Brown" was added to the original dozen cuts, and the Lp was retitled *Rasta Revolution*, with a shot of Marley bundled up in a windbreaker, his hair beginning to "knot up." The album is still widely available on import (Trojan TRLS 89), and shouldn't be missed, for herein is the perhaps-definitive recording (out of 5 or 6) of "Duppy Con-

queror," the "ghost catcher" who fears nothing; "Try Me"; "Rebel's Hop," which reworks pieces of earlier classics "Let Him Go" and "Rude Boy Ska" ("You can't be what you want to be/You ain't got no responsibility/Cloud Nine") — Cho! Every track is a standout!

And the companion package, *African Herbsman* (Trojan TRLS 62), has sixteen impeccable tracks, making it the best single Marley bargain ever released. Here are the first appearances of "Trench Town Rock", "Lively Up Yourself", "Don't Rock The Boat (Satisfy My Soul)", "Sun Is Shining", and "Kaya". This is reggae as pure as you will ever hear it, made right at the start of one of the most fecund periods in modern musical history. Most of the songs on the soundtrack to *The Harder They Come* are from this time.

Perry and Marley composed and refined many of Bob's best songs in the Black Ark Studio that Perry had built in his back yard. The house band was called the Upsetters, and included the Barrett Brothers, Carly and Family Man, on drums and bass respectively, the meanest riddim section on the island. Their cohesion as the Wailers was described years later by Family: "The Wailers was the best vocal group and I group was the best little backing band at the time so we say why don't we just come together and mash the world!"

At least twice it seemed as if the world was about to capitulate, but both times things soured, and the Wailers returned home with

virtually nothing to show for extended tours of England. The second tour, in the winter of '72-'73, led to the breakup of the Wailers, because Bunny refused ever to "trade one part of Babylon for another". Since then he has stayed in the hills, farming and storing food against the "inevitable famine".

Peter Tosh is a bit more philosophical about the breakup: "When I left the Wailers, it was not directly any conflict between me and Bob. Bob was manifesting what was in him. I was at that time decorating what was inside of Bob to make it beautiful, and the time had come for me to decorate what was inside of me, so I did."

The true story of the dissolution of the Jamaican Beatles into their separate (but unequal) parts may never be known. The culprit appears to be the savior — Chris Blackwell, Island Records' chief, who signed the Wailers in 1972 and funded their first two real albums, the landmark *Catch A Fire* and *Burnin'*. Blackwell needed a star front-man for the group, someone with whom the public could identify, and Bob was the choice.

From 1972 onward, nearly all of Marley's material was available on American releases on the Island label. He released several singles strictly for Jamaican consumption (like the three different versions of "Smile Jamaica"; "Blackman Redemption"; and the British recording of "Punky Reggae Party") but he was primarily an album artist now, eventually selling an average of two million

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of each of his ten Island Lp's. Ironically, he never had a gold album in the U. S. In fact, *Catch A Fire* sold a mere 5,000 copies the first time out, despite the unique packaging. The initial format had a blue cover the shape of a WWII pocket lighter, and it opened in the middle on a hinge. Of course, everybody's copy broke from instant overuse, and eventually island reissued the Lp with a more standardized painting of Marley to conform to the new ganja'd Rasta image they were promoting.

Catch A Fire is, quite simply, my favorite reggae album of all time. It is also my first, which might explain my feelings. Others discovered Marley with the second or third albums, and those are their own favorites. But from the moment I laid the needle on "Concrete Jungle," my life was transformed, and (three years later) I entered the Seventies at last. I played that record over and over for weeks, not realizing at the time that it was one of the most completely successful international experiments ever undertaken. Recorded in Jamaica, mixed in England, with overdubs by an American lead guitarist, this was music that crawled through my bloodstream and into my brain like some vampire amoeba from a Congolese time warp. "Heartbeat" music they called it, mimicking the blood-pump, calling forth preternatural urges. "Music can't directly change the problems of de world," Marley told a reporter in Gabon, West Africa, "but it can carry de message of Truth."

Right from the start, the Island Lp's were

designed to reflect the best of the Wailers' achievements, past and present. For the first time, the band had a state-of-the-art studio in which to lay down standard versions of their repertoire; thus the first album included remakes of "400 Years," "Stop That Train" and "Stir It Up," all of which had been released earlier.

Burnin' was the last album that the Original Wailers made together. The inner sleeve had facsimiles of their police identity cards, and incorrectly listed Bob's birthdate as 6 April 1945 (it was 6 February of that year). Here is a brief, impassioned duet of co-writers Marley and Tosh on their anthem "Get Up, Stand Up" (the only song of the Wailers, incidentally, that each of the three has recorded on his own) as well as Bunny's beautiful "Pass It On." "Duppy Conqueror" gets another terrific workout, as does "Put It On." Marley's version of his song "I Shot The Sheriff" is followed by "Burnin' and Lootin'," an incendiary pairing if ever there was one. (It might have been even more explosive had Marley got his original way and called the song "I Shot the Police.")

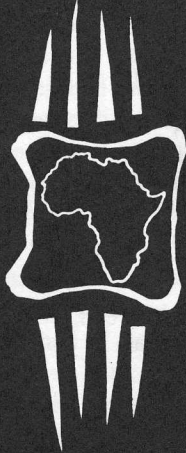
A couple of years ago, Peter Tosh held up the inside cover of *Burnin'* and asked me contemptuously, "You see any picture there for I? I a Wailer from de start, and where is dere a picture for I? Even Lucifer him dere!" Lucifer? I wondered. "Here," snarled Peter, pointing to the pictures of a bearded dreadlock first with a child, then with a goat. "Him de devil, mon. Yes, I. One mornin' him wake up, and all his dreads drop off, like dem lice lick up him head. Lucifer, me a-tell you. And

him get two picture and me a-get none."

Burnin' was originally scheduled to be entitled "Reincarnated Souls." The rare UK Island single of the Wailers' version of the song shows what might have been. Bunny's lead vocals get warm and affectionate underpinning from Bob and Peter, each man seemingly content to let the other play his part. A deeply spiritual song, it may have been their final recording session together. (In fact, Peter recalled that Bob may have skipped the session, "Because he didn't like singing harmony songs.")

The spiritual that did make it on the album was "Rastaman Chant," a traditional "Nyah Binghi" hymn, whose roots lie in Africa. The song often opened the Wailers' concerts in those days, in versions widely different in harmony and tempo. My favorite is of Bob and Peter and Joe Higgs in San Francisco in 1973, after Bunny quit the group, and DJ Tom Donohue corralled them into the Record Plant studios. The drum plays a long time before they start to sing, and the pace is lugubrious and reverently spliffified. Now, the album versions sounds too poppy, too infected by the saccharine edge that Bunny has had to fight against in his songs. It's not quite treacly McCartney versus trenchant Lennon, but without Bob, Bunny's songs often meandered far too much. For example, on *Blackheart Man his first solo Lp*, Bunny grafts a whole silly chorus about the "dawning of the age of Aquarius" onto the elegant verses of "Reincarnated Souls."

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We'll never know what might have happened had those three stayed together. To most Jamaicans at the time, the breakup seemed inconceivable; right on the brink of their greatest success, after more than a decade of trying, the group disintegrated; critical mass achieved through the malevolent force of someone. But who?

Whatever the answer, *Natty Dread* proclaimed to the world once and for all that Marley was a major figure in world music. Carl Gayle, reggae writer supreme, and pioneer of patois journalism, wrote of the album in 1976: "*Natty Dread* was the song that persuaded thousands of young Jamaicans to stop combing their hair."

While the violence on the previous albums was somewhat muted ("*Burnin'* and *Lootin'*" was about burning illusions, Marley told me in 1979, "not about burning t'ings"), this time Marley's lyrics left no doubt as to where he stood in the world.

I've been down on the rock for so long I seem to wear a permanent screw
 But I'm gonna stare in the sun
 let the rays shine in my eyes
 I'm a gonna take a-just a-one step ore
 'Cause I feel like bombing a church
 Now that you know that the preacher is lying
 Talkin' Blues"

"A hungry mob is an angry mob" said another lyric, and "why can't we roam this open country?/Oh why can't we be what we want to be/we want to be free." "No Woman No Cry" debuted on this album, as well as "So Jah Seh" and "Revolution" with its high pitched outro that ranks among the most interesting licks Marley ever sang. In all, a perfect record.

The following release was a logical one, if somewhat disappointing, because it served merely as a recapitulation of the first three records and broke little new ground. It didn't do as well as it should have, either, because cassettes of Wailers' broadcast concerts were widely traded, and the material was in danger of overexposure. *Bob Marley and the Wailers Live* did include the first Island working of "Trenchtown Rock" and ecstatic audience at London's Lyceum Theatre, but people wanted new songs, new material. The burden of three perfect albums was almost too much for Marley.

When *Rastaman Vibration* came out at last in 1976, it got mixed response. Many critics responded as if Marley had dropped a political banner in mid-battle, and accused him of commercial sell-out because of tracks like "Roots, Rock, Reggae" and the synthetic "Johnny Was." "War," eventually a Marley standard, was attacked as filler by most critics, who longed for the Jamaican single of "Jan Live" to be included in its place. "War" was a blank verse rendering of the text of a speech that Haile Selassie I gave in California in the Sixties, and Marley

assumed a Messianic posture when performing it in person. By now he was able to headline large halls in Europe and America, and his work was becoming known in the promised land of Africa, as well as in Asia and Australia and South America. Back home in JA, he took the stage with Stevie Wonder at a huge outdoor concert. Reggae was being predicted as the next big thing, and Marley was clearly its king.

But uneasy rests the head that wears the crown. In December 1976, Marley and his troupe were the objects of an assassination attempt, when teenage gunmen surrounded Marley's Tuff Gong headquarters in Kingston and opened fire with machine guns. Rita, Bob's wife, was grazed in the head, Bob in the chest and arm, and his new manager, Don Taylor, took five bullets in the groin. Miraculously, all survived.

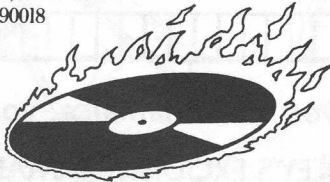
The Wailers had been scheduled to perform at the giant "Smile Jamaica" concert two nights after the attack, and at the last minute Marley decided to come down from his hiding place in the hills to perform for a crowd of 80,000 people in Heroes park Circle. He had a tiny sliver of stage space on which to play, but his reading that night of his lyrics left the audience reeling. "One good thing about music/when it hits you feel no pain." Later, a capella, he begged, "Puss and dog/dem get together/what's wrong with you my brothers/why can't we love one another?"

Following the show, Marley went into a

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voluntary foreign exile of fourteen months. In 1977 he joined forces with Lee Perry once again, in England, cutting another controversial tune called "Punky Reggae Party." Widely available as an import 12", the song was an attempt to join the constituencies of punk and reggae, particularly in England. "The Maytals will be there," Bob sang, "The Damned, the Jam, The Clash/the Wailers will be there/The Slits, Dr. Feelgood too/No Boring old farts will be there." It ended with several minutes of the finest scat singing Marley ever committed to wax. The live version on "Babylon By Bus" pales by comparison.

Exodus was released in late spring 1977, and Marley was set to make his largest world tour ever, when he reportedly suffered a foot injury playing soccer. We know now that this was the first stage of the fatal cancer: melanoma was the diagnosis, and doctors told Marley he should have his foot amputated, but they couldn't guarantee that this would stem the cancer. Marley refused, and allowed only a small piece of his foot to be removed. Eventually, the cancer traveled through his blood stream to his lungs and brain, striking down Marley at the height of his powers.

The lost momentum was coupled in 1977 with the mediocre reviews accorded *Exodus*. Critics complained that Marley was pulling his punches, running scared after the

assassination attempt. "Some heavy heavy Rasta say that," observed Bob, "Dem really penetrate de matter." The album yield perhaps Marley's most beautiful love song, and one of the finest pieces he ever recorded, "Waiting in Vain," with Junior Marvin's gorgeous guitar solo a special highlight. The single was a hit in England, but it contributed to the image that Marley had lost his revolutionary fervor. "Jamming" and "Natural Mystic" are on the *Exodus* Lp, and became regular parts of Marley's live shows, but on the whole, the Lp is a disappointment.

The following year, the easy skanking *Kaya* Lp came out, and further confounded the critics. "He's gone soft" said many. Yet it is one of my favorites, because of its loose and subtle arrangements: perfect for a steamy summer afternoon or sultry evening. He remade three tracks from the Lee Perry period, including the title number "Satisfy My Soul (Don't Rock The Boat)," and "Sun Is Shining." The real standout cuts, though, were the new ones, "Running Away" and "Time Will Tell," fresh classics with a distinctly unsettling edge. In a taunting tone, Marley says, "You're running and you're running and you're running away/but you can't run away from yourself. . . you must have done something wrong. . . now you coming to tell me that I'm running away, but it's not true, I am not running away." That promise closed the album.

By the late Seventies, Marley's live roadshow, resembling more a revival meeting than a rock and roll circus, had traveled to

every continent, trailing successes behind them at every stop. He was now the biggest star in Africa, with dozens of cover versions of his songs being turned out in places like Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria.

His return to Jamaica in the spring of 1978 was heightened by the so-called "One Love Peace Concert" in the National Stadium Kingston, which he headlined. It was his first local performance since the shooting, 16 months earlier, and took place under a full moon on the twelfth anniversary of King Selassie I's visit to Jamaica. At the penultimate moment, Marley did a standing leap above his microphone, and invited the "two leading people of this nation" to join him onstage. Eventually, Prime Minister Michael Manley and opposition leader Edward Seaga did come on, looking utterly out of place and discomfited, as Marley held their hands aloft and made a benediction to Jah Rastafari, the Almighty God. The two politicians did their best to avoid each other's gaze, and left the stage quickly. The ostensible purpose of the concert was to sign a peace treaty in the squalid, violent ghettos of Kingston. But the treaty never took hold, and its main advocates have all died violent deaths since that night, several of them murdered by the police.

In 1979, Marley released *Survival* his most overt political statement since *Natty Dread*, and the critics hailed it as a return to his roots, and welcomed him back. In December of that year, Bob answered his critics. "Marley's music is always Marley's music," he

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insisted, "I haven't changed my musical sound. A man plays his music according to the way he feels. This (*Survival*) is another development, and it's played the way we felt." "Zimbabwe" spelled out Marley's philosophy: "Every man got a right to decide his own destiny/And in this judgement there is no partiality/So arm in arms with arms/We'll fight this little struggle. . . natty trash it in a Zimbabwe/Mash it up in a Zimbabwe." Soon after the song was released, Bob arrived in Zimbabwe to witness the final furling of the Union Jack, leaving only South Africa a last impediment to the eventual unification of the continent. To the Rasta, "Africa must be free by 1983," and the British relinquishing of control in Rhodesia was a sign of the inevitability of that promise.

Survival also provided Bob's first public statement about the shooting in '76, but it was poetically ambivalent: "Ambush in the night/Planned by society. . . they are trying to conquer me. . . protected by His Majesty . . . through the powers of the Most High/We keep on surviving."

"So Much Trouble" was the most satisfying song melodically, and alerted the oppressors that "They are sitting on a time bomb/Now I know the time has come/What goes up is coming down." The album, originally scheduled to be called "*Black Survival*," will remain one of Marley's most important lyrical works, it not one of his best musically.

Marley's final year was probably the most successful of his career. Touring Europe in the summer of 1980, he broke long-held

attendance records of the Stones and Beatles, and drew enormous throngs to stadium concerts in Milan and Dublin and most other European capitals. But in America he was still struggling for mass acceptance. It was clear that Bob would try anything to reach the seemingly-deaf Black American audience. He'd played the Apollo in 1979, and in 1980 he returned from his triumphs on the continent to be the opening act for the Commodores in Madison Square Garden. While in NYC for that engagement, he collapsed one morning running in Central Park. Doctors found a brain tumor, and gave him three weeks to live. Yet he still found the will to push off for Pittsburgh to do one, final, overwhelmingly successful show, with three sets of encores, following which he returned to Sloan-Kettering Hospital in New York for the beginning of six months of cancer treatments. Most of that time was spent in Germany at a controversial clinic whose head doctor kept Marley alive until May of 1981.

Uprising was the last album released by Bob while he was still alive, and it can be seen as a summing up of his life and purpose. "Check out the real situation," he demanded, "We Jah people can make it work" even though "it seems like total destruction (is) the only solution." "Which man can save his brother's soul?" he asked, then answered himself: "Oh man, it's just self control." And "Two thousand years of history, black history,/Could not be wiped so easily."

The final track was breathtaking, a Dylan-like acoustic ballad, with Bob alone on guitar, singing "Redemption Song": "Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery/None but ourselves can free our minds. . . how long shall they kill our prophets/While we stand aside and look. . . all I ever had (were) redemption songs, these songs of freedom." All, and enough.

Om *Black Music Magazine* in 1976, Bob Marley told Carl Gayle how he would know when his work was finished. "Because I will feel myself staisfied, and I will feel like I am tired! And God will tell me. And the people will see me and tell me. It is redemption you know. No one can stop it."

In England, the day after his passing the *Guardian's* front page story about Bob said his death "robs Jamaican music of its first ambassador and popular music in general of one of its most eloquent, powerful and conscientious voices. . . It is for his conviction, his integrity and his commitment to his faith that he will be missed, as much as for the timeless splendor of the music he produced."

Marley's funeral, lasting days was the largest in the history of Jamaica. He is buried in a "shrine" in St. Anne's Parish, and a statue is planned in Kingston, to commemorate the man and his accomplishments.

Robert Nesta Marley spoke to the best in each of us. He made us feel that the rusty cliches of Peace and Love were worth polishing up again. He had flaws, but he sport the Truth. That alone should gain him entrance to the Kingdom. I hope Jah grants it so.

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