

## BUJU BANTON BACKGROUND INFORMATION

“Buju Banton has never repudiated the sentiments of the song ‘Boom Bye Bye’. Furthermore, it is reported that Buju Banton continues to perform the song.”

Amnesty International

*"You can't say to me I can't (say that). ... It is my time to look you dead center in the eyes and say 'Who the hell are you talking to, boy?' If you don't like it, don't listen to it, because other people, I'll be certain, will."*

**Buju Banton** interview  
BBC 1Xtra Dancehall after Dark  
24 April 2006

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/1extra/dad/buju.shtml>

### **Press Release: Brighton & Hove Council**

Council hits out at ‘murder’ music event  
16 June 2006

City councillors have restated their opposition to ‘murder’ music following news that a performer named in a Notice of Motion is to appear in Brighton this July.

Buju Banton was one of a number of performers who were named in a council Notice of Motion put forward by Equalities Chair Paul Elgood. It made clear the council’s opposition to such music and reflected the strong message being sent from the city’s LGBT community that it is unacceptable.

The Motion, approved at a full council meeting in November, 2004, said:

“ This council believes that musicians whose lyrics contain incitements to violence and murder are unacceptable if all people are to be valued and respected , regardless of their sexuality, background, race, gender, age or disability.”

Serious concerns have again been raised over ‘murder’ music singers who are seen as glorifying the killing of lesbian and gay people which makes life intolerable for many lesbian and gay Jamaicans where homosexuality is outlawed.

Councillor Elgood said: “The council has made its opposition to 'murder' music crystal clear. Our position hasn't changed, nor should it. These performers undermine our aim of ensuring that all communities feel safe and valued.”

Simon Burgess, leader of Brighton & Hove City Council, added: “There is a lot of great reggae music out there. Buju's hate song taints that. Buju should renounce his song or stay away from the city.”

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**Full text of Brighton & Hove City Council motion on 'Murder Music':**

passed by Full Council meeting 25 November 2004

proposed by Councillor Elgood and seconded by Councillor Pennington

"This Council believes that musicians whose lyrics contain incitements to violence and murder are unacceptable if all people are to be valued and respected, regardless of their sexuality, background, race, gender, age or disability.

This Council notes that serious concerns have been raised over such "murder music" singers, which include Bounty Killer, Elephant Man, TOK, Capleton, Beenie Man, Sizzla Kalonji, Buju Banton and Vybz Kartel, who are seen as glorifying the killing of lesbian and gay people which makes life intolerable for many lesbian and gay Jamaicans where homosexuality is outlawed.

In acknowledgement of the concerns raised by many people in Brighton and Hove's large LGBT community, this Council resolves by this Notice of Motion to:

1. Urge all music outlets in the City not to stock such music.
  2. Ensure that such material is not available in the City's Libraries.
- Request that all Public Entertainment Licence holders in the City take into consideration the views of the Council noting our concern over such music and potential hosting of such entertainment at their venues."

**Full text motion on 'Hate Music Directed Against Social Groups':**

passed by Full Council meeting 25 November 2004

proposed by Councillor Randall and seconded by Councillor Williams:

"This Council notes the very small minority of mainly rap and reggae music containing lyrics that incite hatred against and the murder of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and that also incite hatred against women and some ethnic groups and others.

The Council believes that 'murder music' contributes to a climate where prejudice is seen as acceptable and exposes those groups who are targeted to an increased risk of violence. Furthermore, the Council believes that 'incitement to murder' lyrics go way beyond acceptable freedom of expression and actively promote a message of hatred. The Council believes that this feeds community division and runs contrary to its core value of promoting community cohesion.

The Council also notes its duty, working with other agencies, including the Police, to help to make the city safer for everyone. The Council notes that Brighton and Hove has one of the largest LGBT communities in the country and there is an on-going need in the city to address homophobic and other hate crime. The Council also notes that the LGBT community enjoys no protection under incitement to hatred legislation in the way that ethnic minorities do (under the Race Relations Act 1976) and as do many social groups, including the LGBT community, in Northern Ireland, under recently introduced legislation.

The Council notes that the music industry, including the three large record chains with outlets in Brighton and Hove: Virgin Megastore, HMV and MVC, have so far refused to stop the production, promotion and sale of albums that contain murder lyrics.

Finally, the Council welcomes the Government's decision to refuse entry to Sizzla (real name: Miguel Orlando Collins) a Jamaican reggae artist who has incited the murder of LGBT people and ethnic groups in his music and concerts.

Accordingly, Brighton & Hove City Council mandates the Chief Executive to write to:

- the city's three MPs to request that they lobby the Government to extend incitement to hatred legislation to cover the LGBT community and other groups targeted by 'murder music'.
- the UK managing directors of Virgin Megastore, MVC and HMV, making plain the Council's view that to refuse to take music off-sale containing 'incitement to murder' lyrics ultimately contributes to a climate where homophobia and other forms of prejudice are seen as acceptable."

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### **Reggae concert banned over lyrics**

**BBC News** Thursday, 23 September, 2004

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/manchester/3681606.stm>

Jamaican dancehall singer Buju Banton has been banned from playing a concert in Manchester after protests over his allegedly homophobic lyrics. The reggae artist was due to perform at the Bierkeller in Piccadilly on Thursday night. Greater Manchester Police cancelled the gig as previous performances "suggest a likelihood of public disorder".

A spokeswoman for Greater Manchester Police said: "**Intelligence gathered about previous appearances of the artist and the implications of his previous performances suggest a likelihood of public disorder and the potential for disruption at his performances. Taking into account this intelligence and concerns from various agencies and community groups, the performance has been cancelled. Greater Manchester Police accepts the right to public freedom of expression but does not encourage anything which could cause possible hate or dissension within any community.**"

The force's city centre safe team worked with Manchester City Council and licensed premises in the city centre before making the decision.

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### **Amnesty International report**

[http://www.amnestyusa.org/outfront/jamaica\\_report.html](http://www.amnestyusa.org/outfront/jamaica_report.html)

**In January 2004, around 30,000 people attended a huge stage show** and Rastafarian celebration, Rebel Salute, in St. Elizabeth, Jamaica. Some of Jamaica's most celebrated artists were present. Throughout the night, Capleton, Sizzla and others sang almost exclusively about gay men. Using the derogatory terms for gay men - "chi chi men" or "battybwoys" they urged the audience to "kill dem, battybwoys haffi dead, gun shots pon dem... who want to see dem dead put up his hand" (kill

them, gay men have got to die, gun shots in their head, whoever wants to see them dead, put up your hand)...

From **Buju Banton's Boom Bye Bye**, which threatened "batty boys" with "ah gunshot in ah head", to Beenie Man's "I'm dreaming of a new Jamaica, come to execute all the gays" to Baby Cham & Bounty Killer's "Bun a fire pon a kuh pon mister fagoty, Ears ah ben up and a wince under agony, Poop man fi drown a dat a yawd man philosophy" (Burn gay men, til they wince under agony, gay men should drown, that's the yard man's philosophy), the exhortations to kill and maim seem to know no bounds. ..

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### **Buju Banton charged with assault**

The Jamaica Observer Friday, September 23, 2005

[http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/html/20050923T000000-0500\\_88961\\_OBS\\_BUJU\\_BANTON\\_CHARGED\\_WITH\\_ASSAULT\\_.asp](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/html/20050923T000000-0500_88961_OBS_BUJU_BANTON_CHARGED_WITH_ASSAULT_.asp)

REGGAE artiste Buju Banton was on Wednesday offered bail in the sum of \$50,000 after he pleaded not guilty to a charge of assault in the night court section of the Corporate Area Resident Magistrate's Court.

The police alleged that Banton was among a group of men who barged into a house on Carlisle Avenue in Kingston on June 24 last year and beat six men who they accused of being homosexuals.

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### **Buju Banton freed of assault charge**

The Jamaica Star

20/01/2006

POPULAR ENTERTAINER MARK 'Buju Banton' Myrie, was freed of an assault charge in the Corporate Area Resident Magistrate's Court on Thursday.

Myrie was charged with Horace Hill for assault in connection with an incident on June 24, 2005, during which it is alleged that a group of men was beaten after they were accused of being homosexuals. Before Myrie left, he was let off with a warning from the RM.

**"Mr. Myrie it is clear that something took place that was unlawful to extricate the men and that is wrong.** They're all sorts of legal recourse to take if you have a problem with someone in your community. I would hate to think you are discrediting your songs by your conduct," she said.

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### **Human Rights Watch**

**Hated to Death:** Homophobia, Violence, and Jamaica's HIV/AIDS Epidemic. Nov '04  
download full 81 page report here: <http://hrw.org/reports/2004/jamaica1104/jamaica1104.pdf>

On June 9, 2004, Brian Williamson, Jamaica's leading gay rights activist, was murdered in his home, his body mutilated by multiple knife wounds. Within an hour after his body was discovered, a Human Rights Watch researcher witnessed a crowd

gathered outside the crime scene. A smiling man called out, "Battyman [homosexual] he get killed!" Many others celebrated Williamson's murder, laughing and calling out, "let's get them one at a time," "that's what you get for sin," "let's kill all of them." Some sang "**boom bye bye**," a line from a popular Jamaican song about killing and burning gay men.

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## **Christian AID report**

### **Jamaican HIV defender murdered on eve of World AIDS Day 01/12/2005**

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/stories/051201s3.htm>

Steve Harvey from Christian Aid partner, Jamaica AIDS Support for Life (JASL), has been murdered. He ran a programme providing support to gay men and sex workers.

Three men, armed with guns, broke into Mr Harvey's house and demanded money. They then forced him to carry valuables into the JASL car parked outside.

One of the gun men was reported to have said to Mr Harvey and his two house-mates: 'We hear that you are gay'. Two of the men denied it. They were tied up and left in the house. Steve was forced into the car which then sped away. Two hours later, he was found, shot dead.

Jamaica has one of the highest murder rates in the world. With a population of only 2.7 million people, the country has seen 1,383 murders in 2005 alone. Gun violence is common and homophobia rife.

## Homophobia

Victims of homophobic violence are often too scared to appeal to the police for protection. According to Human Rights Watch: 'Police actively support homophobic violence, fail to investigate complaints of abuse, and arrest and detain [men] based on their alleged homosexual conduct.'

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## **"Boom Bye Bye" – a witness statement**

provided to Spectrum by a local Trans woman (anonymised on safety grounds)

In the spring of 2001, I moved to London from a small northern town in the hope that a cosmopolitan city would be too busy about its own business to worry about my transsexual life. I am an obviously trans person, and have no choice but to be "out", nor do I have any way to hide my trans identity.

I had no expectations of what life might be like in Brixton SW9, nor had I ever heard the words "batty boy" "chi chi man" or "Boom bye bye" before I moved there. I began to hear all of these words directed at me with venom from the very first day of my arrival, and at first I did not know what they meant. I would only have to go out to the shops to have these words said to me by total strangers.

I had been in Brixton only a week when I was first attacked. It was broad daylight, the middle of the afternoon, just a few yards from my flat, when I was kicked to the ground, and my shopping scattered. There were shouts of "batty boy" and other

things said in patois, which I did not understand. No one in the street moved to help me.

By the summer of 2002, I had been violently assaulted nine times. I had been pelted with bottles and tin cans lifted out of a rubbish bin. I had been pelted with fruit from a vegetable stand. I was kicked unconscious on one occasion. On another I was hit with a wine bottle which bruised me but did not break.

On the last occasion, I was first pelted with stones, and then as I tried to run to my flat, knocked to the ground with shouts of "Boom Bye Bye." My face was stamped upon, and I was kicked unconscious. Maxillio-facial repair has been only partly successful. My head bears many scars, but the scars in my heart are deepest and will not heal.

I fled to Brighton, and here at last I have found peace, and support from Mind Out, for the many emotional problems this abuse has imprinted in my heart and mind. I had never heard of Buju Banton until I came to Brighton, and was at last able to find a meaning to the words "Boom Bye Bye" which I had heard so often, yet never understood, whilst living in Brixton.

There is nothing that can now be done to undo the harm done to me by Buju Banton's words, but if a similar wretchedness is not to befall others, I urge Brighton & Hove City Council and our police service to do all in their power to prevent his planned performance at the Concorde.

There are many LGBT people like me in Brighton & Hove, who have come here as a final refuge from violent alienation and abuse. If the advocates of hate and murder are allowed to do their work here, how long will it be before their violent ministry proliferates, and where will there be left for us to go?

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**Concorde 2** publicity for performance on 5<sup>th</sup> July

<http://www.concorde2.co.uk/>

Having metamorphosed from a rude boy/teenage phenomenon, causing controversy with tracks like **Boom Bye Bye**, into a self assured rastafarian deejay and singer...

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This information was researched and compiled by Spectrum LGBT Community Forum

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