

INTERVIEW WITH ASTON “FAMILY MAN” BARRETT

JAS OBRECHT, FEBRUARY 14, 2011

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

I want to thank you for agreeing to talk with us.

Yeah, man, it's a pleasure for me too. I'm in the mood.

I'd like to start by asking a question about your brother, Carly.

Okay.

Is it accurate to say that he was the inventor of the one-drop beat?

Accurate. That's da man.

How did he come up with it?

Well, you know, we always think of music, like the height of music. Robert said, “What is the heights of music?” Some people said soul music, some say classical, you know. We did a lot of research, and we realized that jazz is the heights of music. Jazz. So we decided to check out what jazz is all about, and we found out that it's just a free-form music. So we decided to free-up ourselves [laughs], you know, encourage ourselves. And, of course, drums are the first instrument in music. You know, they used to use it a lot in Africa to send messages across the village and valley and city, everywhere. So what we do, we in-graft that kind of Nyabinghi communal and mix it with the Jamaica mento and then we decide to create that beat and feel it on the one-drop. And it become the heartbeat of the people. This is reggae. I and I are the architect of reggae.

Is it true that your brother began playing on empty paint cans when you were children?

Yes! And I started out on a one-string bass, which I made myself. [Laughs.]

How'd you make it?

The neck was made out of a 2×4 wood, and the body was made out of ply. And so I draw the body and let them guys cut it out from there on a band saw. And I nailed it together – I never even screw it, I *nail* it together. [Laughs.] It was a board ashtray I got on to the bottom of it, like a bridge, to have the string comes off of it. And the string was one curtain rod [string]. A curtain rod – I put it on there and stretch it around the neck and put the wood ashtray [as a bridge] to leave it off of the frets. When I play it, it go *ping, ping, ping, ping*. When I take it around to the back room – it got a cellar and a wooden floor – and I rest it on it while I play it, it go [louder] *boom, boom, boom, boom*, like a bass. [Laughs.]

How old were you when this happened?

Well, I wasn't checking the age out. Teens, for sure. Like about 15, 16, 17 – it got to be in them time.

Over the years, you've played guitar, keyboards, percussion.

Well, definitely I'm the bass specialist. Yeah, I play rhythm guitar, lead guitar, keyboards, percussion.

Is the bass closest to your heart?

The bass?

Is that your favorite instrument?

Yeah, I decided to play the bass myself, the string bass, the music. Because the drum, it is the heartbeat, and the *bass*, it is the backbone. So if the drummer is not right, the music is gonna have a bad heart. And if the bass is not right, the music is gonna have a bad back, so it would be crippled. So that's what the new concept in music was when they have the big talk in Los Angeles, you know – that's not only the musical capital of the United States, but the world. That was in '73, '74. And guess what was the big argument all about? The new concept in music in all this – the drum and the bass! Because America music, they used to hide it. You'd have violins and voices and ching-ching-ching and a horn section, and the drums was way back. So we says, no. Reggae music, it is the heartbeat of the people. It is the universal language what carry the message of roots, culture, and reality. So you have to feel that [imitates rhythm section] *ping, puff, too-too-too-too*, you know, dub section.

When did you get your first real bass?

Well, first I got some to borrow – you know, like lease for a while. It was a Kent. Then I get a Hagmon to borrow – like a cheap bass, like, but it still plays. And I also sampled Gibson and Kent and Hofner. But Fender is the real bass for me. Fender Jazz.

What attracted you to the Fender Jazz Bass versus the Precision?

Well, it sound deep. It reminded me of what bass is all about, nothing like the upright bass. So I always tried to adopt that principle of that sound, even when I play the electric bass. I tune the Fender and my amp and let it *peace*, like the acoustic bass.

Back when you were playing in The Upsetters, did you have decent amplifiers?

Well, we have to give time for what we got. We didn't got much. I had a little Fender amp, one at the time. They used two 6L6 output tubes, but they blow so often, so I took out the 6L6 what make the Fender circuit and I use two KT66. So when I put in that tube, it doesn't get red and burn out. And that make it punch more smoother.

Was The Uniques' single "Watch This Sound" the first song you recorded?

Yes! "Watch This Sound" by The Uniques. [Hear this 1969 reworking of Buffalo Springfield's "For What It's Worth" here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-d8nmvB6eE>.]

What do you remember about that?

Well, when I was appointed for the session, I told them that my knees were shaking like a leaf on a tree. [Laughs.] I never even been to a studio to see what a studio look like. No one ever take me to a studio. They only heard me on the bandstand in, you know, when we go and play ghetto places. Yeah. So when I get the session, I remember I said to B.B., a singer, I say, "I got this appointment for this session in the studio, but I never been to a studio." Him say, "That's where you're gonna get experience." You know, it wasn't much help, like, "You gotta go." [Laughs.]

Did the Hippy Boys come next for you?

Yeah, it was about Hippy Boy time. Yeah. That was the first name for the first band. Which is the same band. It just the name then keep changing around.

That was with your brother?

Yes.

Did the fact that you were brothers play an important role in the rhythm you created? Other brothers who've played in bands together, like the Van Halens, have said that they understand each other's rhythm better than anyone else.

Of course I do. That's where we lock – the drummer and the bass – and come up with a dub section. I know drummer and bass musicians never practice normally, but we do that. He make a little platform and he get some different sizes of empty paint tins, you know, some get different sound. And he was also in the back room with me, so he's hitting the floor with his right heel as the foot drum, getting that bass effect. And having my one-string bass rest on the wood floor behind the door almost, getting that other bass effect. I get the bass effect and him get the foot-drum bass effect. We have a cymbal. We was walking and find one side of a cymbal, and we nail it up on a little piece of wood. And so that one cymbal was both his crash and his after-beat hi hat.

When you first met Bob Marley, was he writing songs?

Well, we get into that when Bunny Livingston and Peter Tosh left the band. You know, the first tour was '72. Then Bunny quit away. And the following year with Peter it was a little bit shaky. In the last part of the tour in the U.S. we got Joe Higgs to accompany Peter Tosh. And after that Joe went back off to his solo career and Peter left too. And my keyboard player could not be found – Earl Lindo. And Bob said to me, "What are we gonna to do now? Is only three a us leave." I said, "Three of us? That's the power of the Trinity." He said, "What is gonna be my first move?" I say, "I'm gonna rearrange our music room, rehearsal room, and set it up like a little demo studio, so we can tape our new concept of lyrics, melodies, and music, to prepare ourself before we are ready to go into the studio." And that's where we began to work on this album called Natty Dread.

When we were working on it, this lady came up from upstate New York. Her name is Martha Velez. She have an album to do called Escape Out of Babylon. She from Woodstock. So she say she got five song, originally, and she wanted to cover five of our songs. And we have to produce it for her. We stop what we were doing, and we work on her album and record it, overdub voice and mix it, and give it to her. And we get the okay from Island, through them, to do the project. And she gone, well pleased. And as we get back in the studio now and finish laying our tracks and prepare to start the overdub, we get another invitation. This one was from Taj

Mahal in San Francisco. He was working on an album called More Roots, and he want to cover one of our songs too – “Slave Driver.” So we went up to San Francisco. It was Bob Marley, Alan “Skill” Cole, Lee Jaffe, and myself – four of us. And I even played a piano on that track, also, for Taj Mahal. [Sings and moves his hands like he’s playing piano] “Slave driver . . .” I overdub a piano on the verse.

Did you work on the mix of Taj’s album?

Just the first one, More Roots. Just that one. We promised ourselves to do other projects, you know. But, through we busy, you know, it simma down.

How did you put together songs with the Wailers? When you were doing a song like “Who the Cap Fit,” what would the song start with?

In an illustration of earth crisis, earth runnings. Let’s say, “You can’t judge a book by looking at the cover.” “And you see a man’s face where you do not see his heart” – that’s another illustration, you know? Like, your head in it could be near as well as it could be far. So that’s why we say, “Your best friend could be your worst enemy, and your enemy could be your best friend.” [Laughs.] “And it only your friend know your secret,” whosoever that one is, “so only they could reveal it.” And Bob say, “If night should turn to day, a lot of people would run away.” [Laughs.] You know.

Can you separate spirituality from your music? Is there a difference between saying your prayers and playing reggae?

Well, of course. But we were called to be in one because the Almighty say that he that worship him *secretly*, he shall reward thee *openly*. Yeah, man. And we are voluntary chosen from the heavens to come down to earth here, like our big brother Jesus, to fulfill our mission also. I will tell you a lot of people can do the miracles what he perform on earth, can do what he do too – even greater than what he do. And we see greater things is happening today – like chariots without horses. Like we’re in one of these chariots [the tour bus] – it got horsepower! [Laughs.] Yeah, man.

What was your favorite part of being in the Wailers during the Bob Marley era?

By moving off. Starting off. We know we got a vibe, we know we got a message, and we have that integrity fa carry it through. We getting that inspiration from the Most High. And religion is all about running around all type of music, vibration of

sound, because it's word, sound, and power, you know. And we decide to take it to the next step from the late-'60s inspiration, so we're gonna move it up now. And when we move off is right when we first started the first tour. I recall playing at a place in England called The Speakeasy, where we did two shows a night for two weeks. And when we finish the mission, the write-up in the papers – because that club named The Speakeasy, they say that's where all the media people them hang out – journalists, critics, radio, newspaper, magazine. So we play for them two shows a night for two weeks, and most of the time I'm seeing the same faces and some new faces. Some don't miss it – two shows for two weeks. They write up in the paper that the first song what we play, it cast a spell upon them. And after that, it was like *magic*.

Do you remember the night in 1976 when Bob Marley's mother came to see the band play at the Tower Theater in Philadelphia? Your concert was so different that night.

Yeah. A couple of times I see her. Was she performing?

No, she was in the audience. But Bob knew she was out there.

Okay. Yeah, that's cool.

Were you friends with his mother?

Her first gospel album, I produce it. Then some different management came by to work, you know. When I see the first design for the album, I say, "No, that's not it." You can't dress her up like that – you have to have a churchy kind a backdrop, scene. It seem like that. They did something else, but then some people come in – a new accountant and a lot of that kind of crap. She sings her own, from the original. And she said she wants me to be her manager, but I said, "No, I can't manage you, but I will be your producer," the arranger and producer.

Among all of the reggae musicians you've worked with, who were your favorites?

I'll tell you, I just take it as it comes, one day at a time. Because it's like a thrill, a blessing, to work with these different people. To listen to them – to listen to them soul, what they're trying to bring out. And I find it and bring out the thing for them, with them.

What are your views of the role of the bass in the music?

I love singing also, but I don't practice my vocal for that. So when I'm playing the bass, it's like I am singing baritone, so I create a melodic line each time.

Are any songs particularly close to your heart?

So many of them, I'll tell you, my man. They all do, because if we listen to them all, those Bob Marley and The Wailers tracks, you know that nothing else we could have done to that track. [Laughs.] That is so unique. Yeah. A lot of that came from our rehearsal room – the inspiration. And of course the first stage of the music sets like a balance, and then we go to the studio and we do the retake.

Can you tell me about the song "Want More"?

"Want More." Yes. Between Bob, my brother, and myself, we co-write over eleven tracks. And we can recall we were just on six of the eleven. And as much as I had two guitars and two keyboard players – I play a portion of keyboard on the tape, and I play more of the rhythm guitar – I overdub. Bob play some. I am the sole engineer. I am the last one to listen to every mix. They can mix it when I'm not there, but I have to recheck it. 'Cause everything got to have a certain pace and a pitch.

Did you play the same bass all through the 1970s?

With Bob? No. That one I lease it in the museum in Seattle, that music place there, and it tour as much as I do. Yes!

What happened to Bob's Les Paul?

The family got that one. I just got the Yamaha, the one we bring from Japanese in '77. Yeah.

Do you know whatever happened to Al Anderson?

There were some 'scrupulous things. Al and Junior, at some part of it they were trying to impersonate, which is not good. They should think of something else what they used to do before they knew me, before they knew the Wailers Band, and don't try to do what they're doing. When I first met Junior Marvin, he was pretending to be Jimi Hendrix, and themselves called Music Marvin Explosion. And that's the way they should explore it – spoken that way. But instead, you know, they trying to create something which is not good for the music, the World

Federation of Music, and all the music of Jamaica and jazz. They try to violate all of that, which is not too good.

Were your parents fans of jazz music?

No, but I listen to a little jazz and I mix all those kinds of those concepts of music and put into the reggae. It's got funk. It got rhythm and blues. It got soul, and there's a little jazz in there too. Reggae!

When you were a child, what kind of music did listen to?

Well, of course, I have to listen to what we hear on the radio. Jamaica wasn't too advanced in those early years. But still we hear soul, we hear merengue, we hear soca. We hear about blues of America. I used to listen to Elvis Presley a lot. Little Richard, Fats Domino, Bill Haley, Joe Cocker, The Drifters, The Impressions, you know.

Were you aware of a guy named James Jamerson?

James?

Jamerson, the bass player for Motown.

Yes. Rick James! Yes. Yea, man. I listen to that sound. I met a few of them when we on the road playing in the Los Angeles area. We were playing at this small club, the Roxy. I met Rick James there, and Buddy Miles and some more guys. Yeah, I remember Rick James come in with his bass and show me all these digital bass switches for sounds. Them wanna know what I have on my bass sound like that. He sees I have a plain Fender bass. The effects – just what they put in it, you know. What comes out, the vibe, it's not even active [no active electronics]. It's normal. All I use was just a little bit of Soundcraft equalizer because I use two sets of heads – you know, two rigs, left and right, to make the thing tight. Yeah, man. Some of these have so many switches, like in a plane.

You like to keep it simple – no effects.

Well, some tone matches certain concepts of music. We have created a music it might call fa a little thing. It seems like that. But I prefer the Fender still. Some [other basses] look good, but the Fender bass it not only sound like a bass, it *look* like a bass.

Can I ask you a couple of questions about Bob Marley?

Yes.

Was he a very disciplined musician?

Yes, we are.

What were rehearsals like?

Yeah. We decide to come together as singers and players of instrument, and we spread the message [to the] four corner of the earth. Because in those days, the band what I got, every man know every man's parts. You play the keyboard, but you know how to play some part on the guitar. So it was so unique, you know? Everyone just all tight. I recall when we were doing the live recording for Babylon By Bus. It was two shows at the same place. And when we did the first show, and they replay back the tape, they say, no they can't use it. "It's too exact like the LP." So they makin' us, "Loosen up a little – put a little rock and a little soul in it." And that's what we do to make that Babylon By Bus. The very first session, the first night, not released yet. That's what I used to listen when I'm at home. When I stroll in at evenin', I'll put on the live tape of the first show and just dub it.

Did Bob write most of his songs on acoustic guitar?

I would say, yeah. He would use his guitar, or we'd use some together. Sometime he or I would hear a sound and get the inspiration and find a melody and a riff too. Yeah.

Donald Kinsey told me that one day he asked Bob where his songs came from. Bob answered that songs are in the air and they choose someone to come through, and sometimes they choose him. Did you ever hear him say anything like that?

Repeat that again.

Chewy Frazer: *Said him, the song in the air. And they come through him. They choose him to come through his soul. The song speak through him and choose him.*

Yes!

Chewy: *Did you ever hear him say anything like that?*

Yeah, mon. Inspiration come through I and I and I, for sure. You see? We are coming from the throne of King David, the chief musician. And we are the archangels – that is coming from the Psalms, the Book of Psalms. So the whole world manifest through I and I. It's an inspiration. The band is called first the Hippy Boys, then The Upsetters, then the Youths Professionals.

Was Tyrone Downey in the Youth Professionals?

Tyrone? Yes. That was his first band I have him in. Him were in school, and I taken him to studio. He's the one what was down on me for the band name. Somebody was making a club, and they gave us like three weeks to prepare and the club would be finished and them want us to open it. So we were rehearsing three, four time a day through those time. And then it dawned on me, what is it the band name? What are we gonna call the band? I said, "Oh, don't worry about it. The name will come." So on the very final week, rehearsal was so tight. I said "I have to tell them the name – today. And now too!" [Laughs.] So we were we all joking, you know. So I say, "I and I is what? I and I are youths. So the people that gonna come in to hear us, what are they expecting to hear?" "Some professional music." So I said, "You just called the name." Him say, "What?" "Youth Professional." [Laughs.]

If a young person said he or she wanted to play bass like you, what would you suggest?

It's a good idea to keep a tape and listen keenly. The more you listen good, the more you grow, the more it comes to you. I listen. When I started out here with my one-string bass, I already said to myself, "How am I gonna play that as three?" Because there's four strings on a bass, you know. And I don't stop doin' whatever I can do to the one. We have no more. And then I decide to get a guitar now. We make guitar when I want two, three strings. I would turn them, tighten them right up, and play maybe just one piece with one, two, three, four chords or something.

Did your mother and father approve of your becoming a musician?

Well, I know one time my dad said he like I to be one of them pilots – a flyer. My mother always say, "Go to school and learn and know." Of course ya gon' know what ya gon' know. She knows that I'm a genius. At that time I a little genius from birth, you know. And I hear them talking it all the while, about you going to be somebody, you going to be very, very rich. So after a while I begin to *feel* the vibe myself. I say yes, it's true. We have a vibe from Jah for this world. So as time go by, they enlighten me more. They say, "As time goes by, knowledge shall

increase.” And I always meditate on what I want to be in the next five years. Every five years, I meditate what I’m gonna do for the next five years. Five years later, I meditate another time.

What do you want to do for the next five years?

Well, right now, see, what we are doing here, is that I’m still doing my same thing. I see enough thing changing around – technology and all of that – it’s like what goes around comes around. And they’re trying to get more technical. Even in the school, I used to joke about some of these times where we now. I used to say, “In time to come, you’re not gonna need muscles anymore.” Say, “Why?” I say, “Everything’s gonna be just press button.” [Laughs.] I say that from me been 19 – I had them kind a talk. “In time to come, you not gonna use muscles anymore. You need muscles, you’re gonna have to go to the gym.”

Do you mind if I ask you a couple of questions about spirituality?

Repeat that part again. I hear the spirituality good, but . . .

Chewy: *Could he ask you a couple of questions about your spirituality?*

Yeah, mon. Of course! Go right ahead.

What do you think happens when people die?

Chewy: *So what you think happen after death?*

What do I think happen after death? Well, what I hear a lot a things about the earth. And also I hear that we also is the reincarnated soul from the ancient time living in this time. So we pass through all them theoretical and reborn again also, you know? Yeah, Bunny Wailer sing that song, “We all the reincarnated souls from that time, living in this time,” you know. [“Reincarnated Souls.”] It’s on the album called Burnin’ – the Wailers, the second one with Island. Well, you know, you hear things, you see movies [laughs], you hear astrology saying things. And just like you hear our God are different. One true and living God, no matter the different names, whatever you want to call him – Jesus, Allah, or Jah. Whatever you call him, one God out there. But maybe they different culture and languages, they will recite the name of the God different. But him know it in themselves that there is a God. But in that God they must be careful, because you must not worship no other God but Him. It look like they have some duplicates on the earth too. You have some other Gods out there, it seem like. I see a movie once – it was a comedy

show – and guy came in. And them have to carry him to the emperor, And him say, “Who that man and that other man?” And the guy tell him, “His name is dat and dat.” And him say, “And how many Gods he got?” Him say, “You only got one God.” And the emperor laughed at him. Say, “You’ve only got one God.” [Laughs.]

Chewy: *So do you believe there’s a heaven?*

Heaven? Yeah, mon. It’s the heights of heights, which is heaven, of course. Because that’s where the Almighty rest – in the heights of heights. Them call it heaven. But heaven on earth is the same place. It’s at the heights of heights of heights. It’s not like it’s up in the air. It’s the same place. Because if you let them go, take a lot of trip out there in orbit, the space represent the earth, and the earth represent the space. Plus the earth is the fullness of the Lord thereafter. If it wasn’t for the earth, we would have no moon or sun nor star. The whole thing about earth: The curator gonna have to come back to earth because earth is the fullness. And if it wasn’t for the earth, they couldn’t reach up there. What I can tell about is the last thing I know about. Just try to sustain in Jah and some magical work with until there are no other time. As Bob said, “One bright morning when my work is over I will fly away off.”

What do these words mean to you: “If you know what life is worth, you will look for yours on earth. Now you’ve seen the light, stand up for your right”?

“Get Up, Stand Up.” Yes! Kind of some people think that a great God is gonna come from the sky and take away all them problems, and everything nice. But it’s easier if the insurance cover the tax for you. And so, you have to emancipate yourself from that mental slavery. I know that you have to do it in order to know now. You look for yours on earth – that’s earth-running, man runnin’ the earth, which is the new world order or the democratic – is that the word? Yes, society.

A lot of musicians went through The Wailers while Bob Marley was in the band. Why were you and your brother the mainstays? What was it about the chemistry of the three of you that lasted through all the changes?

All right. See, we practiced over the years. That different from the in-borne concept of bringing the music. It’s music is what bring us together. What bring the musicians and the singers together? It’s music, the vibes. And we grow up to be musician, like session musicians, and have a band. And The Wailers – Bob, Peter, and them, they were solid as a vocal group, like a big choir singing. And the first song I hear with The Wailers was “Simmer Down.” And from I hear that tune in a

club, we were one evening. No other tune play in that jukebox but “Simmer Down.” Yeah, man, I went into like a trance to that music, like I was *involved* with the music. Well, I’m not even involved in music yet. In those days I am an electrical welder, I’m a bike mechanic, I’m a blacksmith. So I in-graft all of those other talent and *construct* the music. That’s what I did. That what make it so special. Yeah, man!

What was the difference between working with Bob Marley and with Peter Tosh?

Well, I love all of them, you know. Both of them have a vibe. But I know that Bob is the man, for sure. Could feel that difference, you know? Both of them left to go solo, and Peter ready for his solo album, *Legalize It*, also Bunny first solo album called *Blackheart Man*. And one of the tracks is my own tracks. Him love the track and he was gonna write the melody for it, the song what called “Amagideon” [on *Blackheart Man*]. Yes.

The Wailers carry on the positive vibrations at Tuff Gong Studios, Jamaica, 2011.
Photo by William Richards.

Chewy: *So do you think that reggae music of today still conveys a positive message?*

Yes. Well, of course, they evolve the type of music right now. Sometimes it come like a little battle in the music field. And I could see ’nuff changes like it move from record to CD and now you have download. And what is really happening is the record, and people want to go to the music store and buy music again to take home or club. I know it’s kind of different. I prefer when the vinyl was runnin’ – 45, LP, disco 45, EP. They were better, really, musically. Anyway, that is the future thing, where I want it to be. What we know that. Even as we comin’ up as young musician, you know, and playing this type of music we play, is like at first other musicians berate us. They say we are “two-chord musicians.” Say we only can play two chords. And I say, “Yes! I agree. But which two chords? With what tempo? And what riff?” That what make it so special. And Bob used the same words I. “Is me, mon. Me not prettified singer.” I said to Bob, “I know that. You’re not a prettified singer. You are the greatest expressionist who express lyrics within melody and music. No one does it like you did it.”

Do you have any favorite songs that Bob wrote?

“These are the words of my master: That know weak heart shall prosper. And whosoever diggeth the pit shall fall in it. Because if you are the big tree, we are the

small axe. Ready to cut ya down.” But it’s not like violence, you know. We are a soul rebel. Soul *adventurers*, you know? [Laughs.] We’re not like rebels without a cause – terrorists. We’re not into that crap. All we do is smoke herb and give praise to the Almighty. The true kind of substance took over globally. They make it look like we are using drugs, and they know that is not true. They know what drugs really is. This is the thing: They know it good for over 300 medical purposes, plus its sticks make fine linen for clothes. And it also make the strongest rope people use for ship down in the dock. And it make all them khaki uniform and war uniform which in World War II. And within World War II they meet up together and put a ban on it in 1942. They make it illegal because it’s too good, and they want to sell other plants. It was first discovered on King Solomon’s grave, and it was called “wisdom weed” before it labeled with all these different other names.

Donald Kinsey told me that Bob Marley told him to quit smoking herb and read the Bible.

Yeah. Him mussy have some nice collie weed der.

What’s it like having 42 children?

Hmm. Quite a blessing, I’ll tell ya. And 29 grand and one great-grand – no, I’m gonna have 30 grand. One of my daughter says she’s in a way, preparing to have her first kid. So it’s gonna be 30 grand now and one great-grand – so far.

It seems that almost anywhere you travel in the world, you can find people listening to the music of Bob Marley and The Wailers. Why is that?

Yes. It’s earthly sound. As I say, we are coming from the chief musician, King David’s throne, and we are the archangels and we are voluntary chosen for the mission. But true we are just ordinary people who do extraordinary work. We are like work addicts. Some people realize our significant work and the messages in the music what we do. They call it the music of Bible, the music of people. And some just enjoy it, nice. People see it in different heights of heights. Like I see a guy at the last show, last night. The man say I “come in like Moses.” And like him try to study some history on me and say “I’m just thirty.” And, like him know a lot of things for his age and was proud of himself ’bout what him know and study and feel. And him talk and start gettin’ deeper as him go. I fully explain everything I know ’cause some part him recite it himself. It was like more than tongues can tell. Yes.

When you think of Bob and Peter nowadays, is it with feelings of affection and love?

Bob what and Peter?

Chewy: *When you think of Bob and Peter, do you have feelings of love and affection for them?*

Hmm. Yeah, man. I remember the happy day and the good day. And all time people always say, “Good things does not last forever.” Peter Tosh is the man who used to build my spliff for me. He the one to teach me to do a spliff. [Laughs.] Every time I build a spliff, roll a joint, I think of Peter Tosh. He was the neatest guy building that spliff. That spliff look like it come out of the factory. He was neat, I’ll tell you. But you know Bob couldn’t build a spliff good – big and fluff, like Catch a Fire. [Laughs.]

You had an album that said you could use the jacket for cleaning reefer.

[Family Man looks to Chewy.]

Chewy: *One of your albums said you could use it to clean your reefer.*

Oh, yes! That is Rastaman Vibration, my man. The back of it, Neville Garrick, our designer at the time, he design it so it have a groove [the original album jacket was textured] so that the seeds would just roll off of the groove. Right now the whole thing look smooth, but at first it was a groove thing. The back was rougher. The Postitive Vibration album. And when Peter Tosh came out with the first issue of his album called Legalize It, I hear that there was a picture of a herb with some chemical in it – it smell like it! It not it, but it smell like it. [Laughs.] Yeah, my man.

Was Peter fun to be around?

Oh, I used to see one of them performance – we were at a gig once in Japan. It was him alone, I know. He come out and ride a one-wheel bicycle. Yes.

Do you still live in Jamaica?

Yes. Jamaica, for sure. I think so! [Laughs.]

Thank you for the interview – this has been a wonderful experience.

Yes, my man.

Alright. We'll let you have some time before the show.

Ah, yeah. I'm the captain of the ship [The Wailers]. I keep it and I sail it. I won't let it go down like the Titanic!

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