

January 24, 2008

OPEN LETTER

Humphrey Kadaner
President
HMV Canada Inc.
110-5401 Eglinton Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario
M9C 5K6
Sent via fax: (416) 620 5064

Re: The sale and promotion of “murder music” through HMV Canada

Dear Mr. Kadaner:

Egale is Canada’s largest national organization advocating on behalf of the gay and lesbian community. **Stop Murder Music (Canada)**, is an organization that combats calls for violence and murder against the gay and lesbian community by certain dancehall artists. In our capacities as Executive Director and Founder respectively, we are writing to you to express our concern about the availability and sale of homophobic music through HMV Canada Inc. After reading this letter, we hope that you will agree that HMV Canada should not be a platform for anti-gay artists to promote hatred with the sale of their music in Canada.

You may be unaware that a number of dancehall artists have openly advocated, encouraged and glorified the violence and murder of gays and lesbians in their music. We have enclosed sample lyrics by a number of recording artists, including Elephant Man, Buju Banton and Sizzla Kalonji as examples which are typical of the violence advocated toward gays and lesbians.

Incitement of violence and murder offends Canadian law. We would like to bring to your attention the following provisions:

Sections 318 and 319 of the *Criminal Code* make it criminal offences to advocate killing members of a group, or to publicly incite or promote hatred based on a person’s sexual orientation.

Egale and **Stop Murder Music (Canada)** are aware that HMV Canada has removed products from its shelves in the past. For example, it is our understanding that in 2005, HMV Canada removed all Bob Dylan products in response to the exclusive release of *Live at the Gaslight 1962* through the Starbuck’s coffee chain. HMV has taken similar action toward other artists who have entered into exclusive distribution deals with other outlets, including Elton John, Alanis Morissette and the Rolling Stones.

Given the calls for violence and murder contained in the attached lyric excerpts, we are sure you can appreciate our profound concern about any involvement by HMV Canada in

its dissemination. Given that HMV Canada has removed music from its shelves in the past for economic reasons, we hope it would do the same for fundamental human rights. We believe that your customers care about Canadian values and law and expect HMV Canada, the country's largest music retailer, to take a leadership role in exercising corporate social responsibility.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our concerns in greater detail and to search for a speedy and cooperative resolution to this matter. We will call your office within the next week to follow-up on this letter and thank-you in advance for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Helen Kennedy
Executive Director
Egale Canada
8 Wellington St. East, 3rd Flr
Toronto, Ontario
M5E 1C5

Akim Adé Larcher
Founder
Stop Murder Music (Canada)
c/o Egale Canada
8 Wellington St. East, 3rd Flr
Toronto, Ontario
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Elephant Man

Real Name: O'Neil Bryan
Date of Birth: 11 September 1975



Date of release: 20/11/2001
Availability: Usually ships within 10-20 days
Format: CD
Catalogue number: GRELCD266
Supplier: GREENSLEEVES

Track: Log On

Log on and step pon chi chi man

Log on and step on a queer man

[Log on is a type of dance using the right foot in a stepping motion as if to squash a cockroach - the lyrics boast about crushing queers.]

Dance wi a dance and a bun out a freaky man.

Join our dance and let's burn out the queer man

Step pon him like a old cloth

Step on him like an old cloth

A dance wi a dance and a crush out a bingi man .

Join our dance and let's crush queer men

Do di walk, mek mi see the light and di torch dem fast

Do the walk, quickly let me see the lighter and torch

[Lighter and torch: makeshift aerosol flamethrower weapon]

Buju Banton

Real Name: Mark Myrie
Date of Birth: 15 July 1973



Date of release: 11/06/2002
Availability: Usually ships within 7-10 days
Format: CD
Catalogue number: PH2100
Supplier: VP RECORDS

Track: Boom Bye Bye

Boom [as in gun sound] goodbye, goodbye
[as in we won't be seeing you again, you're dead]
Inna batty bwoy head
In a queer's head
Rude bwoy no promote no nasty man
Rude boys don't promote no queer men
Dem haffi dead
They have to die
Send fi di matic an
Send for the automatic [gun] and
Di Uzi instead
The Uzi instead
Shoot dem no come if we shot dem
Shoot them, don't come if we shoot them
[as in don't come to help them]
Guy come near we
If a man comes near me
Then his skin must peel
Then his skin must peel
[as in pour acid over him]
Burn him up bad like an old tyre wheel
Burn him up badly, like you would burn an old tyre wheel

Sizzla Kalonji

Real Name: Miguel Collins
Date of Birth: 17 April 1976



Date of release: 09/12/2003
Availability: Usually ships within 10-20 days
Format: CD
Catalogue number: CRCD3093
Supplier: JETSTAR

Track: Boom Boom

Boom boom! Batty boy them fi dead
Boom Boom! [as in gunshots] Queers must be killed