

REGGAE SUPPLEMENT

Black Uhuru (L-R) Michael Rose, Puma Jones and Derrick Simpson.

TAPES

The Island reggae albums that are available on cassette are listed below. Profiles on page 12 and 14 list all Island reggae recordings available and several forthcoming releases.

Bob Marley
All albums
Jimmy Cliff
The Harder They Come
Black Uhuru
Sinsemilla
Third World
Prisoner On The Street
96 Degrees In The Shade
The Story's Been Told
Journey To Addis
Linton Kwesi Johnson
Bass Culture
Forces Of Victory
Toots & The Maytals
Funky Kingston
Reggae Got Soul
In The Dark
Pass The Pipe
Just Like That
Steel Pulse
Handsworth Revolution
Tribute To The Martyrs
Inner Circle
Everything Is Great

SINGLES

Island 45s available are:
Bob Marley
'No Woman No Cry'/'Lively Up Yourself'
'Exodus'/'Exodus'
'Is This Love'/'Crisis'
'So Much Trouble In The World'/'SMTITW' (part 2)
'Could You Be Loved'/'One Drop'
'Redemption Song'/'Redemption Song' (band version)
'One Drop'/'Punky Reggae Party'
Third world/Toots & Maytals
Two single pack available soon with Third World's 'Now That We've Found Love' and 'Night Heat' and Toots' 'Chatty' and 'Turn It Up'.

BLACK UHURU

Back about 74-75, New Zealand got its first taste of reggae fever. We were all told that reggae was the next big thing. Bob Marley was at the top of the English charts with 'No Woman, No Cry' and the Maytals had just released their two seminal albums, *Reggae Got Soul* and *In The Dark*.

But it never quite happened. The music reached a fairly limited audience of middle class whites, and then just seemed to fade away. Even in 1977-8, when Marley had a massive hit with the *Kaya* album, reggae to most people meant just that, Bob Marley.

But in 1980 something happened. Marley continued to have huge hits (bigger than ever, in fact), but other reggae acts also started to achieve a notable amount of success. UB 40 had two monster single and a top ten album, Eddie Grant started to take off, culminating in a number one single and now Black Slate are also going places. Hundreds of young polynesian kids could be seen wandering and roller-skating to the sounds of Kingston and Brixton.

But while all the above acts made it with extensive airtime, a couple of acts have started to take off on their own merits

and by word of mouth. The first of these is Linton Kwesi Johnson and the second, and most successful to date, is Black Uhuru.

In New Zealand, the band has come from nowhere. The darlings of the English rock press for some time, Black Uhuru at present have two albums in the national charts, a feat that relies completely on the strength of the music and the band's reputation.

However, Black Uhuru go back a long way. The first group of that name was formed in the late sixties by the 13-year-old Derrick 'Ducky' Simpson, with Garth Dennis and Don Carlos. This group released the first Black Uhuru single 'Folk Song'. Eventually Dennis and Carlos left, and were replaced by Michael Rose and a guy called Errol. Rose's background included a period

spent jamming with Sly Dunbar's group, Skin Flesh and Bone, and being booted out of Happiness Unlimited for smoking herb with Dennis Brown. This line-up recorded *Love Crisis* in 1976-77.

The band then moved to Sly Dunbar, then widely touted as the producer to watch. They replaced Errol with Sandra 'Puma' Jones, an American found by Simpson singing 'Kaya' in a club. With Dunbar and partner Robbie Shakespeare producing, they produced a series of classic singles, including 'Abortion' (banned by Kingston Radio), 'Sun is Shining' and the superb 'Guess Who's Coming to Dinner'.

At one stage, Black Uhuru had four singles in the Jamaican Top 20 at the same time. These singles and others were released in England as the *Showcase* album, which Virgin picked

up, increased by a couple of tracks, and re-issued as *Black Uhuru*. It's a stunning collection of singles and a document of the development of Sly and Robbie's innovative production, matched perfectly to the Black Uhuru style and material. They fit together dub techniques popular in Jamaica in the seventies with Michael Rose's extremely sensual voice.

In the meantime the band had been signed to an international deal by Island Records. The immediate result of the contract was the *Sinsemilla* album, again produced by Shakespeare and Dunbar.

The songs were stronger, and the production placed Sly and Robbie in a position as reggae's foremost producers and innovators. The album used synthesised drum sounds extensively in a way that no-one had attempted before, giving the

sound a lazy, chunky but extremely precise feel. The backing vocals were used to greater effect and the bass was right up in the mix alongside the drums and all sorts of other strange permissive sounds. The record was hailed all over the globe and, almost without exception, was voted top reggae album of 1980.

In New Zealand, both albums, especially *Sinsemilla* have reached a wide audience from all social and economic backgrounds.

The first week of June saw the UK release of *Red* to equally positive reviews. It should reach here later in the year. In the meantime, though, there are two albums out there waiting for you. Both are superb and deserve a place on any discerning turntable, although *Sinsemilla* has a definite edge. Simon Grigg



TOOTS

LIVE

PRESSURE DROP
 SWEET 'N' DANDY
 MONKEY MAN
 GET UP, STAND UP
 HALLELUJAH
 FUNKY KINGSTON
 54-46, THAT'S MY NUMBER
 TIME TOUGH

AND THE MAYTALS