The Globalization of Hip-Hop Discrimination

Written by Robert ID2154
Thursday, 01 December 2005 03:20 -

One of the amazing and blessed things about running a hip-hop & rap web site is that the visitors are global. You can get email from every corner of the globe and from Africa to Finland there are fans of hip-hop culture and music who share their life experiences with you. The fan base of some sites is huge and we are blessed to have visitors from all over the world and people in the armed services who write us.

One of the emails we got recently is from Noah (Young-Chun) Kim formerly known as Nobutaka Toyoda. I was surprised to get his email and very saddened to read what it contained.

Usually we get request for hip-hop and rap artists address, or can you get Tupac to come to our school, or where is he living now and other outlandish requests, but ever now and then a fan writes and it is important that he be heard.

Since it is illegal to print emails we asked permission from Noah to share his email with you. If would like to contact him and lend support or just to find out more; his contact information is below.

Here is the email from Noah (Young-Chun) Kim to ThugLifeArmy.com:

Japanese society continues to oppress ethnic minorities as well as the Burakumin people in areas of employment, access to education, access to housing, denial of the right to vote and the denial of social security. The UN recently published a report (available via the second link) on this matter urging Japan to end the practice of institutionalized discrimination.

I myself am a Zainichi Korean (Korean residing in Japan). I was born in Tokyo as Kim Y-C, a South Korean national, and was denied Japanese citizenship due to the fact that my bloodline and family registry originate in Korea. I also lived until recently using my Japanese name in order to avoid Japanese discrimination against myself and against my father who's livelihood depended on Japanese businesses.

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Because I grew up in Canada, Japanese discrimination can be said to have spread its reach beyond its shores. I suffered from low esteem throughout most of my life enduring bouts of depression due to a negative self-image I carried of Koreans which is prevalent among Japanese people.

One of the key problems with Japanese discrimination against Zainichi Koreans is the one of invisibility; because many take Japanese names and attempt to conceal their identity, the problem itself becomes invisible to most people; my friends in Canada were completely taken back when I recently revealed to them that I was Korean.

Because hip hop has such a wide and loyal fan base in Japan, I was hoping that you can help fight discrimination there; it is difficult to comprehend how oppressors can truly understand music that came out of oppression while at the same time denying that there is a problem. The Japanese are educated in school that they do not discriminate because they treat everyone the same; only after everyone is forced to be the same.

This concept is quite different from what a true non-discriminatory stance implies; that differences among people are recognized and that everyone is respected as a human being after the fact.

If hip hop could do something even minor; ie. Have an artist wear a shirt in a video or at a concert that brings light to the discrimination problem in Japan, you would not only be helping the minority population here but you would be helping Japanese society become more globalized; this in turn would only have positive effects on the global economy.

The Zainichis share similar problems with African Americans; employment discrimination has forced many to turn to a life of crime as a means to make a living. I had a very fortunate upbringing and I feel that my english language abilities is something that I can contribute in order to help my brethren.

Please let me know if hip hop can be of any assistance in this matter.

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

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More information can be found at http://www.imadr.org/tokyo/ishikawareport.html

Contact Noah at **golgo1200@hotmail.com**