

## I Just Called to Say I Love You - Stevie Wonder (1984)

No New Year's Day to \_\_\_\_\_  
No chocolate covered \_\_\_\_\_ hearts to give away  
No first of \_\_\_\_\_  
No song to sing  
In fact here's just another \_\_\_\_\_ day  
No \_\_\_\_\_ rain  
No flowers \_\_\_\_\_  
No wedding \_\_\_\_\_ within the month of June  
But what it is, is \_\_\_\_\_ true  
Made up of these \_\_\_\_\_ words that I must say to you

**CHORUS:** I just called to say I \_\_\_\_\_ you  
I just called to say how much I \_\_\_\_\_  
I just called to say I love you  
And I mean it from the \_\_\_\_\_ of my heart

No summer's high  
No warm \_\_\_\_\_  
No **harvest moon** to light one tender \_\_\_\_\_ night  
No autumn \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_ leaves  
Not even time for birds to fly to \_\_\_\_\_ skies  
No Libra sun  
No \_\_\_\_\_  
No giving thanks to all the \_\_\_\_\_ joy you bring  
But what it is, **though** old so new  
To fill your \_\_\_\_\_ like no three words could ever do

**ordinary, bloom, three, care, love, bottom, July,  
southern, breeze, Christmas, heart, celebrate,  
candy, spring, April, August, Saturday, Halloween,  
something, falling**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ sweets; confectionery.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ the full moon that is seen nearest to the time of the autumn equinox.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ the state or period of flowering.  
"the apple trees were in \_\_\_\_\_"

4. \_\_\_\_\_ a gentle wind.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ average, not interesting or exceptional
6. \_\_\_\_\_ /ðəʊ/ despite the fact that; although.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ the night of 31 October, the eve of All Saints' Day, often celebrated by children dressing up in frightening masks and costumes.

- This song was written by Stevie to Nelson Mandela, who was imprisoned at the time (for around 30 years!) for his part in fighting against the apartheid system in place in South Africa. Apartheid was the legal racial segregation system in place since 1948. The song depicts what Mandela had missed out on each year, every year while he was in prison. While not in the song, it is worth it to mention that apartheid ended and Mandela was elected the President of South Africa in 1994 in the first democratic election of the country.

- **Stevie Wonder**- An American singer, songwriter, musician and record producer. He was born six weeks **premature**<sup>1</sup> which, along with the oxygen-rich atmosphere in the hospital incubator, resulted in retinopathy of prematurity, a condition in which the growth of the eyes is **aborted**<sup>2</sup>, so he became **blind**. "My mother always told me that I could do anything as long as I was careful," Stevland once reflected about his childhood and **inquisitive**<sup>3</sup> nature. He himself never **considered** his blindness to be a **handicap**<sup>4</sup>. He climbed trees and rode a bike. Perhaps more intensively than other children, **he soaked up**<sup>5</sup> music, spending hours listening to the radio, and later, **glued to** the loudspeakers of the television. He would bang on pots and pans, and taught himself every instrument he could get his hands on. At the age of nine, he could play bongo drums, harmonica, bass, and piano.

- <sup>1</sup> occurring or done before the usual or proper time; too early.
- <sup>2</sup> bring to a premature end because of a problem or fault.
- <sup>3</sup> having or showing an interest in learning things; curious.
- <sup>4</sup> a circumstance that makes progress or success difficult.
- <sup>5</sup> to **absorb** or enjoy something that exists around you

- On the occasion of his 35th birthday, Stevie Wonder was honored by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid for his stance against racism in South Africa that same year (1985).

- **South Africa bans "I Just Called to Say I Love You"**  
Stevie famously gave a **shoutout**<sup>6</sup> to Nelson Mandela (1918-2013), who was imprisoned at the time, when he accepted the Academy Award for this song. The negative affect of such was that it led to his music being banned in South Africa. But that incident is also recognized as an **impetus**<sup>7</sup> which led to other prominent musicians acting out against the **apartheid regime**. For instance, Stevie performed this tune, to great applause, at the star-studded Nelson Mandela 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday Tribute in London in 1988.

- **Apartheid** was a system of **institutionalised**<sup>8</sup> racial segregation that existed in Africa from 1948 until the early 1990s. Apartheid was characterised by an authoritarian political culture based on white **supremacy**<sup>9</sup>, which ensured that South Africa was dominated politically, socially, and economically by the nation's **minority**<sup>10</sup> white population. According to this system of social **stratification**<sup>11</sup>, white citizens had the highest status, followed by Asians and Coloureds, then black Africans. The economic legacy and social effects of apartheid continue to the present day.

<sup>6</sup> (especially in hip-hop or dance music) a mention, credit, or greeting, typically one made over the radio or during a live performance.

<sup>7</sup> something that makes a process or activity happen or happen more quickly.

<sup>8</sup> establish (something, typically a practice or activity) as a convention or norm in an organization or culture.

<sup>9</sup> the state or condition of being superior to all others in authority, power, or status.

<sup>10</sup> a small group of people within a community or country, differing from the main population in race, religion, language, or political persuasion.

<sup>11</sup> the arrangement or classification of something into different groups.

### Wonder Honored At U.N.

Musical genius Stevie Wonder was recently honored on his 35th birthday by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid in New York for his dedicated support against racism in South Africa.

Wonder has been among the growing number of Black entertainers who have refused to perform in South Africa because of institutionalized racism there (see story on page 52) and was also arrested while demonstrating in front of the South African Embassy in the nation's capital. When asked why he decided to lend his support to the fight against apartheid, Wonder, seated

at a piano, began to play and sing, "*We are the world, we are the children. We are the ones who make a brighter day so let's start giving.*"

*Wonder chats with another critic of apartheid, Bishop Desmond Tutu.*



*At a press conference of Artists and Athletes Against Apartheid, co-chair Harry Belafonte (r) discusses fight against repressive, racist government as (l-r) Gregory Hines, Tony Randall, Arthur Ashe and Randall Robinson listen intently.*

### Should Famous Blacks Entertain In South Africa?

Should famous Blacks entertain in South Africa? That's a question that Black celebrities have had to wrestle with in light of the lucrative contracts offered them, versus the repression of the Black majority by the ruling White minority in that country.

In September 1983, Atty. Randall Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica, a lobbying group that focuses on issues involving Africa and the Third World, formed Artists and Athletes Against Apartheid. With veteran entertainer Harry Belafonte and ex-tennis pro Arthur

Ashe serving as co-chairmen, the group was designed to solicit support from their colleagues and let the world know its members won't go to South Africa until apartheid is abolished.

Robinson told JET, "As long ago as 1968 the United Nations asked member states to join in the economic and cultural isolation of South Africa." He explained, "They offer large sums of money and want major world entertainers to come there because they confer respectability on South Africa."

Belafonte, who has been outspoken in urging Blacks not to go to South Africa, said, "If you go to Johannesburg or Sun City (the large resort in Bophuthatswana) and play to audiences, extracting inordinate amounts of money for your services and leaving little

1. refuse /rɪ'fju:z/ indicate or show that one is not willing to do something
2. support /sə'pɔ:t/ give assistance to, especially financially. "the government gives £2,500 million a year to support the voluntary sector". Similar: help, aid, assist
3. wrestle /'res(ə)/ struggle with a difficulty or problem. "for over a year David wrestled with a guilty conscience"

## View Performing As Morally Wrong Despite High Pay Offered

Black equality in South Africa, said, given the facts, no Black celebrities should even consider going there. She said, "I don't think we should have any part in propping up a government that is so racist and repressive." She concluded, "By participating in that way, we are helping them."

South Africans have tried to lure the top names in Black entertainment and sports with tempting contracts, but artists such as Nancy Wilson, Sammy Davis Jr., Joe Williams and Natalie Cole, have refused to let dollar signs come before basic principles. Ms. Wilson explained, "I



Denise Nicholas



Millie Jackson



Phyllis Hyman



Joe Williams

have never performed in South Africa, and I don't plan to. What is happening there is wrong and my conscience and my heart will not allow me to be a part of it."

Jazzman Joe Williams offered, "I don't believe in going any place where you are not really wanted. Some people may do it for money, but as many times as I've been asked, I have refused."

As demonstrators rally on college campuses across the country and hordes picket in front of the South African Embassy in

the nation's capital, more and more Black celebrities have joined the protests against the inhumane treatment of Blacks in their homeland. However, statuesque songbird Phyllis Hyman, also an outspoken critic of South Africa's institutionalized racism, said she refused to go to South Africa before it was in vogue.

"I didn't go to South Africa before it was popular not to go to South Africa," Ms. Hyman said. She continued, "My reasons for not going to South Africa stem from my deep political convictions. I knew enough about

South Africa to know that it was a country infested with apartheid, infested with poverty and a lot of hatred against oppressed people — my people."

There have been some artists on the other hand, who have taken the bait to visit South Africa and have lived to regret it, among them Millie Jackson, Tina Turner and the O'Jays. These artists, however, have come to see the light and have renounced the South African government, vowing never to return there un-

til their fellow Blacks are free.

Millie Jackson, whose risqué lyrics have earned her the title "Queen of Raunch," said she would never entertain South Africans again until segregation barriers against the Black majority are removed. She also said she was willing to lend her support to causes in the United States to benefit Black South Africans.

After performing in South Africa in 1979, Tina Turner admitted, "At that time I was naive about the politics in South Africa. However, in recent months, I have turned down several lucrative offers to perform in that country and the Republic of Bophuthatswana. I will continue

■ **Texas Relief Effort:** Athletes and entertainers record a song together in an Irving, Texas studio as part of a Texas relief effort for starving people in Texas and Africa. Among those contributing to the effort are Dallas Maverick basketball player Mark Aguirre (r), former Dallas Cowboys football star Harvey Martin and singer Stephen Stills (l, with hat). The record, titled *Take Our Love—Pass It Along* will be released nationally to aid famine victims.



to reject such offers while the present circumstances prevail."

Popular rhythm and blues group The O'Jays denounced the racist policies of the government of South Africa after performing there in 1981. The trio said they supported boycott efforts by TransAfrica's AAAA and other groups. Group member Walter Williams said, "We have been there to witness the humiliating and dehumanizing effects of the apartheid system. . . We know we have lots of fans in South Africa and we want them to know we are not boycotting them. We are merely deferring performing in South Africa until this evil government is removed between us. And that, we hope, will be soon."



Nancy Wilson



Sammy Davis Jr.



Tina Turner



Stevie Wonder

behind, by your presence, you are encouraging apartheid."

Musical genius Stevie Wonder, who has been very vocal against the racist system in South Africa, recently saw his music banned from the airwaves there after he accepted his Oscar for best movie song for his hit *I Just Called To Say I Love You*, written for the film *The Woman In Red*, in the name of Nelson Mandela, South Africa's best known freedom fighter. As leader of the outlawed African National Congress, Mandela has been in jail for 22 years for treason and sabotage on a life sentence. After learning South African officials had prohibited his music in the country, Wonder commented, "If my being banned means people will be free, ban me megatimes."

Before a Black artist accepts big bucks to appear in South Africa, Artists and Athletes Against Apartheid is quick to remind them:

- South Africa upholds apartheid—institutionalized White-on-Black brutality.
- The White minority government denies the Black majority the right to vote, the right to

own land, the right of free movement and 87 percent of South Africa is by law off limits to Blacks there.

- Black South Africans must carry their "passbooks" with them at all times for inspection by government officials.
- South African officials have stripped nearly half of its 22 million Blacks of their citizenship.

Denise Nicholas, talented actress who recently served as co-chairperson of a black-tie dinner benefit for the group which raised \$50,000 in its fight for

*O'Jays witnessed racist government of South Africa firsthand during 1981 tour.*

