

KING IS THE KING OF BOXING

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sometimes, sure.

"I get the feeling these white sports writers are thinking of themselves, 'Hey, this nigger's gotta have some white guy backing him. No way he does it himself. Gotta be the Mafia backing him somebody, anybody. So they link me up with guys like Frankie Carbo and Blinky Palermo. That bothers me very much. Ain't nobody backing Don King but Don King. The white sports writers can't accept that, can't get it through their heads that this nigger came out of prison and turned the whole thing upside down on them all by himself.

"What infuriates me is that all of this keeps me from coming through as a role model for black kids. I want to be that. I want black kids to look up to me, to know that, hey, this King dude, he got out of prison and look what he did, all by himself. It might give a couple of them something to shoot for, you know. But no. That's

the biggest injustice of all — by not giving Don King his due these image makers are keeping black kids from learning about a successful black businessman who made it on his own.

"Before I went to prison I was a numbers runner in Cleveland and I'm not bragging or anything because I'm not too proud of that stuff today, but when I was a numbers runner in Cleveland and I was the best damned numbers runner there was. I made a lot of money when I was 18 years old, more money than most white people had.

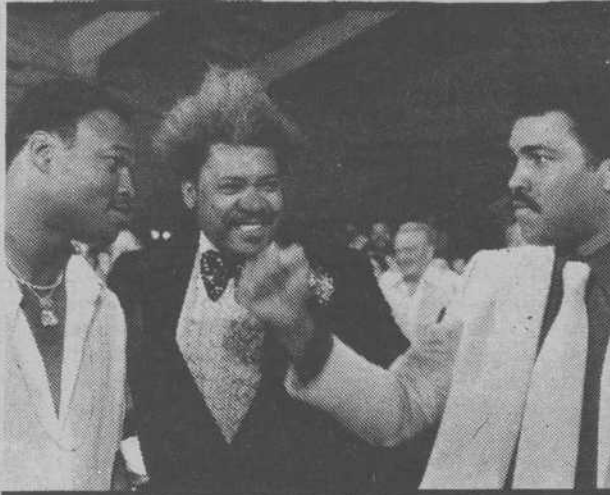
"But then I killed a guy, and I went to prison, and in prison I reassessed everything about Don King. But as far as business goes, you tell me getting whole governments to underwrite fights is bad business? Making hotels your partner is bad business? Ha. I'm not bragging now, but face it: I did things that no white promoter had ever thought of before and I made them work. If I was a bad businessman I'd

be flat on my face by now. Or else I'd be back in jail."

Don King said that besides good business sense he brought to boxing what he called good show business sense. A Don King fight is littered with show business personalities, some of whom King admits to flying in and

and he says that, too, is part of business operandi, so to speak.

"I came into boxing with the tuxedo, the fluffy shirts to bring a little class to the sport. The parties are a part of it. Now I'm a businessman and I know all about trade-offs and things like that. Somebody goes to one of my parties



housing at his own expense, and always there is a Tom Jones or a Redd Foxx or a Sammy Davis Jr. sitting at ringside in full view of the television cameras.

King is big at throwing celebrity parties, particularly in Las Vegas,

up on the penthouse of the Vegas Hilton and they say, when this has got to be a \$40,000 party. To them it might cost \$40,000. But it might cost me only \$10,000, because of trade-offs. I can throw a party at Caesars for just about

nothing, for the same reason.

"Look, from the very beginning, I used sound business practices in everything I ever did.

White businessman uses them to make money he's a genius. Black businessman uses them he's a crook. That's the way it is. I remember once when this white lawyer-type actually sent one of his people over to look at a contract I made up with a magnifying glass. A magnifying glass — to make sure I didn't pull any funny stuff in the so-called small print. They just didn't trust a black man doing business with them. They weren't sending people with magnifying glasses over to look at any white man's contracts. I'll tell you that. But they did it to me.

"When I was in prison I took this correspondence course from Ohio University in economics and I took all the tests and answered all the questions and problems and one day I got a letter from the professor there in Athens, it said, Mr. King, this one economic

problem stumped this whole damned university, not a single student was able to figure it out. But you did. Congratulations. We just wanted you to know that. I must have a few business brains somewhere, huh?

There is a casualness about Don King when he says all of this that underscores the image gap in which he lives. He really is the promoter in boxing, based on a track record for big fights and most lucrative purses, and yet he lives with the curse of being as accomplished as he really is.

Ah, Don King. He may sit down and write his autobiography soon, he said. He's also thinking about going into the movie making business, which, he says is a logical extension of what he's doing now. He was asked what happens to Don King Productions if Don King leaves boxing? Don King didn't hesitate with an answer: "My son Carl takes it over."

If nothing else, you gotta respect that.

Body Building First In Charles Criner's Life

By Lee Bolden

Charles Criner, the first Black Mr. Nevada, is feeling pretty good these days as he reaps the benefits of being the number-one macho man since he defeated 34 other men from all over the state last September at the Aladdin Hotel.

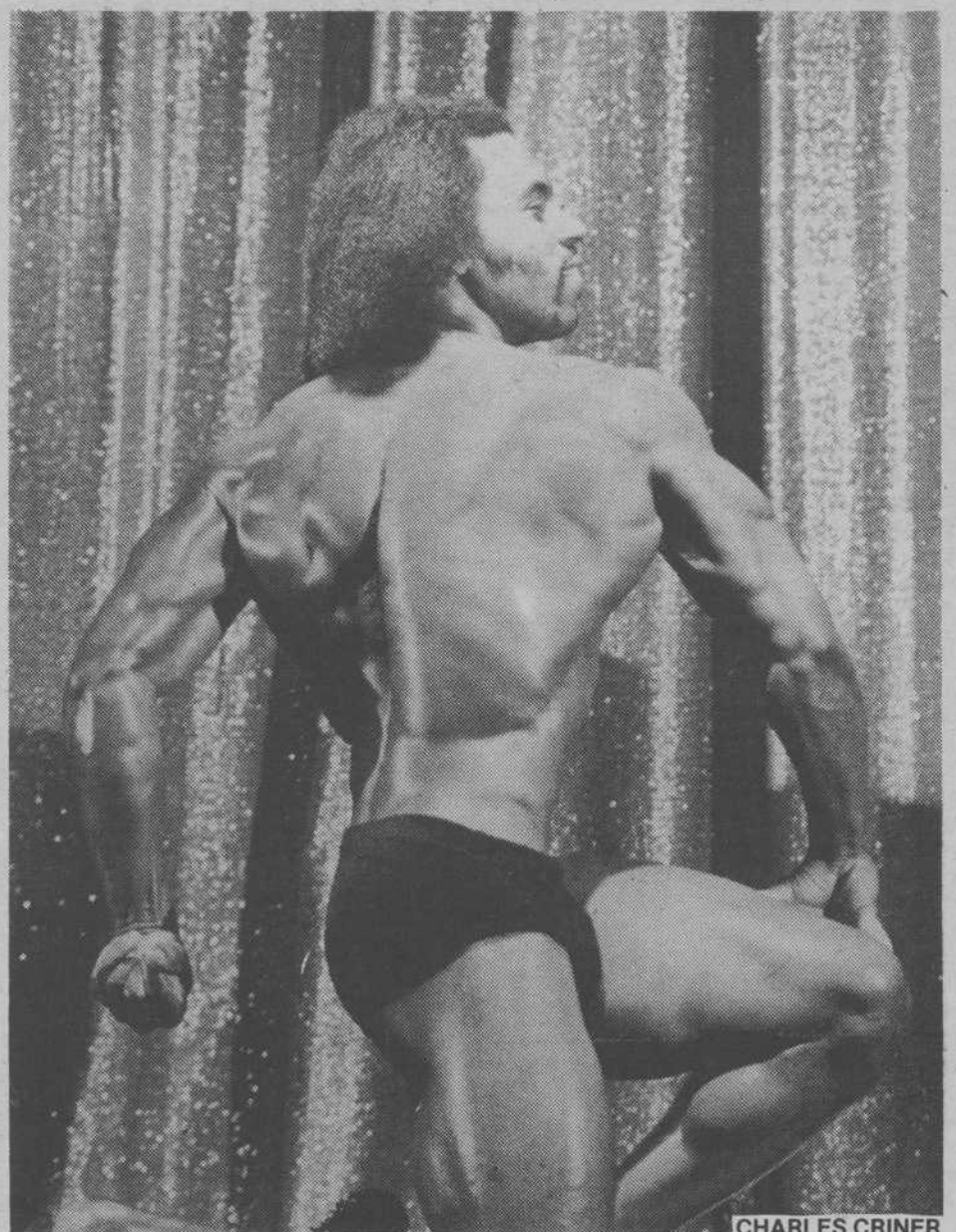
Criner, 25, says that body building to him is a

way of life and he loves every minute of it. His next challenge, which undoubtedly will be his toughest, is to win the Mr. USA Title. The contest will be held here in June, 1981 at Caesars Palace, where he currently is employed as a cook. He has to hold down a job because he is still an amateur and doesn't get paid for

competing. Working as a cook at Caesars has one important fringe benefit — food.

"I am still building, and need to eat my weight in protein every day." Since he is 5'8" and weighs 191 lbs., it means that he consumes 191 grams of protein each day. A typical breakfast for Charles is a six egg omelet, hash browns, toast, orange juice, and three glasses of milk. He has a snack, usually fruit, to tide him over until lunch. Lunch is light — a triple meat patty hamburger, shake, and fries. For dinner, he has two filet mignons, potatoes and a roll, followed an hour later by a New York steak. In addition to that, he takes food supplements such as protein-rich shakes, and vitamins.

Criner thinks that people often judge him wrongly because of his flashy style and his obvious self confidence. "I learned a long time ago that if you want something out of life you have to go for it. Go for it like you are used to it! That's the way it is in the body building game, you have got to believe in yourself or you have lost before you have started."



CHARLES CRINER

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