



Miles Davis' \$125 Album

By Leonard Feather

AT FIRST glance this album — "Chronicles: The Complete Prestige Recording," Miles Davis, Prestige P-012 — might seem to be another giant exercise in the great American game of one-upmanship, a reminder that bigger is better. Certainly it is the bulkiest album in the history of jazz, beating out Keith Jarrett's "Sun Bear" set of ten LPs. The latter appeared in October 1978, was listed at \$85, and reportedly has sold 10,000. The Davis box (12 records, listed at \$125) comprises everything he recorded for Prestige while under contract to that company (then a small independent outfit) from 1951 to 1956. This period followed the classic "Birth of the Cool" dates for Capitol, but the 17 sessions revived here were less organized and, for the most part, not quite as influential. This is not meant to imply that



MILES DAVIS

the interim period (before Davis embarked on his revolutionary collaborations with Gil Evans and a 21-piece orchestra) was not rich in passages of great beauty.

Davis by 1951 had emerged from under the shadow of Charlie Parker, Clark Terry and the other be-boppers. Here and there one find him grappling with technical problems, but for every small gaffe there are a hundred moments that show the extent to which he had become his own man.

Guard

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minorities should have a prominent place in the ranks of government. Blacks were in key policy-making positions, including the Cabinet. President Carter appointed more blacks to federal judgeships than any other president.

This concern and evident identification with black people led blacks to give him the overwhelming majority of their votes last November, despite the widespread unemploy-

ent in the black community.

Our new President, Ronald Reagan, does not have that kind of black support; indeed his every move is being scrutinized for signs that he will be as repressive and anti-black as his detractors claim he will. Aware of black mistrust, Mr. Reagan has tried to reassure blacks he will be a fair President of all of the people.

He has the opportunity to go beyond that on Inauguration Day. The Inaugural Address offers the occasion to enunciate the principles of a new Administration.

Thus, I propose that on January 20, a major

thrust of that address be the need for racial reconciliation, racial justice, and racial progress.

We once had a President who stood in the well of the Congress and declared: "We shall overcome." America needs that kind of commitment again. People need to hear the new President pledge aggressive enforcement of the civil rights laws, protection of the interests of the poor, and devotion to the black thirst for full equality.



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