

RAP ATTACK

The Ray Willis Report

By: Ray E. Willis

The current brouhaha over 2 Live Crew, the Florida-based rap group whose controversial album "As Nasty As They Wanna Be" has been banned by a judge demonstrates the alienation some feel from the strident sounds of this newest rock music genre. But to anyone willing to look beyond the surface, rap music really isn't what it appears to be.

Just like other kinds of music, some rap is positive, some of it is negative, some good, some bad, and some so mainstream that it's even used to sell products destined for mass consumption. In my view the controversy over 2 Live Crew is symptomatic of the growing mainstream resistance to rap music in general. And if that is true, then what we're actually dealing with here is simply an old racial issue masquerading under a new disguise.

For the past several weeks Bobbie Troutman has given this topic a thorough airing of views on her Saturday morning show "For Women Only" on KCEP-FM.

In the afterglow of her exquisite journalistic treatment of this topic the facts remain. Black rappers are under siege. Why? Is it fair? Do rappers deserve such negative intense media attention?

For decades "chitlin' circuit" comedians Rudy Ray Moore and Redd Foxx "race record" party albums have been purchasable over-the-counter in record stores without censorship. Many Black adults can still to this day recite from memory excerpts of The Signifying Monkey. These same adults



who memorized rhyming scatological verses from The Signifying Monkey are honest hard-working people.

If they were exposed to such vile language from listening to party records way back then, can they now be trusted to raise children? Are their morals now totally debased?

But that's not really what it's all about. So-called race records were formerly part of the underground culture associated with being Black in segregated America. Nowadays, rappers have gone public in "integrated" America. The Black experience today may still be pretty much segregated, but the message of rap has now gone public.

Rappers such as M.C. Hammer and Heavy D. and the Boyz are heavy hitters with fans worldwide. They are big business. And that is part-and-parcel of the dilemma where rap is concerned.

Major corporations now exploit rap for profit. Pepsi, Jovan Musk and McDonald's are just some of the firms employing successful Black rap artists to do their commercials. 'Oddly enough, no one seems remotely interested in banning rap for ads.

B J's Restaurant and Casino Has Grand Opening

By Ramon Savoy

Throughout life you come in contact with pessimists who never want anything for themselves or anybody else. They want to paint a picture of doom and gloom. Then there are optimists like Joyce and Brooklyn Wilridge. They had a dream come true earlier this month when the Gaming Control Board awarded them an unrestricted gaming license.

The doors finally swung open to B J's Casino and Restaurant last week. It wasn't easy for them however, because they had been waiting for this for over a year. Even with the \$500,000 loan from First Interstate Bank, Brooklyn, a bartender at the Circus Circus Holte and Casino for

close to 20 years and his wife Joyce knew they would have a fight on their hands to get approval. The location, previously the Westside Story, had had continuous run-ins with the law and granting an unrestricted gaming license to new owners with no previous gaming experience would be difficult. In fact, Brooklyn said he doesn't worry at all about the drug or crime problems that have previously plagued the location from attracting new customers.

He is set on establishing a new hope of life for the once economically deprived Westside. "The potential for continued growth is right here within the community, but somehow it gets overlooked from those within," stated Brooklyn.

B J's Casino and Restaurant will be very good for the community, economically and socially. With a beginning staff of 22 employees, many of whom have worked at different resorts and downtown properties, "the experience is there to give you great service."

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EDITOR'S NOTE: On Thursday, June 28 at 7:00 P.M., Bobbie Troutman, hostess of KCEP's "For Women Only" program, will conduct a public information meeting on "Rapping To Our Children, Explicit Lyrics." The program will be held in KCEP's Alumni Lounge, 330 West Washington Avenue. Attendees must be 19 years of age or older and be prepared to listen to explicit rap lyrics. For further information, call 647-2921.

Could it be that some are uneasy because rap has now transcended racial lines? Any way you look at it, rap music has created a legal avenue for young Black males to be successful at a time when Black males are fast becoming endangered species.

If rap music had a white superstar personality like rock and roll did with Elvis Presley, the present controversy might never have surfaced. Until or unless there is a systematic, across-the-board concern about the explicit and sexually suggestive lyrics used in all forms of musical expression, there shouldn't be such a negative connotation placed selectively on rap music.

As my favorite rap group Public Enemy says in their Fear A Black Planet album, "Brothers and sisters, don't believe the hype!"

COMMUNITY UPDATE

By Faye Duncan-Daniel

The Governor's Conference On Women

An ad-hoc committee of the Governor's Conference On Women met again Saturday, June 23, 1990 at the Moulin Rouge Cafe. The topic of discussion was accountability for all representatives elected to keep the community informed on all action-oriented issues.

As women of color, not only were we omitted from the planning of the Governor's Conference On Women, but the Governor's Conference On Libraries and more recently, the Conference held on June 22 - 23 on Children, Education and Families!!!

In dealing with these sensitive issues, we can only conclude that as long as we are re-active, we will be omitted.

If you want to be included in decisions that affect your quality of life and that of your families, send your resume to Mrs. Rose McKinney-James at the Public Service Commission. She has committed to assist in every way possible to achieve our goal.

If you are interested, please mark your calendar to attend (yes, another meeting) on July 14, 1990 at CCCC, Room 1106.

The African-American Summit Continues

Every Friday at 5:30 P.M., committed members of the AfricaAmerican Summit continue to meet at Lois Craig School to plan and implement information gathered at the African-American Summit held at mabel Hoggard School on May 16-19.

The consensus of those attending the workshops and seminars (well over 200 people!!) dictates action-oriented plans for the coming years, not rhetorical lip service. Those plans are inclusion on every board, agency and commission that makes policy. Part two of the inclusion is accountability by those elected to REPRESENT us at every level of government. We can no longer wait for the news!! We must

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THANKS

The Tyree family would like to thank all its friends and the Employees of EOB for their many contributions and support during Mr. Tyree's recent hospitalization.

James is doing great and back at work.

Many Thanks.

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