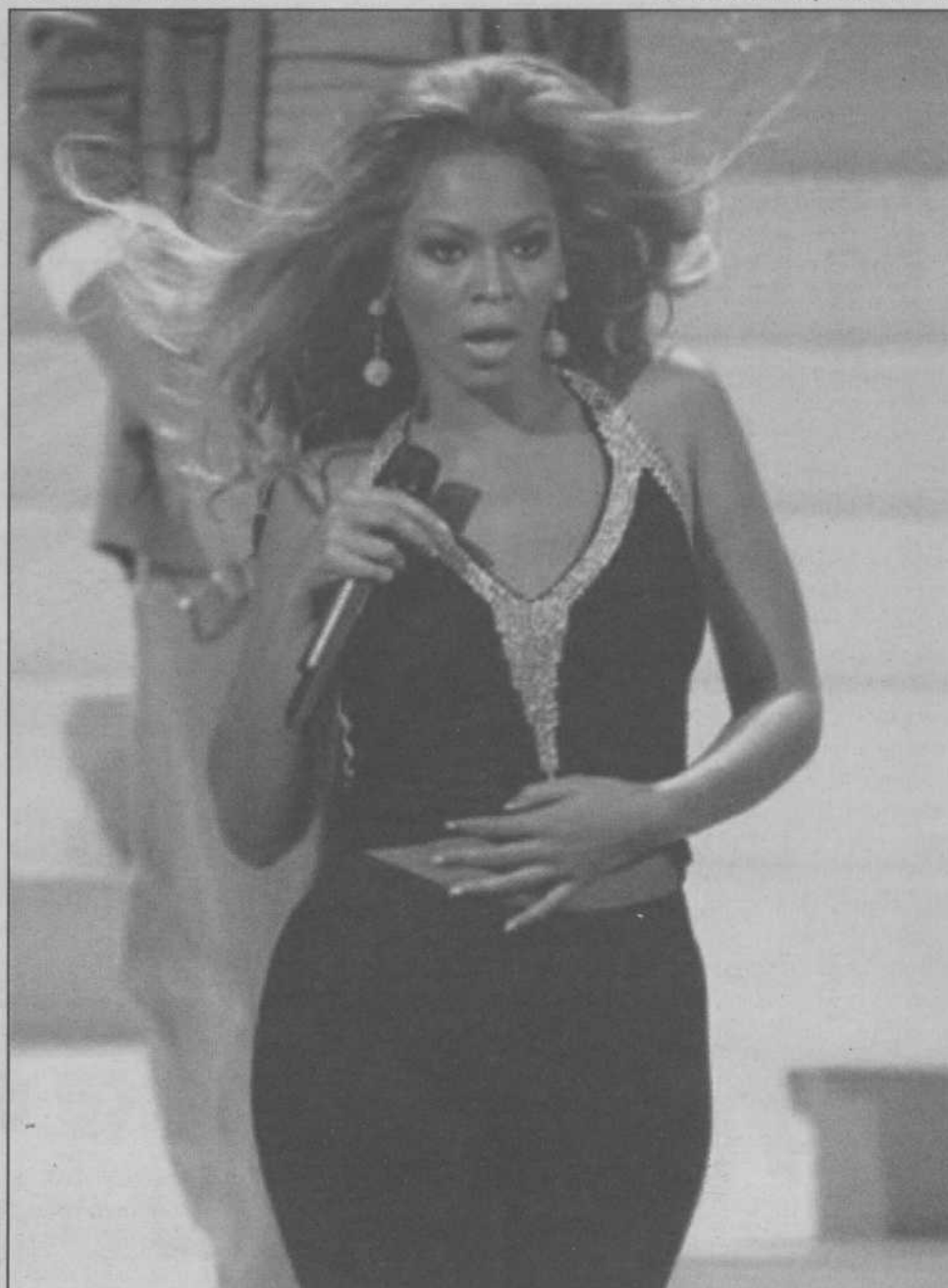


SCENES FROM THE RADIO MUSIC AWARDS



R&B singer Usher (left) clutches one of his handful of trophies (he won for Hip-Hop Artist of the Year, Hip-Hop Song of the Year "Yeah" and Cingular Artist of the Year) Monday night during the Radio Music Awards at the Aladdin Theatre of The Performing Arts. The awards show recognizes the most commercially successful artists of the year. (Top) Rapper Nelly presents veteran singer Janet Jackson with the Legend Award. (Right) Beyonce, winner of the Top 40 Radio Artist of the Year Award, reunited with her Destiny's Child cohorts for a performance of "Lose My Breath."



Jamie Foxx has been universally lauded for his role as the legendary Ray Charles.

Ray

(Continued from Page 11)
when I knew I we had it."

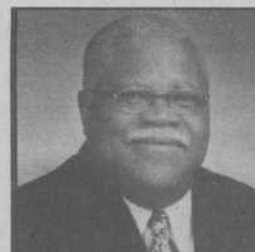
KW: Having started out as a comedian, how hard has it been for you to convince Hollywood that you had the ability to do so much more?

JF: "I never really factored Hollywood into anything. As a Black actor, I can't really worry about Hollywood. I have to go do my thing. When I first got on "In Living Color," I learned from Keenen Ivory Wayans that whatever I did had to be great. And that if I arrived a minute late for work, it was a serious situation, and I had to explain why. Keenen said, 'The reason I'm so tough, Jamie, is because when you're mediocre, you're not going to make it as an African-American entertainer. Try to stay at the top of your game.' It's basically that

mentality that we all have as young cats out there in Hollywood. You're never going to convince anybody. The only thing you can do is stay true to the art."

KW: You throw yourself into your roles so fully that you disappear into each character. Do you ever find it hard to make the transformation back to normal after the shooting ends?

JF: "No, CCH Pounder taught me that characters are like putting on a coat. You put the coat on while you're working, you take it off after it's over. I know some people who stay in the character, and it's the worst thing in the world. You can't go out or hang, or be regular, because the character's residue is too much. I like to flip it on and off like a light switch. That's what keeps things fresh."



Doublespeak and Common Sense in Education

By
Reg Weaver,
President,
National
Education
Association

For the last four years, we have been fed a steady diet of Orwellian double-speak. Legislation that allowed for increased air-pollution was named the Clear Skies Act. The Healthy Forests Initiative was a windfall for the logging industry. And the Patriot Act actually curtails the rights of American citizens in the name of freedom.

But to my mind nothing was more cynical than to label as school reform the so-called No Child Left Behind Act. Why do I call it cynical? Certainly not because it called for raising standards of achievement in our public schools or required highly qualified teachers in the nation's classrooms. The 2.7 million members of the National Education Association – classroom teachers and other education professionals – have worked for those things for years. We take issue with the way the bill was crafted.

You see, with its complicated mathematical formulas for scoring tests, NCLB provides at least 37 different ways for a school to fail. So far, 27,000 public schools, including some of the nation's top blue ribbon institutions, have stumbled according to NCLB. Rather than help schools succeed, NCLB actually sets up the nation's schools to fail, and then provides punishments when they do. Why, if I didn't know better, I'd think the government was trying to destroy public education rather than improve it.

Now every parent knows that children learn at different rates, something apparently forgotten by the authors of the bill. NCLB requires all children, whether they are recent immigrants, learning disabled or homeless, to meet the same standards at the same time, as if they were machine parts produced in a factory instead of children with individual needs and abilities.

Dr. David Pastrick, superintendent of the Marion Center School District in Indiana summed the problem up recently when he said, "I believe philosophically in NCLB, but I don't believe that all children should be held to the same standard at the same time. It just flies in the face of common sense."

Common sense. Now there's something the teachers and education support professionals of the NEA can get behind. As revolutionary as it might sound in today's upside-down world, NEA believes that school reform should be about helping schools, not labeling and punishing them!

If you too believe in the power of education, and that every child deserves a great public school, I urge you to exercise your right to vote. Whether this is the most important election in our lifetimes is something that only history can decide, but we can be sure that whatever we decide this election year, it will have a lasting effect on our children's futures and our public schools.



Great Public Schools
for Every Child

I urge
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to vote