

OUR VIEW

Slanguage

Will it make a difference? Is their penance too little too late? Does anyone even care? This week, a handful of rappers went where few of their brethren have ever gone and did what few of their kind have ever done. They trekked to Capitol Hill and testified before Congress. Convened by Illinois Democratic Congressman and former Black Panther, Bobby Rush, the hearings focused on negativism in hip-hop. Specifically, the proliferation of violent and misogynistic lyrics.

"This hearing is not anti-hip-hop," Rush said, noting that, some hip-hop music has "reduced too many of our youngsters to automatons, those who don't recognize life, those who don't value life."

Testifying were Mississippi rapper David Banner (real name: Levell Crump)—one of the more conscious and socially oriented of mainstream rappers; Edgar Bronfman Jr., chairman of the Warner Music Group; Doug Morris, chairman of the Universal Music Group; Georgetown University professor Michael Eric Dyson; and New Orleans rap mogul Master P (real name: Percy Miller.)

The hearing, before a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee, rekindled the spirit of the early '90s, when C. Delores Tucker and Tipper Gore railed against depravity in hip-hop music. While delivering a solid assessment of the problem—"Gang violence was here before rap music... I can admit that there are some problems in hip-hop, but it is only a reflection of what is taking place in our society. Hip-hop is sick because America is sick"—Banner offered no solution.

Master P's mea culpa seemed genuine. "We are inflaming this problem by not being responsible... I was honestly wrong." That is until he apologized "to all the women out there." To his credit, P, who's years removed from the hip-hop dominator he was in the late '90s, has slowly moved away from party-BS-and-sex music that made him a mogul. He's appeared on "Dancing with the Stars," and his son had a cartoon on "Nickelodeon." If he's a changed man, he should put the same energy into positive hip-hop. Not just him. All rappers; from Jay-Z to the struggling artist without a deal. The power of life and death is in the tongue. Why not choose life, hip-hoppers?

Money for War

President Bush, it's us, the American people. Remember us? We're the ones who overlooked the way you snuck into office twice (in 2000 and 2004). We're the ones who threw our weight behind your leadership (not necessarily your policies) when terrorists plowed planes into New York's Twin Towers. We're the ones who gave tacit approval, if only because of our general silence, for you to invade Afghanistan to hunt for Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden and for you to depose Saddam Hussein in the name of protecting America and stabilizing the world. We believed Colin Powell when he said that the deceased Iraqi dictator had weapons of mass destruction.

We're also the same people that put partisanship to the side and let patriotism guide us as you steered us into war. You called it nation building. We bought it. We didn't yell too loud as information began seeping out about the propagandizing and smoke and mirrors the lead up to the Iraq war. We started to get ticked when we found out that our soldiers didn't have proper armor, that our vehicles weren't equipped to deal with IEDs.

The Halliburton chicanery stuck in our craw. Briefly. When American citizens, many of whom went to Iraq to capitalize (cash in) on the multi-billion rebuilding effort, began dying, our attitudes got testy. What put things over the top—and what's got us as riled as the nearly 4,000 American troops who've died—is your nonchalance in the face of American sacrifice. Now you plan to ask Congress for an additional \$50 billion, on top of the \$460 billion allocated in the 2008 defense budget and \$147 billion in pending supplemental legislation.

You're spending like America doesn't have other pressing issues. Tupac said it best: "We got money for war, but can't feed the poor." Or educate our kids. Or fund universal healthcare. Or finance after school programs. Or....

Q. What do these things have in common?

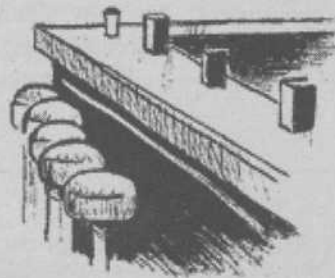
A seat on
the
bus



A drink
of water



A place at the table



AN education



A. A
Military
escort
is no
longer
required

Racists issue Jena Six threats

By George E. Curry
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Call it White Supremacists Gone Wild. After last Thursday's successful march in support of the Jena Six, some Whites drove around nearby Alexandria with twin nooses dangling from the back of a pickup truck. Even worse, one website, www.overthrow.com, published the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Jena Six families, including the name of a juvenile previously unidentified.

The neo-Nazi site proclaimed: "Six niggers are on trial in Jena, Louisiana. Five are currently out awaiting trial. Get in touch, and let them know justice is coming. Their addresses and phone numbers are..."

According to the *Roanoke Times*, the site had earlier urged followers to "Lynch the Jena Six." The Jena Six are African-American youth implicated in beating a White student during a school brawl nearly a year ago at Jena High School. Only one of the alleged attackers, Mychal Bell, remains in custody.

Jesse Jackson has urged the federal government to become involved. "These groups, heavily armed, are dangerous and pose a great threat," Jackson said in a statement issued Sunday.

"...We need federal intervention. I have called the White House today to express the seriousness of this



GEORGE E. CURRY

threat." Jackson, founder of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, also urged presidential candidates to speak out in support of the Jena Six.

The Overthrow.com site is operated by Bill White, who describes himself as the commander of the American National Socialist Workers Party.

He also runs answp.com. In one of his latest rants, White refers to African-Americans as having "ape brains" and added, "Our ancestors didn't kill every raping, murdering, robbing Indian in this country to have their descendents face a bunch of raping, murdering and robbing niggers — and its [sic] time the niggers learned that."

This is not the first time White's website has been in the news.

In June, Leonard Pitts, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist for the *Miami Herald*, wrote a column about Black-on-White crime that led to death threats.

Overthrow.com posted his address, his home address,

his home telephone number and his wife's name. Other White supremacist sites reprinted the information and one gave directions to his house with a satellite map of the neighborhood.

The FBI has announced that it is conducting an inquiry into the Internet threats against Pitts and the Jena Six, but given its record in recent years, I have no confidence that they will yield anything significant.

A similar high-profile investigation into Emmett Till's murder was conducted by the department, only to end in no arrests or indictments.

At press time, the Overthrow.com site was being revamped. However, the Southern Poverty Law Center www.splcenter.org in Montgomery, Ala., which has a unit that monitors hate groups, quoted information from the site when it was fully functional, promising

future violence and calling for lynching African-Americans.

Another White supremacist group's website is vanguardnewsnetwork.com, operated by Alex Linder. Postings on VNN's site were especially virulent in the days leading up to last Thursday's march through downtown Jena, La.

"The best crowd control for such a situation would be a squad of men armed with full automatics and preferably a machine gun as well," is how one person put it on the Web forum hosted by VNN. Another person declared: "I'm not really that angry at the nogs [a recent variation on the n-word] — they are just soldiers in an undeclared race war. But any white that's in that support rally I would like to ...have them machine-gunned." Leading up to the March, a third posting said: "I think a

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