

Appeal to Hip Hop Nation Support World Conference Against Racism

Written by Paul Scott ID4628
Thursday, 09 April 2009 03:05 -

Ask any Hip Hop head about the genre's impact on the world and he will wax poetic for hours about how kids in Japan are break dancing and how children in Africa know the words to the latest lil Wayne song. But ask him about the role of Hip Hop in fighting for the rights of the globally oppressed and the silence is deafening.

With the far reaching impact of Hip Hop across the planet, one must ask why few have spoken out against the probable boycott of the upcoming World Conference Against Racism by the United States.

According to news reports, the US and several other countries will not attend the conference because of concern that issues such as Zionism, Reparations and the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade may be topics of discussion.

To have a country that is the home of millions of the decedents of the worst atrocity known to man refuse to participate in a discussion about racism is not only an insult to the present generation but to our ancestors whose bones lie at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.

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We have a right to sing our song before the world about the problems that we still face in America such as disproportionate unemployment and police brutality without our voices being drowned out by government bureaucracy.

You would think that a Hip Hop movement that has ,vehemently, opposed censorship would have their ambassadors on the front line demanding that the masses be heard. But no. There has been hardly a peep from the hardcore defenders of free speech.

Why?

Because contrary to popular belief and the anti-intellectual nature of some of their lyrics, rappers ain't stupid. They know who to mess wit".

So why does a movement that has prided itself as being "neva scared" wet its collective pants at the thought of addressing global oppression ?

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There has always been a certain amount of danger in black folks getting involved in international issues. One only has to look at the governmental persecution that black leaders such as Marcus Garvey and WEB Du Bois faced when, through Pan Africanism, they tried to expand the struggle of black folks beyond the shores of America. Also, it is more than just a conspiracy theory that Dr. Martin Luther King's campaign against the Vietnam War and Malcolm X's threat to bring the Civil Rights struggle before the United Nations hastened their early demises.

The fear of getting out of the Hip Hop sandbox and stompin" with the big dogs is not just limited to the Hip Hop movement but to Civil Rights organizations, as well.

So, it has been safer to confine ones concerns to the domestic not the foreign. In the case of the rapper, it is much safer to restrict your "beef" to another black man instead of the forces that oppress you both.

As much as many of the Hip Hop artists accuse the Civil Rights leaders of being soft, in reality, they both have the same end game strategy; total integration into the system. That is why the goals and objections of even the most "gangsta" rappers have not differed much from the status quo.

When criticized about their lyrics, some rappers are quick to claim that they are victims of society. Wouldn't the anti-racism conference be a perfect opportunity to expand Hip Hop's

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narrow definition of victim-hood to include the global victimization of African people? This would be a perfect opportunity to show the homies that the issues facing "tha hood" are microcosmic in relation to the issues facing black people, worldwide.

It is imperative that the Hip Hop community uses its collective resources to demand that the Obama Administration send representatives to the conference in Geneva beginning April 20th. It was not enough to register thousands of poor and oppressed black folks to vote in 2008. If, in 2009, the issues facing those people are still ignored the various voter registration drives were a waste of time and energy.

Hip Hop must truly become what it was initially meant to be, the voice of the oppressed.

Forget all the tough talk and street swagga. Until rappers can speak out against things like the boycott of the World Conference Against Racism, like James Brown said, they are just talkin' loud and sayin' nuthin...

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