

The News Argus

The Student Newspaper of Winston-Salem State University

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New CD may Rule out peace

By Jim Farber
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, KRT

Maybe we shouldn't trust that olive branch rapper Ja Rule just extended to arch enemy 50 Cent. The MC talked about a truce with his fellow Queens, N.Y.-born nemesis in an interview with Louis Farrakhan, broadcast on BET recently.

But on Rule's just-released new album, "Blood in My Eye," he hauls out the big artillery. "Every n----- who ever said any jealous stuff about me is dead," he declares in the album's opening salvo.

As put-downs go, these aren't exactly the stuff of Don Rickles — or, more to the point, of Eminem, 50's benefactor, who could wipe the floor with Rule in terms of wit, invention and splatter.

But if Rule's words overshoot the bloody mark, his new music has a hardness and cool he hasn't mined since his first album, 1999's "Venni Vetti Vecci."

Rule started by reinventing the mid-'90s signature gangsta style of Death Row Records — ironically, the

home of 50's sometime producer Dr. Dre. But his next three albums had more pop and R&B, increasing his popularity, but costing him street cred.

50 Cent exploited that by repeatedly putting down Rule as a faux gangsta on his debut CD, "Get Rich or Die Trying."

Now, Rule and his posse are answering back, not only with lines to 50 like "you ain't no gangsta/sweet as duck sauce," but by matching those words to far less radio-friendly music.

Rule's fifth album obsesses on honed riffs and steely beats. You'll find none of the candied choruses or tender melodies of his hits, which paired his trademark bark with the golden tones of Ashanti.

The CD's brevity may have to do with a desire to get an "answer" out to 50 before the year comes to a close.

In fact, Rule plans to release another, more commercial CD in March. When he does, 50 may well call it a sellout. But in the meantime, Ja's riffs rule.

Brazilians now learning affirmative action lessons

By Patrice M. Jones
CHICAGO TRIBUNE (KRT)

RIO DE JANEIRO

Sueli Barbosa was wringing her hands, trying to wrench some compassion from the frowning official behind the glass partition at the admissions office.

Since childhood, Barbosa's daughter, 18-year-old Ana Paula, had been hoping to attend the State University of Rio de Janeiro. But the teenager was rejected for this year's freshman class, and her mother suspects it is because of a new racial admissions quota intended to correct inequities that have suppressed black Brazilians for more than a century following the abolition of slavery.

Barbosa said she had heard that the university couldn't find enough black entrants for its chemical engineering program. So she pleaded with the admissions official: Might there now be a chance for her daughter, whose honey-glow complexion showed her mixed-race heritage — part Italian, Indian and black?

"Everyone in Brazil essentially is mixed race," the mother said, "so how do they choose who is black?"

In a nation of fluid ethnic identities, where nearly half the 170 million inhabitants identify themselves as black or mixed race, the answer to Barbosa's question is not at all simple.

Just as in the United States, the fight over affirmative action in Brazil has generated a public backlash from those who don't believe that race should be a consideration in admissions.

But the attempt to erase glaring disparities between educational and economic opportunities for white and black Brazilians suddenly has cast this nation's own color line into sharp relief.

The State University of Rio de Janeiro, one of Brazil's top colleges, became the first in the nation this year to institute a quota system for admissions in which race is taken into account.

Under the policy, 20 percent of the seats in the incoming freshman class are reserved for black students, another 20 percent for those from disadvantaged public schools and 5 percent will be shared between those with physical disabilities and students of Indian descent. All students admitted through quotas also must come from low-income families.

Those who support the new university admissions quotas cite research pointing to disproportionate levels of unemployment, illiteracy and infant mortality among black Brazilians. Only about 2 percent of current students in Brazil's universities are black. Blacks also earn the lowest wages in Brazil, suffer the highest unemployment rates and constitute the nation's poorest citizens.

In 1888, Brazil became the last country in the Western Hemisphere to officially end slavery. Although its society has never frowned on interracial mixing nor attempted to enforce segregation, the divide between the lightest and darkest Brazilians is evident in any top hotel, corporate office or fancy restaurant, where black Brazilians



Krt Photo by Terry Harris/Chicago Tribune

Students wait for class at the State University of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, which has an affirmative action plan for black students. Defining race in Brazil is a problem for the school. The majority of Brazilians have Indian or African heritage.

rarely are seen, not even as bus boys or bellhops.

"Here in Brazil, many of the black students, because of our history of slavery and discrimination, did not have this chance to attend the university before," said Sonia Wanderley, an admissions officer at State University. "We would like to be a model for how it should be done."

Because of the new quota policy, Wanderley said, the number of black students in courses where they had been underrepresented has already tripled or quadrupled. Black students comprised more than half of some classes, she added.

Nevertheless, poverty and poor preparation are harming the chances that those black students will manage to complete their degrees.

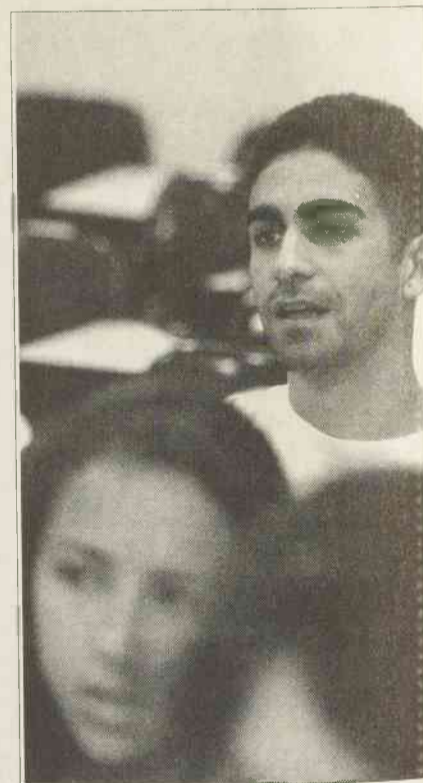
Halfway into a school year that began in March, officials at State University say, 44

percent of the black students admitted under the quota program have dropped out.

Meanwhile, those who oppose the quota program are accelerating their fight. State University has been hit with more than 300 lawsuits to block the quota program.

One student who sued, Gabriella Francescutti, 19, had planned on attending the university and hoped to become a doctor. Francescutti's lawyer contends she was rejected for admission this year even though she scored 82.5 percent on her college entrance exam, a score that exceeded half the students admitted. Attorney Eric Oliveira Guarana argues that his client was denied admission because she is white and middle class.

"The quotas mean the university is admitting people who are technically below standard," he said.



Krt Photo by Terry Harris/Chicago Tribune

Daniel Fernandes, 26, whose heritage is Portuguese, black and Indian, said he was ridiculed as too light-skinned to claim mixed race on his application.

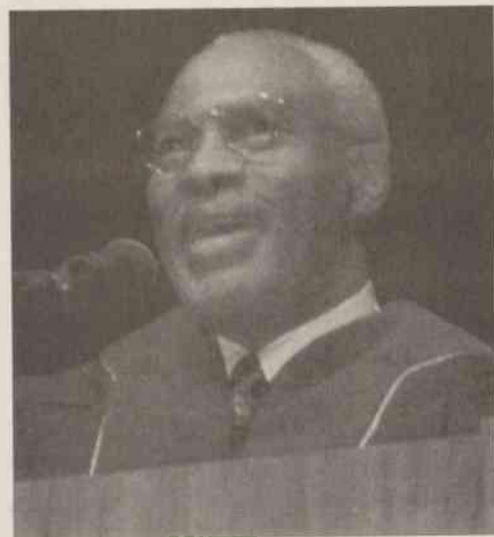
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Convocation makes you realize that Dr. Atkins had to make a lot of sacrifices for this university.

Smith added that he appreciated "all of the sacrifices that Dr. Atkins made to found Slater Industrial Academy in order to further the education of blacks."

Rev. Jones opened his keynote address by borrowing words from the lyrics to a song titled "Get Low" by rappers Lil John and East Side Boys: "Let me see you get low, you scared, you scared? Drop it down to the floor, you scared, you scared? Now back, back, back it up."

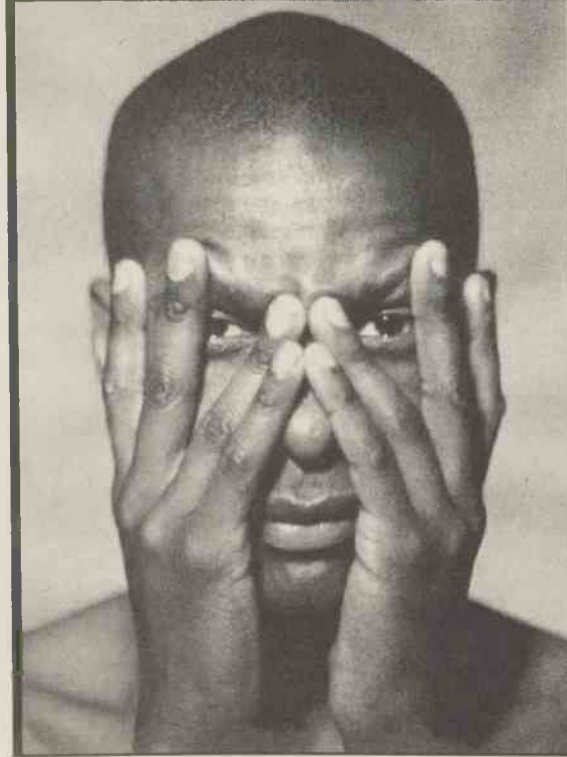
Jones said "getting low" and accepting dares to prove that you are not scared can lead to personal destruction. He challenged students to take responsibility for their actions, and work hard as



Argus File Photo

The Rev. Clifford A. Jones Sr. was 2003 Founder's Day speaker.

Dr. did. Chancellor Martin presented a token of appreciation to Dr. Jones for his keynote address.



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