

# Billboard

## R&B-Soul Breakthrough In S. Africa Busting Bias

By MIKE GROSS

NEW YORK—The record business is on the verge of becoming a political force in South Africa. Many industryites feel that the record business there has grown to such an extent, and has such a potential for continuous growth, that the giant South African companies will soon be stirring up a breakthrough in apartheid. (Apartheid is the Afrikaaner word for separate development of the white, colored and black races.)

The expected weakening of the apartheid position will be the result of economic pressures rather than show business liberalism. The country is emerging as an important factor in the global market for imports as well as exports and the

business community believes that the record buying public can be greatly expanded if the apartheid policy is rescinded. It's estimated that there are 4 million record buyers already secured but that makes up only a small percentage of South Africa's market potential.

Personal appearances by American recording artists have proved to be an important factor in stimulating the record business there, but the apartheid policy has been keeping the visits at a minimum, and American-Negro artists are choosing to avoid the scene completely because of the rigid segregationist attitude. But now that rhythm

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## Breakthrough in S. Africa

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and blues and soul music recordings from the U. S. have gained a foothold in the South African market, it's expected that the businessmen of the recording industry will be forced to whip up political heat against apartheid in order to get more mileage for their r&b and soul product through the personal appearances and promotion tours by black Americans.

### 2 Major Forces

The two major forces in the South African recording business right now are Teal and Gallo. The two firms control 80 per cent of the country's total record business.

Teal, however, has been moving ahead in the r&b and soul music fields through its handling of the U. S. Atlantic Records line. Teal has released more than 100 Atlantic LP's in the past three months and sales have been on a continual upward spiral. Rhythm and blues and soul, they say, could cause an explosion in the market by bringing the black African into the record shops. Teal has been opening retail record shops around the country to cater to this new market.

According to Allen Arrow, of Orenstein, Arrow & Silverman, music business law firm

here, who recently returned from a business trip to the South Africa, the country's creative development is beginning to make itself felt in the world, musically, artistically and theatrically. The South African musical revue, "Wait a Minim," for example, was a long-run hit in London and on Broadway. And, last week, RCA released here a South African-made disk, "Master Jack," by Four Jacks and a Jill.

### New Area

Also, Arrow figures that a new broad commercial area will open up when TV comes to South Africa. It will be about 18 months before the introduction of TV there, but it's believed that once it gets under way, it will develop into another potent showcase for record acts and offer still more ammunition against apartheid.

The United Nations, for many years, has asked South Africa to reverse its policy of apartheid. The controversy over apartheid has reached into the sports field with countries threatening to boycott the Olympic Games in Mexico this summer because of South Africa's stand. But now that the record business is beginning to feel the affect of apartheid—it's expected that something's got to give.