

## B Movie

Gil Scott-Heron

Well, the first thing I want to say is: Mandate my ass!

Because it seems as though we've been convinced that 26% of the registered voters, not even 26% of the American people, but 26% of the registered voters form a mandate or a landslide. 21% voted for Skippy and 3, 4% voted for somebody else who might have been running.

But, oh yeah, I remember. In this year that we have now declared the year from Shogun to Reagan, I remember what I said about Reagan, I meant it. Acted like an actor. Hollyweird. Acted like a liberal. Acted like General Franco when he acted like governor of California, then he acted like a Republican. Then he acted like somebody was going to vote for him for president. And now we act like 26% of the registered voters is actually a mandate. We're all actors in this I suppose.

What has happened is that in the last 20 years, America has changed from a producer to a consumer. And all consumers know that when the producer names the tune, the consumer has got to dance. That's the way it is. We used to be a producer - very inflexible at that, and now we are consumers and, finding it difficult to understand. Natural resources and minerals will change your world. The Arabs used to be in the 3rd World. They have bought the 2nd World and put a firm down payment on the 1st one. Controlling your resources we'll control your world. This country has been surprised by the way the world looks now. They don't know if they want to be Matt Dillon or Bob Dylan. They don't know if they want to be diplomats or continue the same policy - of nuclear nightmare diplomacy. John Foster Dulles ain't nothing but the name of an airport now.

The idea concerns the fact that this country wants nostalgia. They want to go back as far as they can - even if it's only as far as last week. Not to face now or tomorrow, but to face backwards. And yesterday was the day of our cinema heroes riding to the rescue at the last possible moment. The day of the man in the white hat or the man on the white horse - or the man who always came to save America at the last moment - someone always came to save America at the last moment - especially in "B" movies. And when America found itself having a hard time facing the future, they looked for people like John Wayne. But since John Wayne was no longer available, they settled for Ronald Reagan and it has placed us in a situation that we can only look at -like a "B" movie.

Come with us back to those inglorious days when heroes weren't zeros. Before fair was square. When the cavalry came straight away and all-American men were like Hemingway to the days of the wondrous "B" movie. The producer underwritten by all the millionaires necessary will be Casper "The Defensive" Weinberger - no more animated choice is available. The director will be Attila the Haig, running around frantically declaring himself in control and in charge. The ultimate realization of the inmates taking over at the asylum. The screenplay will be adapted from the book called "Voodoo Economics" by George "Papa Doc" Bush. Music by the "Village People" the very military "Macho Man".

"Company!!!"

"Macho, macho man!"

"Two-three-four."

"He likes to be .. well, you get the point."

"Huuut! Your left! Your left! Your left, right, left, right, left, right!"

A theme song for saber-rallying and selling wars door-to-door. Remember, we're looking for the closest thing we can find to John Wayne. Clichés abound like kangaroos - courtesy of some spaced out Marlin Perkins, a Reagan contemporary. Clichés like, "itchy trigger finger" and "tall in the saddle" and "riding off or on into the sunset." Clichés like, "Get off of my planet by sundown!" More so than clichés like, "he died with his boots on." Marine tough the man is. Bogart tough the man is. Cagney tough the man is. Hollywood tough the man is. Cheap steak tough. And Bonzo's substantial. The ultimate in synthetic selling: A Madison Avenue masterpiece - a miracle - a cotton-candy politician□Presto! Macho!

"Macho, macho man!"

Put your orders in America. And quick as Kodak your leaders duplicate with the accent being on the dupes - cause all of a sudden we have fallen prey to selective amnesia - remembering what we want to remember and forgetting what we choose to forget. All of a sudden, the man who called for a blood bath on our college campuses is supposed to be Dudley "God-damn" Do-Right?

"You go give them liberals hell Ronnie." That was the mandate to the new Captain Bligh on the new ship of fools. It was doubtlessly based on his chameleon performance of the past: as a Liberal Democrat. As the head of the Studio Actor's Guild, when other celluloid saviors were cringing in terror from Mc Carthy, Ron stood tall. It goes all the way back from Hollywood to hillbilly. From Liberal to libelous, from "Bonzo" to Birch idol, born again. Civil rights, women's rights, gay rights: □it's all wrong. Call in the cavalry to disrupt this perception of freedom gone wild. God damn it, first one wants freedom, then the whole damn world wants freedom.

Nostalgia, that's what we want□: the good ol' days, when we gave'em hell. When the buck stopped somewhere and you could still buy something with it. To a time when movies were in black and white, and so was everything else. Even if we go back to the campaign trail, before six-gun Ron shot off his face and developed hoof-in-mouth. Before the free press went down before full-court press, and were reluctant to review the menu because they knew the only thing available was...Crow.

Lon Chaney, our man of a thousand faces: no match for Ron. Doug Henning does the make-up; special effects from Grecian Formula 16 and Crazy Glue; transportation furnished by the David Rockefeller of Remote Control Company. Their slogan is, "Why wait for 1984? You can panic now...and avoid the rush."

So much for the good news□.

As Wall Street goes, so goes the nation. And here's a look at the closing numbers: racism's up, human rights are down, peace is shaky, war items are hot. The House claims all ties. Jobs are down, money is scarce, and common sense is at an all-time low on heavy trading. Movies were looking better than ever, and now no one is looking, because we're starring in a "B" movie. And we would rather had...John Wayne. We would rather had...John Wayne.

"You don't need to be in no hurry.  
You ain't never really got to worry.  
And you don't need to check on how you feel.  
Just keep repeating that none of this is real.  
And if you're sensing, that something's wrong,  
Well just remember, that it won't be too long  
Before the director cuts the scene. yea."

"This ain't really your life,  
Ain't really your life,  
Ain't really ain't nothing but a movie."

[Refrain repeated approximately 20 times]

"This ain't really your life,  
Ain't really your life,  
Ain't really ain't nothing but a movie."