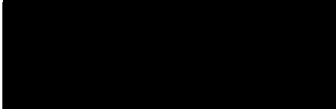


Victor Willis



February 16, 2017

Mr. Neil Portnow



OPEN LETTER

Dear Mr. Portnow:

My name is Victor Willis. I am the original lead singer of the Village People and writer of such iconic hits as "Y.M.C.A." "Macho Man" "In the Navy" and "Go West," along with my co-writer Jacques Morali. I'm also a voting member of the Recording Academy and I'm concerned that you are not being entirely candid about how the Grammy's *Album of the Year* is decided. As you are already aware, the Grammys have a special committee to over-ride the voters. This committee was put in place after Lionel Richie's album "Can't Slow Down" won the 1985 Grammys *Album of the Year* over Bruce Springsteen's "Born In The U.S.A." Certain people (mostly white) were very upset about this and thought Springsteen should have won.

Soon thereafter, the Grammys instituted a special *select committee* to override the decision of Grammy voters in the event the *select committee* does not like who the Grammy voter has chosen for your top award.

Therefore, it seems you're not being entirely candid when you suggest that *Album of the Year* is decided by Grammy voters, so, if we want more black awardees, join the Academy and vote. The truth of the matter is, *Album of the Year* as with a few other categories, is manipulated by the Grammys through this *select committee* and you know it. Simply put, if certain people at the Grammys don't like who the voters have chosen, a Grammy committee will simply override the voters and subsequently select who they think should win. Like Adele, maybe?

Why won't you reveal this *secret committee* to the public and exactly who's on it? The question is how many African Americans are on that committee? You ought to come clean. And if there really is an issue of race, as some have suggested with respect to *Album of the Year*, could this *select committee* be the problem?

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victor S. Willis".

Victor Willis