



JIMMY BISHOP CBS Records



JIM TYRRELL CBS Records



LEBARON TAYLOR
CBS Records



GEORGE BUTLER
CBS Records

Black Executives

By Bob Matthews

One of the most fiercely competitive businesses today, is the record industry. And it is precisely that —a business—big business.

Recognizing the contribution of the black artist—and the potential of the black audience, most astute companies have sought experts to handle this huge marketable entity.

Warner Brothers has Tom Draper, vice president, Black Music Marketing.

It was in September 1975 that chairman of the board Mo Ostin and president Joe Smith announced the appointment of Draper.

No stranger to the industry, Draper began in the record business in 1965, as a field sales representative with the consumer electronics division of RCA in Detroit, Mich.

In 1970, he moved to the company's record division, working first in local, then regional record promotion.

Moving up, he was transferred a year later to New York headquarters, where he became merchandising manager for R and B Product. He wound up as vice president of A and R, R and B Products at RCA

In The Record Business

before Warner - Reprise hired him away.

When he arrived, Warner Bros. had an image of straight pop, rock and progressive acts. The situation for black artists was bleak. Of the 14 or 15 who had working arrangements with the label, only one had any impact: Graham Central Station.

Tom recognized a coming force in the record industry,

and lost no time in setting things into motion. Disco music started making an inroad in late 1975, and along with promotion director Eddie Pugh, Draper began to concentrate on the disco scene on the East Coast.

According to Draper, The East - coast corridor — Washington, D.C. to Boston, Mass., is the strongest disco scene in the country. It became a matter of education for the disco

jocks, who previously had gotten their cues of what music was wanted from the radio deejays.

Draper also recognizes the diversity in today's music—how an artist can cross over from jazz to pop to R and B, with overtones of C and W. George Benson, who is in the Warner-Reprise stable, is a prime example. After making a

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TOM DRAPER Warner Brothers



LARKIN ARNOLD Capitol Records



HENRY ALLEN
Cotillion Records
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