Songwriter pins his hopes on 'Billy-Gate' song



David "Hawk" Billings says his song on Billy-gate fell together in 20 minutes once he had written the chorus line. The song may be his breakthrough in the song-writing field. (Staff photo by John Stano)

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Jimmy you ought to be mighty proud of your brother's fame. He proved you could still make a million dollars in America off a

name.
From a gas pump jockey to a Libyan chief he turned peanut butter into prime roast beef.
But we're all going to get a little needed relief when brother Billy brings the White House down.

From "The Billy-Gate Song" by David "Hawk" Billings

By MARILYN RILEY

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If country music is what starts your
toes tapping, you may already have
heard this home-grown song poking political fun at the first family.
You can't yet buy "The Billy-Gate
song," which is being played on at least
two Detroit area country radio stations. But songwriter David "Hawk"
Billings is working on it.
For the 25-year-old Troy resident,
the last touple weeks have been a blue
of writing, arranging, recording and
pedding tapes to radio stations. Now,
he's hustling to find a company to produce a "Billy-Gate" record before
the
Billygate affair turns into old new of,
fi-ancial backer Paul Roncell have paid
off so far.

"Billy-Gate" has sparked "moderate

off so far.
"Billy-Gate" has sparked "moderate
to heavy" requests at WCXI, where
disc jockey Deano Day has been playing it on his morning show for the last

week, says station program director Bill Ford.

"THERE ARE NO political overtones," Ford says of the requests. "I'm political when it comes to the ridon't think it's Republicans or Democrats. Billy Carter is kind of a character and they appreciate him as a character. They think it's a cute song."
Country listeners like novelty songs, which is why the station started playing it. Ford says. Such sonses also die

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Country listeners like novelly songs, which is why the station started playing it, Ford says. Such songs also die quickly, although WCXI will continue playing it as long as the demand is there, he adds.

WPON also has played "Billy-Gate" a few times. But dise jockey David Lee Harper says he won't play the song on the safternoon show because it's not up to the musical quality of other local artists' work played at the station, he says. He likes the lyrics, though.

Not bad for supple at the station, he says, He likes the lyrics, though, on stations in Indiana and Texas.

Not bad for supple says the song also is playing on stations in Indiana and Texas.

Not bad for committee or caught the bug" about 10 years ago. And in spite of the political theme of the song. Billings says he isn't particularly interested in politics.

"TM NOT insinuating the White

"I'M NOT insinuating the White House should come down," he says, ex-plaining his lyrics. I'm just saying the

After struggling to write a catchy chorus, Billings wrote the rest of the song in about 20 minutes. He byped, after rewriting the song into final form, be could let it rest at that. But Roncelli pushed the project and "Hawk" found himself flying to Nashville to see if someone would buy it.

Billings has been writing poetry and songs since he was a child. And from earlier trips to the country music capital, he knew he faced a tough audience. The song wasn't even his favorite of the 200 or so he has written. He wasn't op-

"Everybody loved the song in Nash-ville," he said, but nobody was willing to record it. Big record companies don't need the headache of a political song and small firms can't produce it tast enough to catch the Billygate wave, he explains.

However, he did get offers to publish but not record the song, offers he could attract a recording company.

The publishing offers, plus the encour-agement he got for his work were even more satisfying than hearing his song on the radio, he says.

"This song to me has already made it. It's done more than I ever dreamed it would do," he explains. "It's been a real inspiration. Now I want to write more than ever."

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Billings says he doesn't want to be a big star, just a songwriter respected by his colleagues.

Will it happen? "There's no doubt in my mind that's where I'm going to make my living. I have to li I don't, it'll be nobody's fault but my own."











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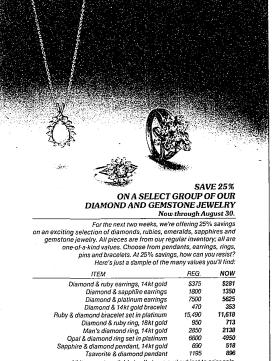
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