

# Record Mirror

## THE CLASH

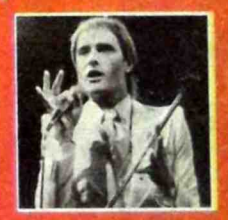
'Political power grows from the barrel of a gun' That's only one of the things these 'degenerates' have to say  
**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW INSIDE**

## BEACH BOYS

Why did they cancel?

## STEVE HARLEY

Why doesn't he like the press?



## ELVIS

Why did he give up his job?

## PUNK POSTERS

Why? Because they're in colour





# We ask you, do these men look like degenerates?

Or does Barry Cain go over the top? He doesn't think so, he just loves The Clash, that's all



CON FUCIOUS, the celebrated Irish Playwright, once said of the The Clash "There is so much atro within their sphere it's ridiculous."

And ol' Con knew a winner when he saw one.

But the question is - Do you? In case you don't: Contained herein are several maxims. If you find one cut it out, carefully fold along the dotted edge, place in an envelope and post to the following people - The Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham; The Matador Public House, Birmingham; St Martins Church, Birmingham; Several constabularies; The Sunday People; The Dolce Vita, Birmingham; Tony Blackburn; Mr Bernard Brook - Patridge, GLC member; Assorted dummies all over the country.

With any luck the principles might just explode in their faces causing permanent brain damage.

In case you do: Then there's no need for me to tell you that Clash turbulence has smashed many a milk bottle on a band aid bossman's doorstep (imagery), induced trash-can convulsions in high places (axioms), and played some of the best damn rock 'n' roll the world's ever seen (and that's a fact).

But I just have - so there. Their sabre tooth album chewed virtually every British rock record previously released into squelching redundancy. And you can see for yourself, round about sunset most days, gutless bands limping into the distance, towards an accursed horizon.

Constructive mayhem outside the mausoleum. How long before the doors open and the bodies burn?

Over the top? Na. I just love 'em. That's all.

Well, I've had my say (ah, the power of writing for this crazy organ. It goes to my head at times. We don't have cleaners, just men in white coats). I guess it's time for your weekly 'Set The Scene' show.

A rub a dub pub halfway down Camden High Street a hundred yards from where

*'We are not the new leaders that everyone seems to be searching for'*

**THE CLASH** hang out and rehearse. The remnants of a lost sun effectively blocked out except for the occasional flat cap shadow flung across the carpet every time the door is opened.

Like it so far? Well, don't stop reading even if you don't. Cos

**THE CLASH** ARE GONNA START TALKING ANY MINUTE NOW. Alright? But the SS Show still needs touching up.

A table covered in lager and screwdrivers and French fags. Red vinyl seats. A piano seethes nearby, a pool ball plops against another pool ball. Mildew words lie stangled on the floor. There's blood on the hands of

**THE CLASH.**

"So we gotta bring this carpet all the way back from Birmingham." Paul Simonon. "What the hell are we gonna do with a grand's worth of carpet?"

"The Royal Angus Hotel says we damaged the carpet and want 1935 compensation." Joe Strummer. "It happened when we played Wolverhampton about six weeks back and stayed there."

"Could always knock out a few suits from the material." Mick Jones.

"Yeah." Nicky Headon. The next bit concerns something that is going to happen in the future but will be in the past when you read it. Geddit Okay (see Situation Vacant pages).

Joe. "The church and the police and the pubs have got together in Birmingham to prevent us from playing the Rag Market this Saturday. The Church say they won't be able to hear themselves pray. The pubs say they'll all be destroyed and the police refuse to grant a dancing licence."

Mick. "They're calling us degenerates."

Joe. "We went into The Matador, the pub near the Market and Paul put a record on the juke box. Then him and me started dancing. When the record finished the publican said he thought it was disgusting to see two men dancing together."

"I told him I was dancing with myself. He said 'That's even worse!' When Punk rockers dance everyone gets frightened. So we're still gonna turn up outside the Market at 8 pm on Sunday and check it out. We won't be playing - but we don't know what's going to happen."

Paul. "They ought to have a huge aircraft hangar right slap in the middle of Birmingham behind the church for us to play in."

Joe. "Older people in Birmingham are scared of the younger people in Birmingham."

**COMPLETE CONTROL, 'CLASH CITY ROCKERS', 'WHITE MAN IN HAMMER'S MITH**

**PALAIS, 'THE PRISONER'** Four new clash titles. Four new Clash instincts.

Mick. "They are all based on the same theme. They have references to the mundane in front of - the television way of life. They are a celebration of the power of music. See, The Clash have been pigeon holed - everybody's favourite political band on the scene at the moment. We are sick to death of hearing all this kinda crap shoved at us."

Joe. "We ain't taking no notice of what people think we should or shouldn't be. They all need their heads seen to. They are looking for an easy escape route to a university degree."

Mick. "We are not Top Of The political Pops. We are not the new leaders that everyone seems to be searching for."

Joe. "What the hell do we know

about the international money market?"

Mick. "We always wanted to be a rock 'n' roll band. It all gets a bit too heavy for us when you have all these people depending on you and expecting so much from you. I only want people coming up to me and saying 'I really like your group' not 'Why did you sell out?' They're pushing us around. We just want to do and say exactly what we want."

Paul. "Most of those people don't even know what sold out means. So we played The Rainbow. A lot of people wanted to see us. That's why we played. So we signed with CBS. A lot of people wanted to buy our records. What's the point of signing for a tiny label with poor distribution, so people have to come down from Scotland to buy your record in Rough Trade? They wanted us to lead the revolution - but we're only just part of it."

Joe. "We haven't got any control over the situation at all. We haven't got any control over our lives. We just get tossed about like everyone else. Look - POLITICAL POWER GROWS FROM THE BARREL OF A GUN - and I haven't got a gun."

Hold everything. The Nicky Headon corner. Okay Nicky. What do you think of it so far?

"I joined the band three months ago. It's a lot better that I thought it would be and it's getting better all the time."

Mick. "He's now officially the fourth member of The Clash."

Slogan daubed on wall outside nearby doss house - "You won't find any ex-German servicemen here." That's what Mick saw.

It's been a rough ride for the waifer drummer. He and Joe both spent three days in jail after falling to answer bail for a charge of stealing a hotel key and towels from a Birmingham Hotel.

Joe. "We jumped bail. They treated us bad. They gave us nothing. One cup of tea, chips and beans. No paper. No pen. No cigarettes. No books. The guy in the next cell was beaten up. We kept hearing him getting knocked about."

Nicky. "They did it shrewdly though, cos when he appeared in the dock you couldn't see a thing in front. But we sat behind him and his ears looked really bad."

Joe. "I guess we got treated the same as anybody else would be, but it's really rough."

Nicky. "The only time we saw anyone in those three days was when a face appeared poking something through a little hole in the door."

Joe. "But we just kept very cool throughout. If you give them any lip they don't muck about."

Nicky. "The joke is they can't really do you for nicking a hotel key. But they told us straight. If you don't co-operate with us we'll oppose

*'They wanted us to lead the revolution - but we're only just part of it'*

ball and you'll remain locked up' - That's what they said. They weren't against punks I don't think - but definite personal things came out.

Joe. "The comment of the magistrate was a killer. 'If you check into respectable hotels you've got to behave like respectable people.'"

£100 between them on the theft charges, plus another conviction for Joe after he was caught spraying 'Clash' on a wall outside Dingwalls. Joe. "That was Nicky's first test - acting as a lookout. He failed."

Joe comes on like a fluorescent lamp. Splatter, pause, er, pause, gush into action. Petulant and totally unique.

Okay. In the wake of the band are the minions - the 'don't ask for the moon when you have the stars' brigade as Bette Davis so eloquently put it. A preposterous number of bands attempting to emulate their idols. Opinions.

Paul. "When we first started we had nobody to look up to. Now all the second wave / rate bands have us."

Mick. "And a lot of them are getting f----- up by the new entrepreneurs."

Joe. "I'll tell ya. All the 'new' singles that have been released are rubbish."

Mick. "They all seem to be comprised of people who are into totally different things - and that makes for a mess up. They are simply kidding themselves."

Joe. "They think - 'It must be good because it's new wave'. That's nowhere."

Mick. "Fact is, there's too many surrogate bands without an idea between them."

Joe. "You've gotta sort through the crap before you find the wedding ring."

The Clash were demolished by The Pistols in recent interviews. A kind of incandescent indifference was displayed by Rotten.

Joe. "They sounded like 10-year-

old kids. They mentioned that we wanted conscription brought back. They just don't listen right. That quote's from 'Career Opportunities' and the words go 'I hate the army and I hate the RAF... they are going to have to introduce conscription.'

Mick: "It's just thick. All the band are bitching and that just shows how weak the whole thing is. I respect the Pistols. They have a certain degree of accessibility to quite a few things and they could make it stronger. So many people seem intent on undermining the new situation."

### *'The Clash have been pigeon holed — everybody's favourite political band'*

Joe: "Everything changes. It's bad to take anything too seriously and we don't. Sometimes we come to blows amongst ourselves — but we always laugh about it after."

Mick: "It's serious time though. People are now more concerned about themselves than ever before. Nobody now would fight line by line across the trenches. There's much more awareness. They'll rather go to a psychiatrist or chiropodist or maybe have a tooth pulled."

Joe: "I don't believe in countries or states or tribes. I believe in a few people, maybe I can count them on one hand, who can you trust?"

Mick: "Right. It's our outfit. That's all that matters. Let people indulge themselves."

Rodent the Roadie who doesn't like being mentioned. "But every time I indulge myself you shout at me."

Welcome to the saloon bar two step.

Mick: "I never shout at you."

Rodent: "You do."

Mick: "I don't."

Paul: "You screech. S-C-R-E-E-C-H!"

Mick: "I think everywhere now people are satisfied with the small group set up. Y'know, not looking for more than two or three friends. That stems from a distrust of anything you are told."

Joe: "Because it's lies. Everything they tell you in school is a bunch of crap. Just do what you are told, moulding you to fit the machine. They don't want you to think. That's too dangerous. Things today are definitely more restricting. If something worries the authorities, they make a law to prevent it."

And the Rainbow gtg must have worried plenty of clinging vine bigots.

Mick: "Yeah. That night they tried to make Joe say something like 'We want you to enjoy yourself, but we want you to enjoy yourself in your seats.' Nobody's gonna tell our band to calm down."

Joe: "And I never went to the party after. I just looked at all those people standing outside and the bouncers punching people in the face and I couldn't take it. Besides, I don't even think I was invited."

There weren't many teds around that night.

### *'We just want to do and say exactly what we want'*

Joe: "A lot of teds are beating up punks. It gives them more credibility."

Mick: "The teds are very scared. They're living in the past. They were once the bad boys on the block but now the punk is getting more attention as a bad boy. Punk rock is taking the piss out of rock 'n' roll — but we are playing contemporary rock 'n' roll."

Joe: "The teds and Mary Whitehouse are on the same side."

And now, the one you've all been waiting for. The one that has alienated some followers from the band with all the deerslayer vengeance of two Grunwick workers

separated by a coach window. I'm talking about 'Remote Control' and CBS. So explain.

Paul: "We were on tour at the time CBS decided to release the album track as a single. We came up to London to sort it out cos if it had to be an album track we wanted 'Janie Jones'."

Nicky: "It was like a battle with everyone trying to establish that they knew best. So we finally turned around and said that they can have it their way but we know how it will turn out."

Joe: "We decided to lose that battle to prove a point. We couldn't win that one. There was nothing else we could have done. They had their way — they f--- it up. It won't happen again."

Mick: "There are a lot of people at CBS that don't want us there. They tolerate us. They've now got their safe punk band — The Vibrators — and they probably only signed them to frighten us. That band will do anything they're told to do. I don't lose a night sleep wondering whether CBS like us or not."

Joe: "They're nice to your face, but wait till you turn your back... And another thing. We spent all our money on the other groups on the tour and CBS are refusing to refund any of it."

### *'Schools — they don't want you to think. That's too dangerous'*

Paul: "They've got their own ideas and they include thinking that we can't do the tour by ourselves. We have been a social service."

Joe: "We're completely skint at the moment. We're treated like dogs. Nobody gives you something for nothing."

Not exactly happy families. But I know who I believe.

Then there was that little matter of The Jam who supported them for a while.

Paul: "Their record company didn't want to support the tour. And they had their own tour looming up."

Joe: "Then they started coming up with that conservative nonsense which was the total opposite to the feel of the tour."

Paul: "And to think we once saw hope for the The Jam."

Right Clash press.

Joe: "There were a lot of masturbatory press articles about the band that made me puke."

Mick: "People who write about rock 'n' roll can indulge in their own fantasies and I like to read it."

### *'We don't preach, we just hope we are making things a little clearer'*

Joe: "I just don't believe in reading that, just like I don't believe in a leader. People are hanging onto your every move. I'm just someone doing something. I ain't gonna get taken in. I learned from early on you should never believe your own press, cos the minute you do you're doomed. People expect us to do their thinking for them."

Paul: "We don't preach. We just hope we are making things a little clearer."

And another thing. Malicious gossip about heavy university backgrounds abound about these guys. None of them went to university, three of them went to art school — "It was better than going into a factory," Paul, whose only hero incidentally was Jimmy Greaves.

But it don't really matter if they all went to Oxford. Does it.

Joe: "Like I always say, trust the story not the storyteller."

The confused blasts of disparity that this band seem to fire with alarming regularity are merely a camouflage. Mick Jones, the harbinger of the band's destiny explains: "We know we are the greatest band in the world, the universe. We don't care about the competition, because we are better than the rest."



*'We know we are the greatest band in the world, the universe. We don't care about the competition, because we are better than the rest'*

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