

Rotten moves on and Biggs joins the bandwagon

THE WORLD OF POP FROM THE INSIDE WITH CHRIS SALEWICZ, OUR MAN IN THE KNOW



Johnny Rotten . . . totally enamoured by the Jamaican culture.



Great Train robber Ronald Biggs . . . joining two other members of the Sex Pistols.

The Rotten Saga continues. Currently ensconced in the Kingston (Jamaica) Sheraton Hotel with Richard Branson, his English record company boss, John Rotten is reported to have been checking out various Jamaican musicians and producers—notably producer Joe Gibbs and the rhythm section of bassist Robble Shakespeare and drummer Sly Dunbar—with a view to recording with them.

It isn't known whether he intends to attempt live work with any Jamaican musicians although the impracticalities of playing with people locked into the manana spirit of Jamaican time could produce severe problems.

Rotten, though, whose love of reggae is legendary, is said to have become totally enamoured of the West Indies' island culture and to be intending to move into a house on the island when Branson departs for New York.

Meanwhile, whilst the

boy from Finsbury Park gets drawn deep into the JA. roots, Pistols guitarist Steve Jones and drummer Paul Cook present an equally surreal vision as they float down the Amazon on a raft with expatriate Great Train robber Ronald Biggs.

This merry prank has been engineered by manager Malcolm McLaren and is to be included as footage in a movie working title "The Great British Rip-off," which McLaren is making, utilising both documentary and scripted fictional footage of the Sex Pistols.

Fellow archetypal punk band the Clash are meanwhile experiencing problems of their own.

Following a series of "secret" dates around the country which were

intended to let the band grow accustomed to such new numbers as "The Prisoner" and "White Man in Hammersmith Palais" before they were recorded, guitarist and songwriter Joe Strummer was hit with a further bout of the recurring glandular fever that has troubled him over the past couple of years.

As Blue Oyster cult Supremo Sandy Pearlman had already flown over to London from New York to produce the band's next album, this was somewhat unfortunate. It is hoped, however, that Strummer will be back working with the band by this weekend and the record will not be unduly delayed.

Meanwhile, perhaps epitomising the speed with which the New Wave has made changes and had changes made within it,

Generation X release at the beginning of next month an album that threatens to eclipse both the Pistols and the Clash's first records.

Produced by Strangers producer Martin Rushent, the as yet untitled album contains what the band's bass player Tony James considers sardonically to be "the first punk epics".

Notable amongst these long numbers is "Kiss Me Deadly," the title of a Mickey Spillane book that James had first considered for the title of the LP until he decided it sounded better as the chorus line of a rock 'n' roll song.

Strongly reminiscent of the manner in which Bruce Springsteen structures his "Jungleland" style street ballads, "Kiss Me Deadly" is a near-stream of con-

sciousness reaction to Fulham, the area of London in which both James and guitarist Derwood lived.

James feels that the Springsteen line "flash guitars like switchblades" amply covers his personal vision of rock 'n' roll.

"All the macho posing of rock musicians is utterly ridiculous," he laughs. "The reason guys start playing instruments and getting into rock bands is usually because they're so weedy they can't possibly be the big heavy guy in the street they'd really like to be."

"Waving a guitar around on stage is the only possible way they can get close to that."

He draws attention to his nine stone frame and tells 'of how living in Fulham made him "very good at running".