

# RUDE BOY

From the first clips of the Jubilee celebrations and a variety of NF slogans, the scene is set for a film about NF/ANL. The first scenes of the film are of National Front speeches and marches by both the NF and the Anti-Nazi League. It shows the violent, fucked-up capital and country where we live. Ray Gange is introduced- dull job in a sex shop, drinking at the pub. Ray is a character we can all sympathise with because <sup>he's</sup> a general, bored frustrated dosser and there's a bit of him in all of us. We see him the victim of the police, picked up for drunk and disorderly when he's not doing much. More ralliers, trying to be controlled by the police cut into the first bit of Clash footage: "Police and Thieves", the Clash are worn out putting every last bit of energy into it. Playing to an audience, **pegoing** desperately. After this, Ray is seen in the pub talking to Joe Strummer about the politics of the band, which is a bit shitty. Ray wants a job as a roadie, but the Clash can't afford it. The Clash rehearse "Garageland", which is a good slice of Clash. Ray is at another gig trying to get off with this girl and they go into the ladies' where she gives him a quick blow-job. Sex for the sake of it- enjoyment like any other drug. The kids are represented as frustrated teenagers, whose only pleasures are rock and roll to get out of their rut and

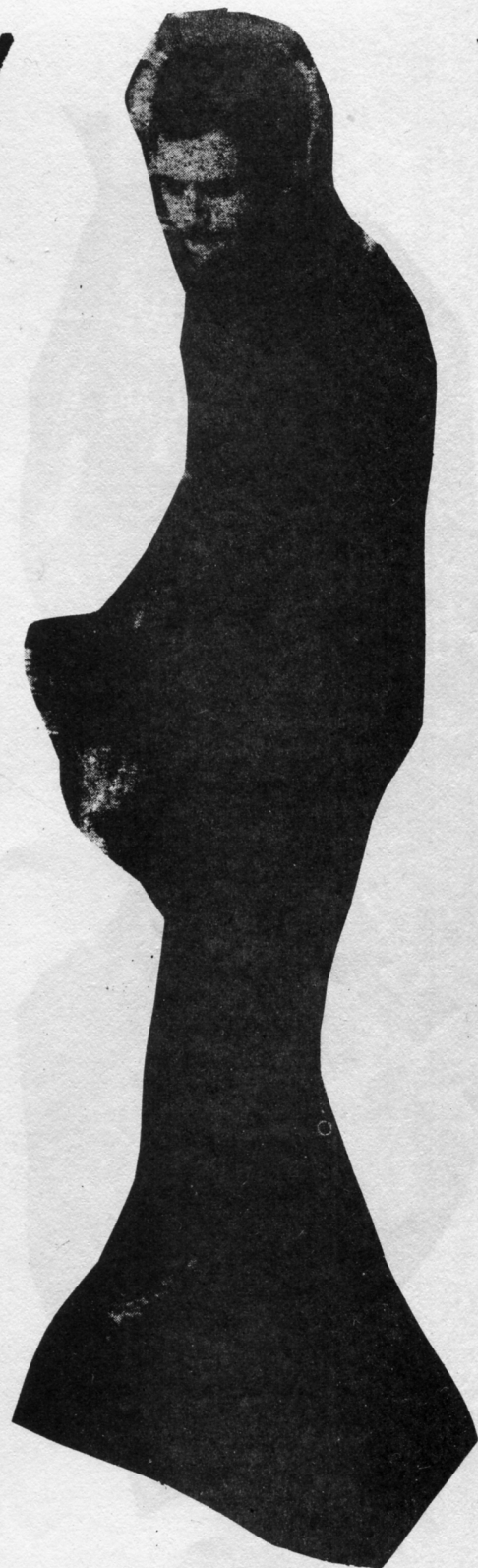
relieve their pent-up tension. Sex 'n' drugs 'n' rock and roll. They've got nothing except these.

A good bit of footage follows of the Clash at the RAR festival, Victoria Park. Tearing through "London's Burning" and "White Riot" (with Jim Pursey as guest singer), the crowds spread out before the stage. There's some hassle which Ray helps to control. You can see it's his only real thrill as he steps up to the mike and encourages the crowd's shouts for an encore- a minute of personal fame

Afterwards, Johnny Green, Clash roadie visits him in his sex shop and asks him to come along as a roadie. His first work is at the Glasgow Apollo, where sweaty live numbers are interspersed with bouncer violence. This includes an effective puke-up scene of Ray in the bogs, after he's tried to help prevent the bouncers beating up a kid. From here on the ~~film~~ film deteriorates into a band film, with the Clash on and off the set. They push their hard-lads-about-town image forward. They come over as a part of the rock and roll business, being a punk band because that's the mode of expression at the time. And they come over as the number one band of the moment, with all these kids following them. They're a professional band, a part of the rock system, like Mick Jones telling Ray to get off the fucking stage when he's trying to sort out some equipment at the Apollo. The film doesn't do much good for their image- Topper Headon and Mick Jones are wankers, with

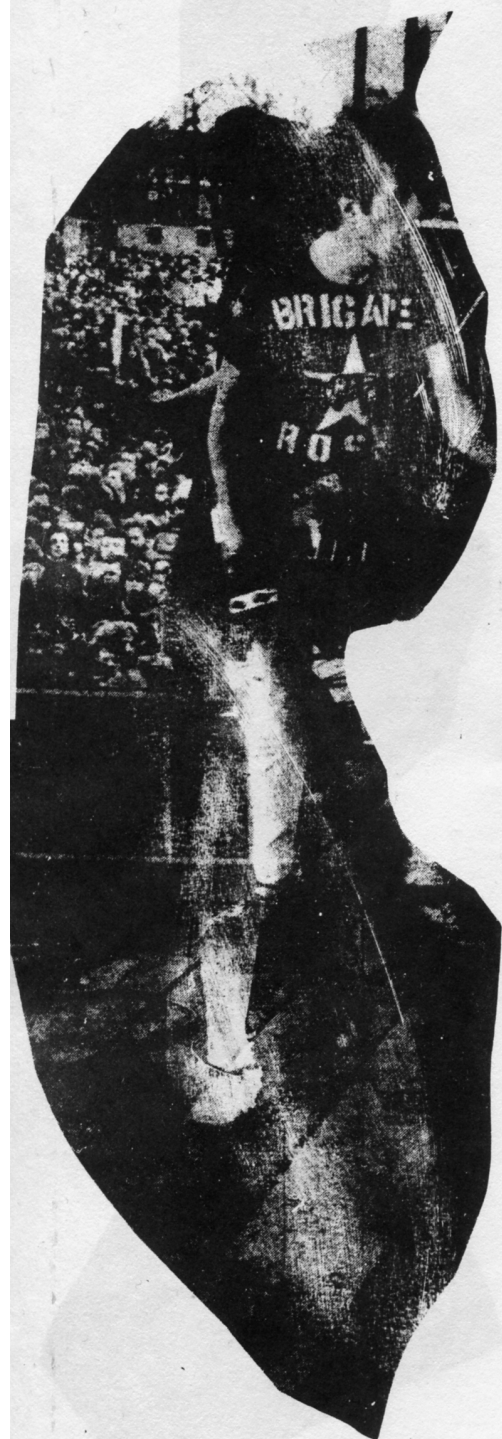
their mild threats at Ray. We don't see much of Paul Spence, but he seems ok. Joe Strummer is sympathetic and caring in his attitude towards the nowhere-kid Ray. His best scene is where he plays the piano while a pissed Ray tries to move around to the music. "What d'you wanna do with yourself?" asks Joe and Ray doesn't know, but we know that already.

Once the band become the biggest part of the film, the characterisation of Ray, already not enough, is not carried through. He is just glimpsed as always being ~~being~~ pissed and gradually getting lax in his roading jobs. After the Scottish dates, he goes back to the sex shop for a while before asking to come back as a roadie. This time he is really lazy and walks out after having been dumped fully clothed and pissed as ever into a bath by various Clash and roadies. He walks away



and you realise he's got no friends (like all of us) and he's just wanting attention and he's got nothing. After this you see blacks being questioned, presumably without cause, and then Mag Thatch (who's already been seen at a conference) steps into No.10 which, I suppose signifies it's her fault. "Rudi Can't Fail" plays out the cast list and is a good song.

The film seemed to get boring and wear on in places and the directing



was pretty bad. A few days later I realised I thought it was a good film really.

It showed London as the urban crui capital, its NF marches, police annoyance, and general shitty atmosphere. It didn't stress it enough though. The film was bad because it lacked direction- it was pulling three different ways. The story of Ray Gange, a typical kid, ordinary and with no future, no promise of anything interesting ~~was~~ We can sympathise with him as with the other kids present at the concerts, because they're us, Joe Strummer summed it up with his simple but directly true lyrics:

"All the young punks  
All the young cunts"

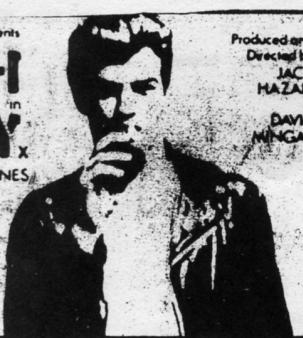
And the future: "Looking like a piece of gold" as it gets nearer it "Looks more like a lump of coal" But Ray isn't characterised enough, he just ambles on as someone who's always drunk.

Its a story of the politics of the time, the rise of the NF, the rise of dear Margaret, the state of post-Jubilee London, etc. which ties in with the rest of course- Ray is a product of this political society, and the Clash appear to be up there to fight certain political factions. But the clips are too brief and cramped together, - whole load of marches and police agro at the beginning then virtually nothing throughout the Clash dominated middle except a Thatcher speech, then there's the black

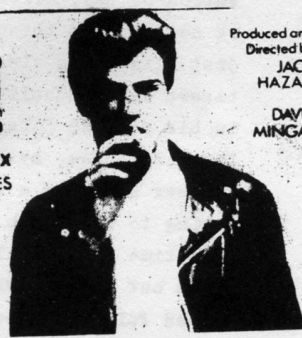


victimization at the end but thats it. It shows the rise of the National Front during '77, with the usual fanaticism which develops with these kind of things- Ray's friend becoming a skin and jumping on the bandwagon. Somewhere I read it said Ray starts off getting more involved with the Clash and their politics finally growing away from them and becoming a racist, which is lies. He's had neutral, perhaps slightly racialist views from the onset and they don't change at all. He's anti-communist throughout. Or its a band film- the Clash, mouthpiece of the masses etc but it just shows their life on the r road except for their occassional statements like Strummer's politic chats or Mick Jones laying down vocals for "Stay Free". It was enjoyable because the situations were ones where we have been through or could understand or sympathise with plus there was some good Clash footage. Ray is a nobody, one of many, and the Clash was the only thing in his life. When that was over, it was back to normal and the same old drugs.

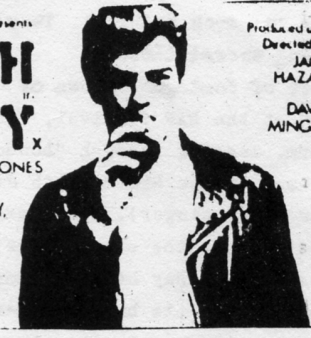
MICHAEL WHITE presents  
**THE CLASH**  
in  
**RUDE BOY**  
Music by JOE STRUMMER & MICK JONES  
"ROUGH, BAWDY, OFTEN FUNNY,  
FINALLY DEVASTATING"  
THE TIMES  
"A STRONG RESEMBLANCE TO  
THE CLOCKWORK ORANGE..."  
SUNDAY TIMES



Produced and Directed by  
JACK HAZAN & DAVID MINGAY  
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JACK HAZAN & DAVID MINGAY  
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