

CLASH RATS JUDAS PRIEST

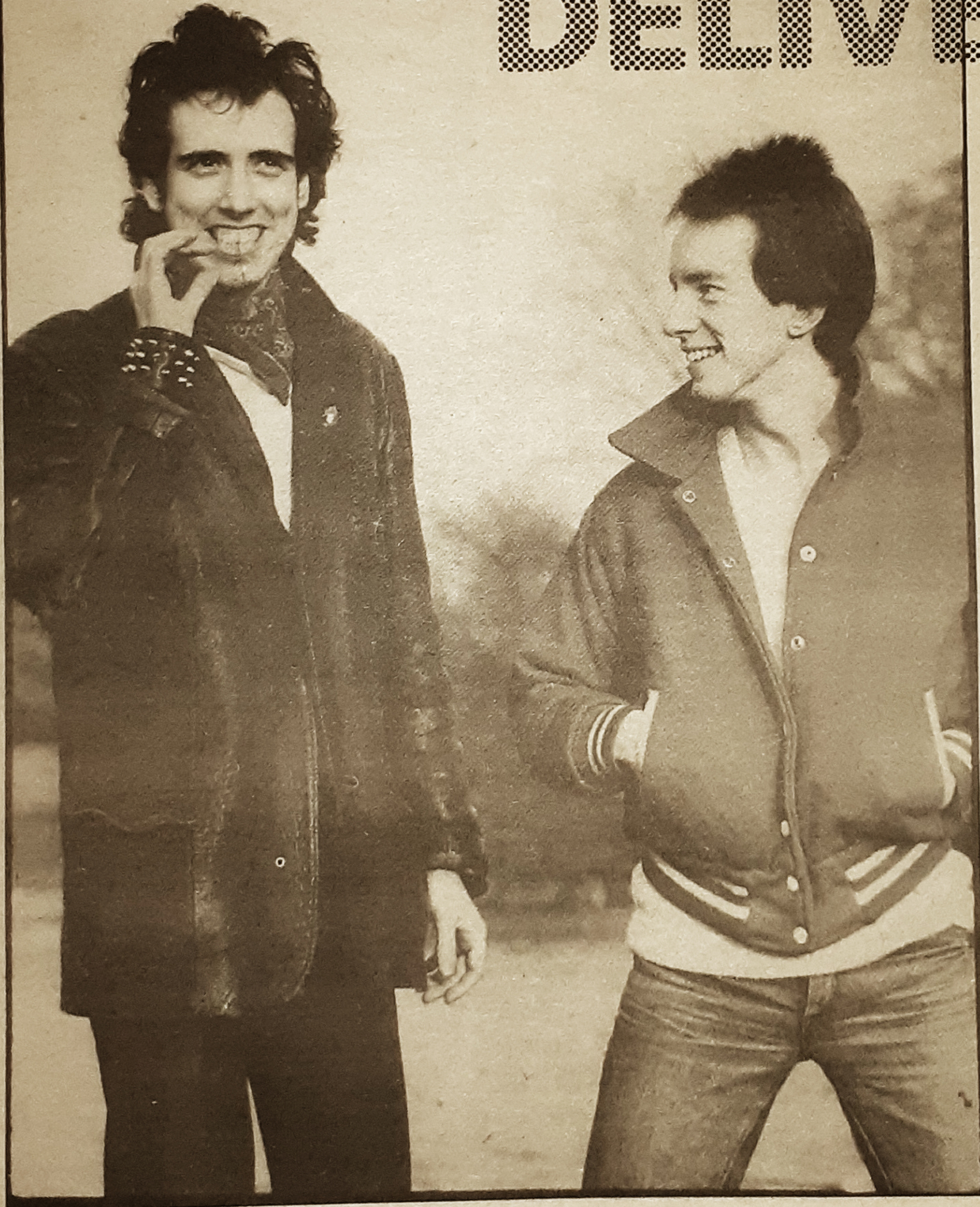
SOUNDS



**MALE
MODEL
IN
KILLER
ALBUM
SHOCK**

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CLASH ON DELIVERY



INTERVIEW BY



GARRY BUSHELL,
PIX BY
JILL FURMANOVSKY

*'A spliff ana pound.
And half a pint of brown.
That's how we spell
Camden Town' ('All The
Young Punks').*

*'Just because we're in a
group you all think we're
stinking rich.
'N you think the cocaine's
flowing like rivers up our
noses.
'N every sea will part for
us like the red sea did for
Moses' ('Cheapskates').*

“**T**HINK the album's bloody great. Most groups after they've done their album they go 'aww, this could 'ave been better' or 'we mixed this badly cos we got stoned' an'all that. But we don't have that cos we spent like five days on each track getting it right.”

Mick Jones laughed, it was like a Monty Python sketch, with him and me sitting on a 3d arrow, with 'admission free' stamped on it, plonked outside the Serpentine Art Gallery in Hyde Park with all these sculptured Morrismen behind us.

“I 'ate sculptures.” Why meet here then? “Why not.” Under the firm guidance of lensperson Furmanovsky, Jones and Topper wandered round the gallery posing, with me and Mick's long time mate Robin Banks (as we shall see, an appropriate name) bringing up the rear. It was a weird place, stuffed full of frightfully-frightfullys pretending not to see the star in their midst — me, dummy. Jonesy looked more like a lighterman with his red neckerchief and leather sports jacket with

CONTINUES OVER

OR: how to beat the backstabbers and come up with a good second album. ('Good? It's bleedin' great' says the detached and objective Mr Bushell)

the little Lenin badge on the lapel.

"Lend us your handkerchief Garry, then I can pose with these Morrismen....."

I did. The bastard blew his nose on it. Close forensic examination revealed not even the minutest speck of cocaine.

"Drugs are complete muck. Cocaine is the worst kind of drug ever — Joe said that months ago and he was getting at me cos I was snorting, but he was right, that sort of drug is really soul-destroying."

THAT WAS Mick's first serious moment of the day and just one indication of the new sense of clearheaded purpose running through the Clash camp after they have once again undoubtedly delivered the vinyl goodies.

Not that you'd have guessed it by the way they were letting off steam in the park, racing round the ponds (Topper won every time) or winding me up with scarying made-up tales about 19th century anarchists perishing in the park's own isolated cop-shop; or dropping in little anecdotes that all you Clash fanatics love (like did you know Joe once entered a marriage of convenience to get the money for his first Telecaster?).

But later, walking down to the Notting Hill flat Mick shares with Gen X's Tony James, he spelled out more of the Clash's current mood of positivism.

"I'm really optimistic about punk, I think it's like a matter of thinking straight. If we can think straight then I think a lot of people'll follow suit, not fall for the same trick twice..... I mean I don't like to talk about it in the past tense, I don't see why everybody gets so down. When people talk about punk these days it's like they're at a wake.

"I'll tell you know, the spirit of the thing won't die until we break up and we ain't in a mood to break up at the moment. We're thinking straight, being enthusiastic, believing....." SEEN.

I'M NOT gonna go on and on about the new album, suffice it to say that when Dave 'Slightly Put Out' McCullough described it as the best album since the last Clash album that's exactly how I feel too. It's just that no other group EXCITES me as much as the Clash. The first week I was here I reviewed them and said "as long as they generate the same buzz of excitement you get when you skip off school for the first time they'll still be the Clash we know and love."

And they still do.

The Pistols may have been the innovators but it was always the Clash for me, it's almost embarrassing to say how much they meant. They changed my life. Laugh, go on. But it wasn't just fun they were

offering, they were asking questions too, making you think.

Living on White City they somehow articulated the frustration that I felt; when it looked like the Front/New Party Army really were on the up and up, they were an uncompromising 'stuff you'; and when we finally did have a riot of our own with hundreds of kids charging up Belmont Hill, exactly 15 months ago then it was their lyrics screaming round my brain. And if you think that's posing or cliched or a joke then screw you, cos it's true.

Which doesn't make for arschole 'thick or thin' fan worship. If that album had stunk like for a time I was allowing myself to think it would, I'd have been the first to say so. But more of this later.

The best thing about this job has been meeting people you've long admired and finding that they're decent people after all. Mick Jones is such a man. Wish I could say the same about the wretched Banks tho', who during the course of the interview swiped my pen, my Clash lyric sheet and my copy of the Parsons/Burchill book of slag offs. If it hadn't have been for my old war wound.....no only joking Rob, can I have me braces back now?

"You can't write nuffin about the flat" Mick had chided while pouring me out a large pernod and lemonade (real payola, huh kids), "Cos someone's doing that in a Generation X interview." So I'm not gonna say a word about the Clash-logo embellished union jack hanging over the stairs or the big Lenin poster in the living room or the whiff of models in James's bedroom. Instead, cue interview.

What was Sandy Pearlman (their producer) like?

"A fucking misery.....it was like 98 days in hell." D'you think he's made a lot of difference?

"Absolutely none at all, it sounds like the first Clash album to me.....no it doesn't, it's better. The difference is in the playing of it, you can play it and there's loads of stuff you won't hear the first few times."

Only ten songs though.

"The only reason we put ten tracks on the album is that it's a better sound than if you cram in all the stuff. We've got about 15 songs unrecorded.....you wanna hear some?"

Jones whipped out some tapes recorded with Pearlman in England about five months ago, and listening to those early versions of 'Julie' and 'Safe European Homes' with our heroes barely containing giggling fits all I can say is it was worth the wait. Outtake versions of 'Groovy Times' and 'Heart And Mind' however were enough to dispel all rumours that they'd dried up as composers. A new album

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"We're doing one, the soundtrack for the film."

What film?

"It's about our roadies.....no it's about us going to court all the time an 'all, but that won't make it dull, it's got film of the Glasgow concerts. It's not really a documentary, it's more like acting. It's loads of things that actually happened and we're acting them again. I think it'll be called 'I Fought The Law' and it should be shown as a proper film on general release."

The film's nearly finished, it'll be finished by Christmas and all we'll do is plonk ourselves in a studio for about a month and finish off the music. But it'll be proper stuff, it'll be like as good as getting an album. If it's not I'll warn everybody before 'and.' Not another three month job then?

"The work that went into that album! We did the whole thing about three times, two lots of demo tapes, then the real thing and then we cut down and cut bits out that weren't necessary and eventually got in down to what it is now. See, we weren't gonna be pushed into the second album two weeks after the first zone like those other groups, who 'ad no time to think what they're writin' about and ended up sayin' the same things as before."

Okay, let's hear what the album's got to say, starting with one of the albums best cuts, 'All The Young Punks':

'Face front we got the future.

Shining like a piece of gold.

But I swear as we got closer.

It looks more like a piece of coal.

But it's better than some factory.

That's no place to waste your youth.

I worked there for a week once.

But luckily I got the boot.

All the young punks.

Laugh your life cos there ain't much to cry for.

All you young cunts.

Live it now cos there ain't much to die for'

"THE SECOND part of the second side is a progress report on us. It's also one of the answers cos it's an indication of what can be done — just to make you feel alright. They want to keep you preoccupied with troubles so you can't concentrate on anything else, same with all the working stuff. This says 'at least 'ave a laugh to start with'.

"If you're gonna place any importance on the words you've gotta read them as if it was you cos that's who it's for. It ain't for nobody who ain't experienced it.....Like with the factory you're only in there ten minutes before you start feeling sick in the guts. All these jobs are the same, that they don't need people to do them, but they keep

you at it.

"America's ten times worse actually cos when they don't keep you at it they've sussed it out for yer leisure time as well. It's like a real con — you don't get a second to think of nuffin. It's real blank stuff. Richard Hell was right. But I think the first thing to do is laugh at them, cos they are funny, all the bosses and that. It isn't funny really, but that's your own personal freedom, that first laugh.....the first step."

'Cheapskates': "That song was written during a period of heavy drug taking. The lyrics are meant as a satire on the situation. That last bit was me an Joe writing together and coming to a conclusion instead of talking it out."

And 'Stay Free' is your song: "It's me and Joe they're all me and Joe but that one's got a bias towards me. It's just where I come from, that's what it was like for me." (Robin Bans is actually one of the characters in the song). The hooligans who never got caught make the best rock 'n' roll."

'Guns On The Roof':

"That is not about shooting at pigeons! We're not that pathetic... you'll have to ask Topper about that."

Topper: "I've shot things all my life."

Rob: "He shot his parents when he was three."

Topper: "...and, well, they shit on you."

Mick: "It was originally a jam, the traditional jam, just three chords, it sounds like 'I Can't Explain' and 'Clash City Rockers'."

Topper: "That's a trick."

Mick: "I know we're making light of it, but it's really one of the heaviest songs on the album. Joe assumes the role of the bloke in the witness box imagining he's witnessing all this evil. He goes 'I swear by almighty god, and all 'ades erupts at that point, all the feedback."

'A system built by the sweat of the many.

Creates assassins to kill off the few.

Take any place and call it a courthouse.

This is a place where no judge can stand'.

And the line about Russia, and the Chinese design on the cover, is that just symbolic or do you see

those systems as some sort of alternative?

"No, not really. I see them as big blank spaces full of people with nothing to do and it's worse than here. They just say they do this, do that, and you do it. It worries me but I haven't got a liberal worry about it. Like, my main concern is survival."

You haven't had a good relationship with the left wing groups in this country.

"Sod 'em. They're too namby-pamby..... I think the Anti Nazi League and Rock Against Racism are fucking spot on. I support 'em wholeheartedly and I'm not at all embarrassed to be associated with them."

'English Civil War' is about fascism, the danger that hasn't gone away, so don't be complacent.

'When Johnny comes marching home again.

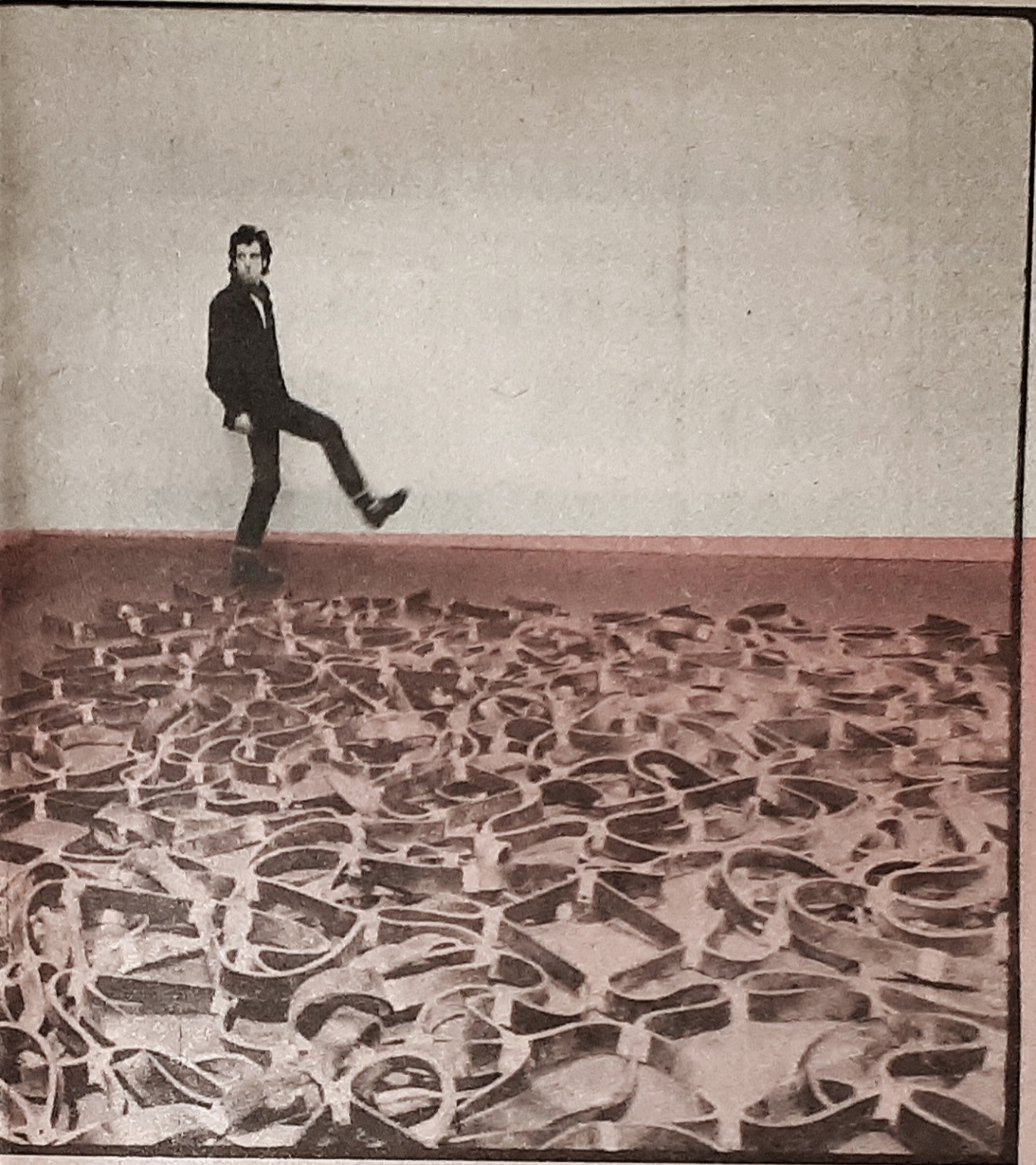
Nobody understands how it can happen again.

The sun is shining and the kids are shouting loud.

But you gotta know it's shining through a crack in the cloud.'

"I despise the NF, you can't say words strong enough because fascists





murdered thousands of people. That's the serious stuff. Now it's the same old scapegoats, the Asians and the Jews and if the Front got in they'd murder more people. We can do things about it — pretend it's not there or use whatever power you can for the benefit of good. We make ourselves available but I don't see it in terms of organisations. I see it more as a gang or something, I've got quite a romantic vision of it."

The Last Gang in Town? I thought that song was about you being the last 'original' punk band going but the lyrics aren't about that.

"The lyrics are just something I believe to be a profound truth, it's the same message as 'The Kids United' — the more we fight amongst ourselves the more they're laughing."

'Down from the edge of London.

The rockabilly rebels came.

An from another edge of London.

The skinhead gangs call out their name.

But not the zydeco kids from the high rise.

Though they can't be recognised.

But when you hear a cajun fiddle then you're nearly in the middle.

Of the last gang in town. What I really want to know is why don't you put the lyrics on the album?

"It's what it means to you that matters, the kids make up their own words (I won't say a word about him singing 'We're Garry's band' for the last 18 months — Carol Bushell). Before, a few months ago I mean, 'Tommy Gun' was even on a record kids in Liverpool came up and told us their own words to the whole song. It's great."

'Tommy Gun' is about mercenaries and Mick whips out an American mag called 'Soldier Of Fortune', which is much more pornographic than Tony James' battered copy of 'Spanking Schoolgirls', full of ads for t-shirts bearing legends like 'Be A Man Among Men-Rhodesian Army'. A snip at just under six dollars — real sicko stuff.

What were the lyrics on the first album I read you now laugh at?

"I hate Englishmen just

as bad as wops'... there's some stuff on 'Deny' and also in the middle of 'What's My Name' it goes 'Dad got pissed an' I got clocked/Couldn't hear the tannoy so he lost the lot/Offers mum a bribe thru the letters box/Drives yer fucking mad...' All those swear words on the new album won't endear you to American radio stations...

"They warned us about not getting on the radio that some of these records are potential hits'. They said 'Here's this apple, you can be rich and famous if you only take the swear words out' — we had to tell 'em where to stuff their apple. But we needed the big production to take on the groups over there. It's really 'orrible, it's still all groups like Aerosmith. I'm definitely into getting rid of all that lot. It's just boring f***ing granny music. Heavy Metal is like for young old farts and they can all go and screw themselves, including Blue Oyster Cult who I ultimately have nothing but contempt for.

"When I was there it was

to come back to the 'Complete control' conundrum.

"The pressure is immense but I don't think I've got any right to moan about it. People understand it's not all peaches, not all glamour — and we never wanted it to be that. We just felt we had to 'ave a go cos everything else was so shitty.

"We don't do those TV programmes cos we don't want to perpetuate that crap. Who wants to do 'Rock Goes To College' for an hour? We don't play only to students. How can you have a programme like 'Revolver' which is supposed to be a punk programme where the bloke in charge doesn't even like punk? Or some old guff like Robin Nash deciding what is popular?"

What about Jimmy Pursey's argument that TOTP is going out to kids who aren't old enough, or can't afford to go to gigs?

"I'd rather make myself available to see us in different ways like doing schools or playing prisons, rather than that pathetic representation. I wish Jimmy well, but it's not for us."

How about CBS?

"I want records out. I want hit records but I won't eat shit. There's certain things you have to do but I've never eaten shit. I've been shit on while I'm not looking but I've never eaten shit.

"I stand by nearly everything I've ever done and I believe we're still true to the spirit of the thing as opposed to some groups who've used punk to become what they are now which is nothing different to what's gone before. They need to be destroyed. I won't name names but if they act like berks and tossers they're gonna be seen as berks and tossers in the long run."

The band's break-up with Managers Lib is still sub judice so Mick's only comment was words to the effect that Managers Lib is about as pathetic as Mens Lib, that the group are as badly off now as they were two years ago and that he saw the case as a stand for all groups who get treated as they were.

The Harlesden gigs are seen as the ending of an era — the fulfilling of their final Rhodes obligations. The slaggings they received didn't seem to particularly bother him.

"Yeah — I went out and walked past some dole office again, so I could remember what it's like. No, them reviews were pretty potty, it was like people had been waiting a long time to say them things — but I wish 'em all the best... and a box of Bandaid each..."

Robin: "And a craftsman made coffin... who the fuck is Ian Penman anyway? The most insignificant speck of dust on the earth."

Mick: "And I know Eric Fuller was pissed and

couldn't get off with some bird... No, but really Penman's working class entertainment bit is really fucking insulting. Only an upper class twit would say a thing like that. An upper class twit who goes 'oh yes they're working class entertainment in the form of Slade and the Faces' and like what's this guy know about rock 'n' roll and the excitement its given thousands and thousands of people?"

At this stage this Guinness Book Of Interviews entry was rudely interrupted by a noisy Tony James...

Tony: "I've just come by bus!"

Mick (posh): "Oh what. Limo broken down then? You mean you had to mix with the common people? I say."

Tony: "It's been hard work down the gentlemen's club all day... aw look, Crossroads is on."

"Coronation Street's better. Its been really gripping with Ray and Deidre (Is that your conscience speaking — A.N. Office-Gossip).

Topper: "Ain't they emigrating or somefin?"

Mick: "See we watch it too — we got nothing better to do. Everyone watches it. It's official — the Pope watches Coronation Street."

I hear you got a theory about Italians and rock 'n' roll.

"Yeah, a lot of Italians play great rock 'n' roll."

You mean Giovanni?

"No. A lot of Italians don't play great rock 'n' roll too. In Italy there's a lot of things going on. And with Italian Americans — like there's Thunders, David Johanson's band, half the Dictators. Springsteen looks Italian to me... what a stupid question."

Well let Topper answer some questions.

"Okay Topper, tell him how the set on the tour's over an hour long and 'ow 'ard it is to play the new album live. We still can't play really. We 'ad a lot of fun watching our record being recorded by session musicians. On the album are Stan Bronstein from Elephants Memory on sax on 'Drug Stabbing Time' and Glouves and Al Fields (the 60 year old black blues musicians known as the Living Legend who plays in Noo Yawk's Bells Of Hell bar — I'm there every Saturday) on joanna for 'Julie'."

But of course I could go on and on about how the Clash don't actually play themselves live, but that they get in trained musician lookalikes. Or rather I would have been able to if Robin Banks hadn't taken it upon himself to nick me microphone at the vital moment in the conservation. So I spose we'll have to leave it there, till the next gig.

'Wanna move the town to be Clash City Rockers — getta little jump of Electric Shockers...'

STILL!

the little Lenin badge on the lapel.
 "Lend us your handkerchief Garry, then I can pose with these Morrismen....."
 I did. The bastard blew his nose on it. Close forensic examination revealed not even the minutest speck of cocaine.
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The best thing about this job has been meeting people you've long admired and finding that they're decent people after all. Mick Jones is such a man. Wish I could say the same about the wretched Banks tho', who during the course of the interview swiped my pen, my Clash lyric sheet and my copy of the Parsons/Burchill book of slag offs. If it hadn't have been for my old war wound..... no only joking Rob, can I have me braces back now?

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What was Sandy Pearlman (their producer) like?
 "A fucking misery.....it was like 98 days in hell."
D'you think he's made a lot of difference?
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But luckily I got the boot.
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"THE SECOND part of the second side is a progress report on us. It's also one of the answers cos it's an indication of what can be done — just to make you feel alright. They want to keep you preoccupied with troubles so you can't concentrate on anything else, same with all the working stuff. This says 'at least 'ave a laugh to start with'.
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"Cheapskates": "That song was written during a period of heavy drug taking. The lyrics are meant as a satire on the situation. That last bit was me an Joe writing together and coming to a conclusion instead of talking it out."
 And 'Stay Free' is your song: "It's me and Joe they're all me and Joe but that one's got a bias towards me. It's just where I come from, that's what it was like for me." (Robin Bans is actually one of the characters in the song). The hooligans who never got caught make the best rock 'n' roll."

"Guns On The Roof":

those systems as some sort of alternative?
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 You haven't had a good relationship with the left wing groups in this country.
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 "When I was there it was

like I was drawing maps, like I was a spy for Britain and I'd go back an' say that's where you bomb.
 "I know it sounds like we're gonna fuck off to the States and you'll never see us again but, I mean, we play here more than most bands. America is really syphilitic, really diseased. It's horrible, it's almost too late..... some of it's good, like every town's got their own little scene. The Dils are probably the best punk group. They're good, three piece goodness."
 "I admire the way Joe found America. He just hired a Chevy and drove until the Chevy broke out. I found America a different way. I went to 'Ollywood in my week off. LA, man, the most evil place in the world. It's like the new Roman Empire — I was almost drawn there. It was the most horrible thing, all laid back and disgusting and I 'ated everybody but it was so gross I was fascinated by it."
 You were saying at the press conference about the pressure from CBS about not doing Top Of The Pops etc. The whole thing seemed

couldn't get off with some bird... No, but really Penman's working class entertainment bit is really fucking insulting. Only an upper class twit would say a thing like that. An upper class twit who goes 'oh yes they're working class entertainment in the form of Slade and the Faces' and like what's this guy know about rock 'n' roll and the excitement it gives thousands and thousands of people?"
 At this stage this Guinness Book Of Interviews entry was rudely interrupted by a noisy Tony James...
 Tony: "I've just come by bus!"
 Mick (posh): "Oh what. Limo broken down then? You mean you had to mix with the common people? I say."
 Tony: "It's been hard work down the gentlemen's club all day... aw look, Crossroads is on."
 "Coronation Street's better. It's been really gripping with Ray and Deidre (Is that your conscience speaking — A.N. Office-Gossip).
 Topper: "Ain't they emigrating or somethin'?"
 Mick: "See we watch it too — we got nothing better to do. Everyone watches it. It's official — the Pope watches Coronation Street."
 I hear you got a theory about Italians and rock 'n' roll.
 "Yeah, a lot of Italians play great rock 'n' roll."
 You mean Giovanni?
 "No. A lot of Italians don't play great rock 'n' roll too. In Italy there's a lot of things going on. And with Italian Americans — like there's Thunders, David Johanson's band, half the Dictators. Springsteen looks Italian to me... what a stupid question!"
 Well let Topper answer some questions.
 "Okay Topper, tell him how the set on the tour's over an hour long and 'ow 'ard it is to play the new album live. We still can't play really. We 'ad a lot of fun watching our record being recorded by session musicians. On the album are Stan Bronstein from Elephants Memory on sax on 'Drug Stabbing Time' and Gloves Glover and Al Fields (the 60 year old black blues musicians known as the Living Legend who plays in Noo Yawk's Bells Of Hell bar — I'm there every Saturday) on joanna for 'Julie'.
 But of course I could go on and on about how the Clash don't actually play themselves live, but that they get in trained musician lookalikes. Or rather I would have been able to if Robin Banks hadn't taken it upon himself to nick me microphone at the vital moment in the conservation. So I spose we'll have to leave it there, till the next gig."
 "Wanna move the town to be Clash City Rockers — getta little jump of Electric Shockers....."
STILL!

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to come back to the 'Complete control' conundrum.
 "The pressure is immense but I don't think I've got any right to moan about it. People understand it's not all peaches, not all glamour — and we never wanted it to be that. We just felt we had to 'ave a go cos everything else was so shifty."
 "We don't do those TV programmes cos we don't want to perpetuate that crap. Who wants to do 'Rock Goes To College' for an hour? We don't play only to students. How can you have a programme like 'Revolver' which is supposed to be a punk programme where the bloke in charge doesn't even like punk? Or some old guff like Robin Nash deciding what is popular?"
 What about Jimmy Pursey's argument that TOTP is going out to kids who aren't old enough, or can't afford to go to gigs?
 "I'd rather make myself available to people who couldn't see us in different ways like doing schools or playing prisons, rather than that pathetic representation. I wish Jimmy well, but it's not for us."

How about CBS?
 "I want records out. I want hit records but I won't eat shit. There's certain things you have to do but I've never eaten shit. I've been shit on while I'm not looking but I've never eaten shit."
 "I stand by nearly everything I've ever done and I believe we're still true to the spirit of the thing as opposed to some groups who've used punk to become what they are now which is nothing different to what's gone before. They need to be destroyed. I won't name names but if they act like berks and tossers they're gonna be seen as berks and tossers in the long run."
 The band's break-up with manager Bernie Rhodes is still sub judice so Mick's only comment was words to the effect that Managers Lib is about as pathetic as Mens Lib, that the group are as badly off now as they were two years ago and that he saw the case as a stand for all groups who get treated as they were.
 The Harlesden gigs are seen as the ending of an era — the fulfilling of their final Rhodes obligations. The slaggings they received didn't seem to particularly bother him.
 "Yeah — I went out and walked past some dole office again, so I could remember what it's like. No, then reviews were pretty potty, it was like people had been waiting a long time to say them things — but I wish 'em all the best..... and a box of Bandida each..."
 Robin: "And a craftsman made coffin..... who the fuck is Ian Penman anyway? The most insignificant speck of dust on the earth."
 Mick: "And I know Eric Fuller was pissed and

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