

I'D CALLED Mick Jones last Friday night. The parsimonious Bernie Rhodes — who, though a replacement manager has yet to be found (and it is most likely neither Billy Gaff nor Brian Lane), appears to be regarded most firmly as the band's ex — wouldn't give me tickets for last Saturday's Clash Roxy date, said CBS.

Could Mick put me down on his own guest list?

"Sure thing," he replied. "Only I've just got in from playing in Dublin an hour ago and I've just been told there's an advert on Capital Radio saying we're not playing."

"Whatever happens, though, I can tell you we're going to be turning up."

At seven last Saturday night The Clash turned up all right. To talk with and console fans unable to enjoy yet another Clash gig stymied by officialdom. See also Belfast and Birmingham, where the group made personal appearances outside venues to explain their lack of appearance onstage.

"I can't think of any other group that turns up to a gig, spends a couple of hours talking to the fans in front of a fish and chip shop and then goes home," said Mick Jones in an Indian restaurant in Westbourne Grove about half an hour after the band had departed the North-West London industrial wasteland in which the Harlesden Roxy is set.

This was the third time that efforts have been made to bring The Clash and the Roxy together.

Unbeknown to The Clash themselves, Bernie Rhodes had originally booked the band in to play the Roxy last September 9, to celebrate the return of Jones and Joe Strummer from their Stateside studio sojourn.

As the band knew nothing whatsoever about the gig, and as Mick and Joe were still in the States continuing their temperamental studio relationship with producer Sandy Pearlman ("He's spent six months trying to turn us into Fleetwood Mac but he hasn't succeeded," says Jones), the gig was re-scheduled for September 25.

The temperamental/tempestuous studio relationship continued.



June '78 rehearsal. Pic: WALT DAVIDSON

## CLASH BEATEN OUT OF ROXY AGAIN

September 25 came and went. The gig was re-re-scheduled for October 14 — last Saturday.

Between September 25 and last Saturday, however, part of the downstairs section of the Roxy was turned into a dance floor. This entailed the removal of 500 seats.

On the eve of the October 14 gig, the Greater London Council, who

appear to have been operating something close to psychological warfare with The Clash ever since fans trashed a sizable number of seats at the Rainbow during the spring '77 White Riot Tour, checked out the Roxy and informed Terry Collins, the manager, that due to the new seating facilities only 900 of the 1,600 ticket holders could be allowed in to the theatre.

At a meeting of the Roxy's Board of Directors, late last Friday afternoon, it was decided that chaos was likely to ensue if the first 900 fans who arrived were granted entry to the theatre and the remaining 700 were turned away. It was after this meeting that ads were placed on Capital Radio telling ticket-holders to stay at home.

Even so, however, the band and the theatre management continued to

attempt to find a solution that would permit them to play to all 1,600 ticket holders that day.

"Up until three o'clock this afternoon," grunted Joe Strummer through a mouthful of vegetable biryani, "I thought we'd manage it. I thought we could play two sets, one for all the kids who turned up early and then another one for the rest."

"But the police objected to that. They said they didn't want that type of person wandering about Harlesden all evening."

"I wouldn't mind betting that Sid Vicious business hadn't got something to do with it." An ominous note for the future . . .

The Clash stuck around outside the Roxy until about nine o'clock. There were close to four hundred kids outside; the band figured they spoke to most of them.

Most of them were *very* pissed off.

"Wouldn't you be?" demanded Joe wearily. "There were kids from all over the country: Cardiff, Liverpool, Belfast, Newcastle, Glasgow . . . What *am* I supposed to say when someone says to me that they've spent twenty quid to get to the Roxy and that they're broke now?"

"Ah, but listen, you know — I can understand it if they're pissed off with us, but I wish they wouldn't be. Because if they are then they're just buying it. They're not seeing through it all and realizing that they're being just as stitched up by the GLC as we are."

"Still, it's understandable. There was this guy there who's in some remand home in the North-East. I told him we were going to be playing *two* gigs — on October 25 and 26 — so everyone can get in to see us. 'What good's that to me?' he said. 'I can only get out at weekends.'"

So The Clash will return to the Roxy on Wednesday, October 25 and Thursday, October 26. Ticket holders 1-900 will be let in on the first day, ticket holders 900 onwards on the 26th.

Jah willing, Harlesden should once again shake to and delight in the sound of the Clash City Rockers in a week's time.

CHRIS SALEWICZ

THRILLS