Weekend Mirror

THOUGHTS OF CHAIRMAN JOE

The Clash's lead singer lashes out

POP by NICK KENT

JOE STRUMMER, leader of Britain's militant music movement, feels betrayed.

Three years ago Joe and his band The Clash were spokesmen for a new breed of young musicians.

They stuck up two fingers at the cigar-chewing moguls of the music world and demanded a big say in how their careers were run.

Now Joe is depressed. He feels he has been deserted and there's nobody left to speak for.

"The Clash have always turned down Top Of The Pops—I believe it turns music into trivia," he says.

"But groups who were once on our side were soon queuing up to get on the show, tempted by the audience of millions.

Howls

Joe, 28 sits huddled up on the pub stool, a hunted man hiding under a grey trilby hat and a Cromble overcoat.

The way he feels makes him an eternal outsider. His songs are fierce, outraged attacks on police who harass blacks and youngsters, screams of protest at Tory dole queues, howls of pain inflicted by the injustices of a suffering world.

Joe says: "Every record must contain politics now. You can't write love songs with a Tory government kicking all and sundry in the teeth.

"It's a blow in the belly to see pap rise in the pop charts. Perhaps I'm jealous, but it sticks in my gullet every time The Police have a big hit.

"Their music lulls kids into thinking things are better than they are. The Police take black reggae and give it a vasectomy."

Joe has taken some hard knocks of late. The Clash signed a deal with giant record company, CBS — and the holier-than-thou music Press accused them of selling out.

Says Joe: "I was delighted. The Clash couldn't run away from success. I don't feel guilty about making money.

"But I despise rock groups who take the money and run. The Rolling Stones, for instance. They deserted the London fans who made them a success.

Joe ploughs his money back into the roots of music. He is reputed to have given £25,000 to reggae artist Mickey Dread so that he could make an LP.

"Yeah," says Joe. "I suppose we are a really easy touch."

High

The Clash are five years old this month. They've had hit singles and their latest album, Sandinista! is high in the charts.

But Joe can't see any cause for cheer.

"Maybe my standards are too high. That's the trouble with having ideals."

OUTSIDER: Joe Strummer. Picture: ERIC HARLOW

ROCK DIARY

TODAY

THE DARTS: Birmingham, University.
THE WHO: Brighton, Conference Centre.
THE FALL: Cardiff, University.
HARRY CHAPIN: Dublin, Stadium.
BAD MANNERS: Liverpool, University.
JAPAN AND WASTED YOUTH: London, Hammersmith Odeon.

TOMORROW

THE STRANGLERS: Cardiff, Top Rank
HARRY CHAPIN: Cork, Savoy
D EDRINGER: Hull, Humberside Theatre.
LINDISFARNE: Leeds, Opera House.
THE POLECATS: London, Marquee.
BURNING SPEAR: London, Rainbow.

Supplied by Melody Maker.

Save at the double

HERE is a great double offer for Pop Club members

You can get ten per cent discount on all tickets for the great Silk Cut International Festival of Country Music at Wembley over Easter.

This year's line-up of talent is bigger than ever and includes Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash.

AND we are offering members 50p discount (maximum two tickets) for all seats at the three main venues of Franki Valli's British tour with The Four Seasons.

The line-up for the International Festival of Country Music includes:

Friday April 17: George Jones, Jerry Lee Lewis.

Saturday April 18: Marty Robbins, Billie Jo Spears.

Sunday April 19: Tammy Wynette supported by Hoyt Anderson.

Monday April 20: Johnny Cash, June Carter with Frank Ifield.

Ticket prices are: One Day: £19.50, £16.50, £14.50, £12.50, £9.50, £7.50. Two Day: £37.00, £31.00, £28.00, £24.00, £18.00. Three Day: £54.00, £46.00, £41.00, £38.00, £27.00. Four Day: £70.00, £59.00, £51.00, £48.00, £36.00.

Pop Club members can get ten per cent off any of these prices by sending a cheque or postal order made out to Mervyn Conn Promotions Ltd., with your name, address and Pop Club number on the back.

Enclose a SAE and post to Festival Booking Office, Mervyn Conn Promotions Ltd., 14 Orange Street, London, WC2. Phone enquiries to 01-930 7502.

Franki Valli's concerts at the Apollo, Manchester are on March 3 at 8 pm (ticket prices: £6.50; £5.50; £4.50; £3.50) and the Odeon, Birmingham on March 13, at 8 pm (ticket prices: £6.50; £5.50; £4.50; £3.50). For these venues, show your membership cards at the box office to obtain your discounts. Both box offices are now open.

The other venue is the Apollo, Victoria, London on March 14, at 8.00. (ticket prices: £10.00; £7.50; £6.50; £5.50; £4.50).

Applications for the London Concert should be made by post to: Kruger Organisation, Concert Promotions Ltd., P.O. Box 460, Brighton BN1 5BQ. Enclose a postal order with SAE made out to the Kruger Organisation with your name, address and Pop Club membership number on the back.

SINGLES

☆ GLAD ALL OVER (Dreamland). Great rock 'n' roll sound from Suzi Quatro in this update revival of the Dave Clark Five hit.

☆ ROLLIN' (Polydor). Bubbling Tina Charles certainly gets her skates on for this speedy roller disco number. It's highly infectious and could get into the charts.

☆ TIME IS TIME (RSO). Andy Gibb's unmistakable vocal style blends well with this uptempo rock ballad he co-wrote with brother Barry. Pleasant but not a monster hit.

STAN SAYER

THE CLAPTON OF OLD

ROCK REVIEW

ERIC CLAPTON: Rainbow Theatre, London.

AGEING youngsters, lost souls, smart record business types—they came in droves to honour the man they once called God.

They were looking for the past and they found it. Clapton was out to prove that old rock guitar heroes never die—they just fall asleep.

His performance could have come from any time in the past four or five years. For the truth is that Eric's act needs vitality, a breath of fresh air to blow the moths out of his faded blue jeans.

He churned out a rushed version of Layla, a ponderous Cocaine, a dozy You Were Wonderful Tonight. Yet the audience clapped and shouted for an encore. They got four. Beside me, two people asked if it was time to go.

All in all it was about as exciting as a night at the launderette.

NICK KENT

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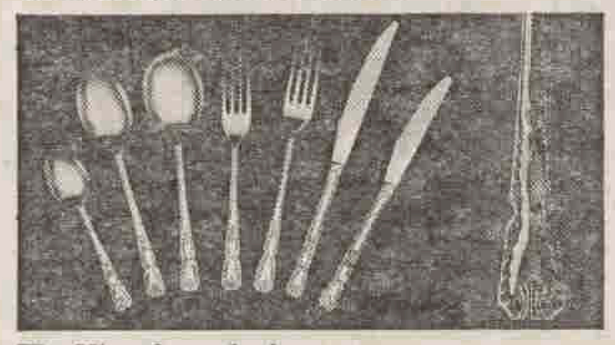

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