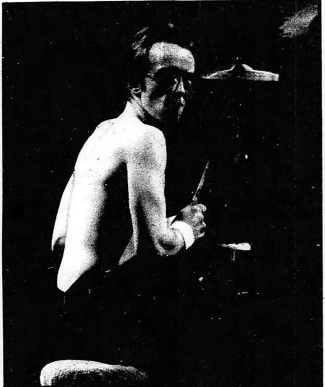




Joe Strummer: I wanna kill Mickey Mouse, the lyrics say, but what about the mucus problem?



Raw sounds and bare back: drummer Topper Headon carries the mirror image up on stage and into the act.



Greetings, fans: The Clash mingle with followers after the show. "Oh Geez, I can't think of any questions. Why don't you just talk into the tape?"

The not-so-loud Clash of punk symbols

Rock

Report DEIRDRE MACKEN
Pictures: PETER MAYOH

ing further his guttural lyrics, and the beat of three guitars and a drum. "I wanna kill Mickey Mouse", he shouts, inciting his fans to a greater zeal.

The message is one of riot: rioting against the oppressors, the politics of world leadership and the law. The crowd respond with enthusiasm, if not aggression. But, after two hours of thrashing their bodies to ear-splitting noise, they are sapped of the energy to do anything — let alone riot in the streets of Sydney.

The band staggers off-stage and the audience staggers on to the street.

Everybody's doing just what they're told to

Nobody wants to go to jail.

White riot, I wanna riot . . .

A riot of my own

AT NOON, the sun streams into the bar of a kitsch, sixties-style hotel that is still renowned as the place the Beatles stayed. The Clash's entourage — the roadies, the four managers, Gerry Baxter, and the publicist, Cosmo Vinyl, gather for a morning coffee. Paul Simonon is talking quietly into an interviewer's tape recorder, the snarling Joe Strummer is working on a suntan at a city pool and the other two performers are asleep in their darkened rooms.

Despite the band's reputation of high-living, there are no fans, groups or hangers-on in the furniture is intact, the management is relaxed and bar sales are doing well. The talk is of laundry, tattoos, shopping and money.

"Go easy, boys, you've got a budget of \$1 each . . . a week," boomed manager Gerry Baxter, reminding all that the Clash, with their penchant for selling tickets cheap and not selling enough records, still owe their record company.

"We're doing okay on this trip," says Cosmo. "We'll be able to pay wages and break even. As long as we do that we'll be okay, accountant is just a bore. Our accountant is always asking us to come to meetings — booooring."

"When you're on tour, you have to think of the people first and then worry about the money and the schedule. We hired a real tour manager once and he lasted three days. You can't be too organised in this business. As long as we all get to the hall, then we're doing okay."

Gerry Baxter chimes in: "When we were touring Japan, a guy on the tour offered me a watch. It all happens like clockwork there and they get very offended if you're seven minutes late. What the hell."

The bar is the conference room. It is the place where roadies, organisers, managers and the band meet to discuss business, solve problems, see visitors and find company. It can also be a depressing place. After most of a year



All together now: Photographer Mayoh tried all day to get the band together for a photograph. Success came late in the evening, just before the concert, inside the men's toilet. "I took a photograph in Japan four days to get us organised," one of the band said. For the record, from left: Joe Strummer, Topper Headon, Mick Jones and Paul Simonon.

travelling the world, the lethargy of hotel-hopping creeps in. Between concerts there is a lot of time to kill.

Lunch for most is a McDonald's hamburger — a traitorous act considering the Clash's attitude towards American institutions, from Mickey Mouse to McDonald's. For guitarist Paul Simonon, bouncer Ray Jordan, and Cosmo Vinyl, lunch is egg and chips at another hotel, which had decided against accepting their patronage a few days previously after displays of the band's loud music and choice of language.

"Would you like to order something to eat?" the waitress asks Cosmo as she picks up Paul's half-eaten egg and chips.

"Yes, I just want these, my favorite meal, left-overs and chips," replies Cosmo, taking the plate from the waitress.

"I don't think they like us anymore," says Cosmo, tucking into the chips.

"When we came here, they had this picture of us in the foyer saying 'Welcome to the Clash.' That didn't last long. I wouldn't have minded so much, but they took our picture out and put in one of Ultravox . . . (expletive deleted). Can you believe it? Ultravox, Jesus."

The lethargy of late afternoon is broken only by the visit of four Aborig-

inal activists — "They're just come for a talk on racism, to get our views and tell us what they're doing" — and a solitary fan, called Kerr, whom no one seems to know, except Joe, who says he'll meet her later.

In 1977 there's knives in West Eleven: Ain't no lucky to be rich. Six guns in Knightsbridge. Danger, stranger. You'd better paint your face.

PERHAPS IT was the all-night plane trip or the trauma of being thrown out of a hotel but the Clash were in a fighting mood when they arrived for their first Australian Press conference. "Thanks for waiting, we're not trying to be pop stars," said Joe Strummer as he strode into the room.

It was Joe, who at 29 has been described as the old man of the band, who held court for about 40 journalists, pop

writers and hangers-on. "Who are these people?" said the public relations lady referring to the glittering press vying for positions in the crowded room.

"What are you all doing here, if we only sold 9000 records here," said Joe turning around for a good split. "There's no f . . . use for us here. I've been told no one gives a f . . . about politics, all they want to do is go down to Bondi and see the bikinis. There is no need for our message here."

Joe bared his chest to the sunlight streaming through the window and said accusingly, "I've never seen sunshine like this, I can't believe it. You go to Tokyo and it's like breathing a car."

Snarling and strutting his way around the conference room, he more than lived up to his publicity image of the angry young punk, who had fought his way up from working-class Britain by belting out his songs of oppression.

"Russia and America are . . . All they do is jive around, paranoia right. They

Continued on Extra 12.

Critics' Choice

CLASSICAL: Dvorak is to symphonies what fresh air is to a heat wave: welcome and refreshing. His Symphony No. 8, op. 80, is perhaps the finest of them all, and it receives a sparkling interpretation from the brilliant young conductor, Andrew Davis and the Philharmonia orchestra, in a new CBS digital recording (Masterworks 38708). The sound quality is open and excellent and the performance is first rate.

BOOKS: If your taste is for science fiction that realistically extends the exploration of human character from the known world to a scientifically possible future, George Turner's 'Vanegory' (Faber; \$4.95) is your mark. 'Vanegory', not so much a sequel as a companion to his earlier 'Beloved Son', treats the familiar Faustian theme of immortality with freshness and satisfying astingency.

GALLERIES: Stuart Gerstman Galleries, City, opens the year with a show of drawings by Kevin Lincoln. Although objects in his drawings throw shadows, they seem to be floating in hazy fields of rubbed and scrubbed charcoal, showing Lincoln at his best.

POP: Sharon O'Neil has won a reputation as an impressive singer and songwriter. Her recent single, 'Maybe', made this quite clear. Tonight is the last opportunity to see Ms O'Neil and her band before they leave Melbourne. They are playing at the Chevron Hotel, St Kilda.

Michael Shmidt
Stuart Sayers
Robert Rooney
Rebecca Batties

ARTISTS IN SCHOOLS

The Co-ordinator, A.I.S. is seeking expressions of interest from ARTISTS who wish to work in schools and communities in the Northern Territory.

The 1982 program will include artists in: MUSIC THEATRE LITERATURE CRAFT

However expressions of interest for future years from artists in other disciplines would be welcomed. Interested artists should contact:

BRUCE WALLIS
A.I.S. Co-ordinator 'Arts Unit'
Professional Services Branch
Northern Territory Department of Education
P.M.B. 25, Winnellie, N.T. 5789.
Phone (089) 85 0211

Details and application form will be forwarded by return post. Applications for 1982 close - 16 April.

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Continued from Extra 11.

say it's better to lose an arm than become communist and in Russia they say, "You want your freedom?" Right, bang, bang, I wanna kill Mickey Mouse, bang, bang.

Revolution is when students and real workers respect each other. When people stop thinking about themselves. They tell us to shut up but it's too late for that now. We are blind like Nero, everything is burning down, all we have to do is look closely and we'll see it. We're being conned by everyone."

Joe, still spitting and snarling, told his enthusiastic Press gathering what he thought of rock and roll and pretty punk bands: "They all stink, it's all just a pose. Those groups posing around on TV with songs at the top of the charts, can't get 100 people to a concert. Get it."

"I'll tell you what rock and roll is. It's a Japanese rock band flogging millions to thousands of screaming, pubescent Yoko Onos, get it. Rock and Roll is not revolutionary thinking, forget it. It's got nothing to do with revolution."

At this outburst, Joe Strummer's anger dissipated. Exhausted, he hid his head under the table, leaving discussions on racism, Aborigines and riot to other members of the Clash.

Career opportunities.

*The ones that never knock:
Every job they offer you
Is to keep you out of the dock*

THE AUDIENCE has left and the roadies are checking broken guitar strings and equipment which is still hot from

Clash of symbols

two hours work. About 20 fans, those that are good talkers, wait back stage and another dozen wait in the street, behind three bouncers.

"Joe will see you now," said Cosmo, ushering several fans and onlookers into a dressing room containing Joe, Paul and Mick, still wet from sweat and slumped across the chairs. Joe is cornered for questions.

Joe, how come you spit so much, is it because you are a punk or do you have a mucus problem? "Yer, I've got a mucus problem. I don't eat dairy products because they bring up more mucus and I'm thinking about going on a special diet. Look someone bought me this today," he said, producing an old book on mucus problems: "Maybe the answer's in here."

Joe, why do you snarl so much? "Do I snarl a lot? Maybe I snarl when I feel angry, I never realised I snarled when I sang."

Joe, aren't you getting a bit old to thrash your body around on stage each night? "Yer, well, they say that Saturn returns in your 29th year. I'm 29 and a half. I went through Saturn's return last year, trying to figure out what I wanted to do. I've still got nothing, no home, no room, no belongings, nothing. I've had a girlfriend for the last three years but it's not as if I have to go home to her, and I'm not about to settle down for a mortgage

and kids, not yet? Jesus . . ."

Joe, how come you attack Australians for wanting to go to Bondi too much, when you spent all day down by a pool picking up that pink tinge on your arms? Joe smiles.

Joe, do you always let your fans in after the concert? "Yer, if they want to hang around. I don't mind talking to them, I'm done in after a concert anyway."

And the fans come. Ushered into the dressing room in shifts, cornering members of the band, asking harmless, sometimes inane questions, swapping addresses, recommending pubs and bands, talking music or just absorbing the presence of the Clash.

They ask Joe to sign their shirts — "That's great, now me mum will probably wash it off" — and they interview Mick for their fan magazines — "Oh geez, I can't think of any questions, why don't you just talk into the tape."

There is no talk of riot or revolution. Two hours of pure punk philosophy has done nothing to make Malcolm Fraser scared. The fans are happy, quiet and slightly intimidated by the performers, for whom they have been pining.

"We don't incite violence, violence doesn't need inciting. We provide a release," says Joe. They come here all pent up with frustration and anger and they get it out of their system. I'm not violent, I'm calm because I have a release. And these kids are calm, but maybe the kids in Britain need the release more than they do here."

The Clash will play in Melbourne at Festival Hall next Tuesday night.