

The Clash: Political rock

MONTREAL (CP) — The Clash has been hammered by the critics, hounded by the authorities and racked by internal conflicts, but it's still playing rock 'n' roll, and lead singer Joe Strummer says the

Records

music is better than ever.

"The New Wave is coming back to spit," said Strummer in a

telephone interview on the eve of the band's five-city Canadian tour, which begins in Toronto tonight and then heads to Montreal, Ottawa, Kitchener and Vancouver.

"We want to make music vital again. When we were growing up, music was everything. It was more than everything. Now it's just another consumer item. We want to restore all that."

The Clash is considered one of the two great bands that emerged from the British punk rock movement. The other, the Sex Pistols, lasted only nine months.

Since its last North American tour, The Clash has fired guitarist Mick Jones and acquired a new drummer and two new guitarists. But Strummer says the music is better than ever.

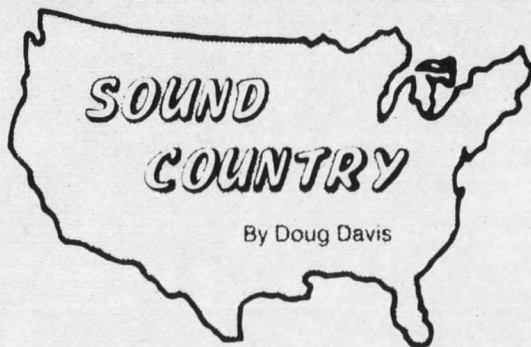
"Don't take my word for it; ask the audiences. We're more rocking; we're playing louder and faster."

The Clash formed in 1976 and immediately distinguished itself by preaching political engagement at a time when politics was virtually taboo among the young.

The music was so primitive and furious it made the Rolling Stones sound like Mantovani. The lyrics were equally extreme: "When they kick down your front door, how you gonna come? With your hands above your head or on the trigger of a gun?"

But Strummer says the song is about self-defence, not insurrection.

"I don't believe that an armed revolution is ever an actual revolution. The revolution is in our minds. We have never really



Everyone's hitting the road these days. **Hank Williams Jr.**, whose recent performance on the USS Constellation was taped for Showtime, is going to the Far East, Australia, Japan and Hawaii during May.

The **Bellamy Brothers** are looking forward to this month's trip to Saudi Arabia where they will have little time to rest up before leaving for a tour of Ireland in June.

The **Whites** will soon embark on a government sponsored goodwill tour of Africa. Along with Dobro player **Jerry Douglas** and drummer **Neil Worf**, **Buck White** will travel to Bangladesh, Tunisia, Oman and Qatar while entertaining citizens and government officials. Before Douglas takes off for Africa he will be honored by Frets Magazine as "Best Dobro Player of 1983." This is the third consecutive year Douglas has earned this honor.

The Whites have been cleaning up the awards, too. They recently became the 59th act to be inducted into the Grand Old Opry. This honor followed a "Cashbox Magazine" award for the No. 1 country vocal group for singles and albums. The group has also just finished filming a **Ronnie Milsap** special for Multimedia with **Ray Charles**, **Gladys Knight and The Pips**, **Leon Russell**, **Janie Fricke**, and **Bobby Jones and New Life**.

T.G. Sheppard has been doing his share of benefits, too. He headlined one recently for the National Kidney Foun-



Hank Williams Jr.

ation at the Opryland Hotel. T.G. along with **Eddie Rabbitt** and **Janie Fricke** hosted the New Faces Show at the Country Radio Broadcasters Seminar. The show was taped at the Opryland Hotel for future television broadcast and featured **Bandana**, who performed its upcoming single "Better Our Hearts Should Bend Than Break." This is Bandana's premiere effort with producer **Jim Ed Norman**.

What does an 8-year-old aspiring country singer from Oklahoma have in common with an established country star? In the case of **Danny Cooksey**, the newest addition to the NBC hit sitcom "Diff'rent Strokes," and **Johnny Lee**, lots. Lee discovered Cooksey, who's been singing professionally since the ripe old age of 6, and has since added him to his billing with many other country greats.

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tried the democratic process and it's time we did."

He has stopped taking drugs, after having tried them all.

"The drug culture made us try to imagine that reality wasn't really happening. But now, with all those missiles, people are starting to realize reality is happening."

"Drugs are tame. The new way of looking at things is that the wild people are the ones who don't take them."

Asked if he admires any of the new rock groups, he replies, "I must, but I can't think of them right now. There are so many bad records being put out."

As for Boy George, "to be quite honest, I'm getting sick of hearing his whining voice."

Although the critics declared punk rock dead years ago, Strummer still considers The Clash a punk band.

"Punk is not just a marketing trip; it is an attitude to life, an attitude that won't be fobbed off by excuses, that wants to see the reality behind the actions."

A punk band should be prepared to act as a midwife to ideas. "Yeah, a midwife to ideas. Sophocles said that."

The Clash plays Montreal on Wednesday, Ottawa on Thursday, Kitchener on Friday and Vancouver on May 31.

Here are the week's Top 10 pop albums and singles as compiled by the national music trade source, The Record. Bracketed figures indicate position last week.

ALBUMS

- 1(1)1984 — Van Halen
- 2(2)Thriller — Michael Jackson
- 3(3)Colour By Numbers — Culture Club
- 4(4)Footloose — Soundtrack
- 5(5)She's So Unusual — Cyndi Lauper
- 6(6)Touch — Eurythmics
- 7(7)Sports — Huey Lewis and The News

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8(8)Learning to Crawl — Pretenders
9(10)Into The Gap — Thompson Twins

10(9)99 Luftballons — Nena
SINGLES

- 1(1)Girls Just Want to Have Fun — Cyndi Lauper
- 2(3)Against All Odds — Phil Collins
- 3(2)Somebody's Watching Me — Rockwell

- 4(4)Jump — Van Halen
- 5(5)99 Red Balloons — Nena
- 6(6)Footloose — Kenny Loggins
- 7(9)Hold Me Now — Thompson Twins
- 8(8)Miss Me Blind — Culture Club
- 9(7)Eat It — Weird Al Yankovic
- 10(10)I Want A New Drug — Huey Lewis and The News

Ask Kate

Inherited talent

By Kate Woods

I am trying to find an address for Stephanie Zimbalist so I can send her a 1921 brochure on her grandparents' (Alma Gluck and Efreim Zimbalist) concert in San Diego. Can you help me? — M.B.S.

You can write in care of the "Remington Steele" production offices, MTM Enterprises, 4024 Radford Ave., Studio City, CA 91604. But I would write to her about it first and wait for a response before sending the brochure.

NUCLEAR PANIC — I saw a movie some time ago on television starring Ray Milland. It was similar to "The Day After" in that a family was trying to survive after a nuclear war. Can you tell me the name of it? — D.W.

Milland not only starred in but directed "Panic in the Year Zero," which was released in 1962. Others in the cast were Jean Hagen, Frankie Avalon and Mary Mitchell.

MORE WILD WEST — I am a big fan of the old series, "The Wild Wild West." Are there plans to produce any new shows, and is Ross Martin dead? — M.P.

The daring duo from the 1965-1970 series were reunited once in a



Stephanie Zimbalist

1979 television movie, "The Wild Wild West Revisited." Ross Martin died shortly afterward and there have been no plans to re-team Robert Conrad with a new partner in another sequel.

ROOKIE UPDATE — I enjoyed the 1972 series "The Rookies" starring Georg Stanford Brown as Terry Webster. Is he still involved in show business? Is he married? — E.M.

Brown is very much involved in show business, but as a television director, not an actor. On the home front, he is married to "Cagney and Lacey" star Tyne Daly.

Send your letters to Kate Woods, United Feature Syndicate, 200 Park Ave., Room 602, New York, N.Y. 10166. Because of the volume of mail, we cannot make personal replies.

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