

Duncan Campbell.

The Clash

CBS

The Jam

In The City

Polydor

ain't so lucky to be rich, Sten guns in Knightsbridge . . ."

The Clash hate the country that raised them, and their relationship with each other functions on a strange love-hate basis that manifests itself in their recorded and on stage brand of aggro.

Jones is a violent manic depressive with the potential to be a true rock casualty. Sort of a New Wave Keith Richard. Strummer is arrogant, self-confident and in control. Simonon is in love with rock 'n' roll because it gets him laid a lot.

Between them, they produce concise sputs of breakneck energy, conjuring up a

"We ain't ashamed to fight," says The Clash's Mick Jones, and The Clash set out to do this with a vengeance.

Jones, Joe Strummer and Paul Simonon make ugly, angry music to come out with guns blazing to. No smile on your face when you're smashing the system with these songs in your heart:

"In 1977, there's knives in West Eleven,

Hi!! We're the Jam. If you don't buy our album Paul, Bruce and I will be around with our mates, the Clash!!

nightmare, 1984-type vision of Blighty that is frightening in its intensity:

"All across the town, all across the night . . . everybody's driving with four headlights . . . black or white, turn it on, face the new religion . . . everybody's drowning in a sea of television . . . London's burning . . ."

At the same time, their sincerity shines through as well. They're determined not to prostitute themselves or the sake of success.

"I don't want to compromise," says Strummer, "I think people will come round in time, but if they don't, it's too bad."

Untitled

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The only song on this album over two minutes long is the band's astounding version of Junior Murvin's classic reggae song, "Police And Thieves". Like many New Wavers, The Clash are reggae fans, but so far, they're the only band with the guts to record a number, and succeed in making it their own.

With the Pistols now defunct, the Clash move into the front of the New Wave stakes. Latest reports indicate they've lost none of the impetus created by this first album. Catch them if you can.

The Jam describe themselves as the black sheep of the New Wave. They drape the Union Jack behind the bandstand when they play. They love their Queen and country. Paul Weller says he votes Conservative.

"I don't see any point in going against your country," says Weller. "Chaos is not really a positive thought."

This attitude is carried on in Weller's songwriting. He doesn't advocate burning down buildings or rioting in the streets. Life, to him, is what you yourself make of it. Don't be so ready to blame everyone else for your own problems.

Image-wise, The Jam came across like Mods of the '60's. In their natty mohair suits and two-tone winklepicker shoes, they look a bit like the Yardbirds did when they played R & B.

Their sound is pure Shepherds bush. Weller doesn't like the comparisons drawn with The Who, but admits to being first turned on by "My Generation." He plays immaculate Townshend power chords, and even copies Townshend's stage moves.

But don't be too ready to write The Jam off as mere plagiarists. Weller's ability to construct a song transcends that. He's already written a perfect teen anthem in "In The City", and "Away From The Numbers" easily takes its place alongside numbers like (sorry Paul) "Won't Get Fooled Again."

Bruce Foxton and Rick Buckler make up a rhythm section of immense, but controlled drive that kicks you right where it hurts. The Jam, in short, are a power trio with a capital P.

Listen, both these albums are seminal New Wave. Aw hell, reject that tag. All tags stink. Mick Jones says so. These albums are seminal 1970's rock 'n' roll, and after a too-long wait, they're now on general release. If you ain't listening, you're way out of touch.