

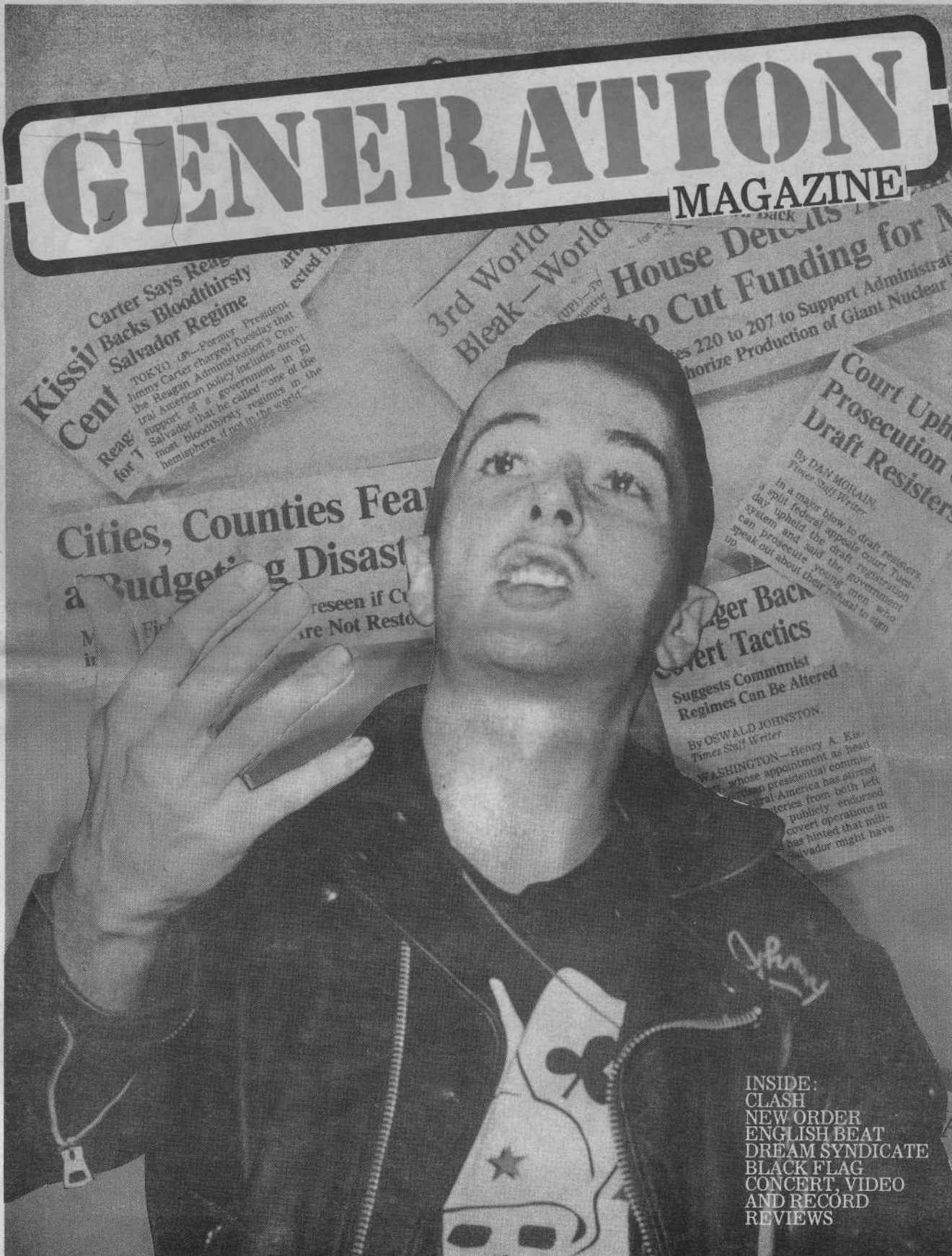
GENERATION



CLASH

GENERATION

MAGAZINE



Carter Says Reagan
Kissil Backs Bloodthirsty
Cent Salvador Regime
TOKYO (AP)—Former President Jimmy Carter charged Tuesday that the Reagan Administration's Central American policy includes direct support of a government in El Salvador that he called "one of the most bloodthirsty regimes in the hemisphere, if not in the world."

3rd World
Bleak—World

House Demands
to Cut Funding for
220 to 207 to Support Administration
Authorize Production of Giant Nuclear

Court Upholds
Prosecution of
Draft Resisters
By DAN MORAIN
Times Staff Writer

Cities, Counties Fear
a Budgeting Disaster
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Anger Back
Covert Tactics
Suggests Communist
Regimes Can Be Altered
By OSWALD JOHNSTON
Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON—Henry A. Kissinger, whose appointment as head of the presidential commission on Central America has stirred controversy from both left and right, publicly endorsed covert operations in El Salvador that military officials have hinted might have

INSIDE:
CLASH
NEW ORDER
ENGLISH BEAT
DREAM SYNDICATE
BLACK FLAG
CONCERT, VIDEO
AND RECORD
REVIEWS

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The Clash



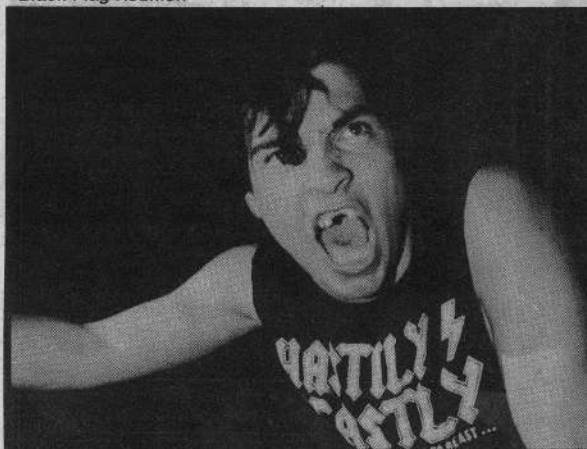
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English Beat



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Black Flag Reunion



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GENERATION

"In prehistoric times, music, like the dance and every other artistic endeavor, was a branch of magic, one of the old and legitimate instruments of wonder-working. Beginning with the rhythm (clapping of hands, tramping, beating of sticks and primitive drums), it was a powerful, tried-and-true device for putting large numbers of people 'in tune' with one another, engendering the same mood, coordinating the pace of their breathing and heart beats, encouraging them to invoke and conjure up the eternal powers, to dance, to compete, to make war, to worship. Music is founded on the harmony between heaven and earth, on the concord of obscurity and brightness... music of a well-ordered age is calm and cheerful, and so is its government. The music of a restive age is excited and fierce, and its government is perverted. The music of a decaying state is sentimental and sad, and its government is imperiled. The more tempestuous the music, the more doleful the people, the more imperiled the country, the more the sovereign declines."

—Hermann Hesse
Magister Ludi

We live in exciting times! For the past several years there has been a resurgence in rock 'n' roll that has produced some of the most important, vital music since the late '50s and early '60s. Spawned by the punk movement, which is still an important and growing one in America, the new music is finally finding mass acceptance around the country. Unlike the predominantly stale, unintelligent music of the early and mid '70s (basically due to the importance business played in controlling the music at this time), the new music is made by a generation of younger people with a passion for reestablishing the raw power, energy and intensity found so often in early rock 'n' roll. This growing young community has an awareness of the importance music plays in our lives that goes beyond entertainment.

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There are so many things happening in music today that it's not always easy to find direction, whether one writes the songs or listens to them. Yet there are many parallels between the music scenes of the late '50s and early '60s, and those that are and have been developing for the past six or seven years. There are not only similarities in music, but also in fashion, dance and philosophy, and they have been caused by the lifestyles associated with the music. Whether it be rockabilly, mod, ska, soul, funk, rap, punk, techno-dance, or even industrial noise, all these subcultures have their own music, which helps define look, dress, speech, dance and ideas. In general, whole lifestyles are based around the music. And regardless how close the new movement may resemble the original (i.e., the purists in rockabilly, mod, ska and soul), or how they may incorporate different influences to come up with something relatively new (i.e., punk, rap, funk or the new techno-dance music), there is a commitment to lifestyle that hasn't happened on such a large scale since the '60s. It is this commitment that makes the music transcend mere entertainment; it becomes much more important.

Back when rock 'n' roll started in the '50s, there was that great music we now refer to as rockabilly. This simple, uptempo rhythm-and-blues was made popular by legends like Hank Williams, Eddie Cochran, Johnny Burnette, Gene Vincent, Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, and, the biggest legend of all — Elvis Presley. At the same time, black performers beginning to get attention, though racism limited their popularity, Fats Domino, Bo Diddley, Little Richard, and Chuck Berry were instrumental in influencing generations of rockers, and they wrote some of the best rock 'n' roll ever, helping break down the color barrier in

America. Right from the beginning, the music was making people think by presenting them with "race music," albeit in a toned-down manner. Greasy "long-haired" rockers like Elvis and James Dean became the first rebellious images to be associated with rock 'n' roll. Most "good Americans" were outraged by Elvis' swinging hips, the wild, radical music of both black and white performers, and, most of all, the reckless lifestyle glorified in many of the songs.

Since this was the rock 'n' roll music of the time, it was not easily ignored. But this "rebel without a cause" theme was effectively swept under the carpet by the untimely deaths of Hank Williams, Eddie Cochran, and Buddy Holly — all young and very promising songwriters and performers. Then Elvis Presley joined the service for the Korean War. All these incidents watered down the rebellious aspects of the music. During the late '50s and early '60s, the excitement of the previous years waned.

Several important events in the early '60s marked these years as important and creative in rock 'n' roll history. First there was the emergence of the Motown sound out of Detroit. The black label started the careers of many prominent black performers, including Martha and the Vandellas, Junior Walker, the Four Tops, the Temptations, Diana Ross and the Supremes, Mary Wells, the Jackson Five, and a roster that spans two-and-a-half decades of great talent.

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The British Invasion was spearheaded by the Beatles, who were followed by the Rolling Stones, the Who, the Kinks, the Dave Clark Five, the Animals, Herman's Hermits and others — it became the greatest musical phenomenon to hit America. The surf sounds of California were made popular by the Beach Boys, Jan and Dean, the Ventures, the Surfaris, the Standells, and the many beach party movies. Bands were drawing thousands of fans to shows around the world, and selling ever more records.

The idealistic "peace and love" movement of the hippies tried to speak out against the injustices of society, and rock 'n' roll was their cry. The Vietnam war was the biggest issue, but when it was over the hippies lost steam. The music was bought out by the growing record industry that had been spawned by the great success of rock 'n' roll. The performers had grown old, secure, and rich as important commodities in the new corporate structure of the music business. They churned out formula "party" music to a new generation of kids in the early '70s, a generation that had lived in the shadow of the radical, riotous days of the hippies. All that was left was the long hair

and drugs — the ideals were gone, the music was just a memory. The qualities that had marked the decade of the '60s as a promising one — the innocence, sincerity, hopes, and dreams, that total commitment by a generation of kids who strove to change what they felt was wrong — was smashed.

The civil rights movement and the Vietnam war caused riots and strife throughout America in the '60s, but the injustices and the problems are still here. They were swept under the carpet for a few years until a new generation of kids started to regain that spirit of reckless and rebellious youth. This time there is more cynicism, less innocence, and perhaps less hope, but the commitment is there. It started with the glitter movement in the mid-'70s and boomed with the punk explosion in England during '76 and '77. Like early rock 'n' roll, it was looked on as evil, and many people tried to kill it off as a fad. Early bands like the Sex Pistols, Damned, Clash, Stranglers, Buzzcocks, Adverts, X-Ray Specs, and a host of others brought back music that anybody could play, and which dealt with subjects kids could relate to. The music expressed the frustrations kids felt in what was becoming a seemingly meaningless world — it made you face reality.

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This new music threatened the now huge corporations that sold music. Because it threatened their stranglehold, they tried to ignore the music, but it didn't work. Despite proclamations that "punk is dead," the punk scene continues to grow. Now, many new music bands heavily influenced by the punk scene are gaining acceptance among the business world. What will happen remains to be seen. Many hardcore punk bands are still ignored by major record companies who find them too weird or too revolutionary. Yet they persist and the music continues. There is a "do it yourself" atmosphere, a tendency to avoid the major record companies. Now, the new dance bands are getting big in America, yet they maintain a sense of purpose and integrity that stems from their association with the punk scene. No matter what happens, one shouldn't underestimate the excitement being generated by new music right now. It is important and relevant, as rock 'n' roll should be. It delights, inspires, and is a medium through which a new generation can try and change the world and make the future more optimistic. †

Shawn Stern

GENERATION MAGAZINE

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MAGAZINE

CLASH: NOT FOR

While in Los Angeles preparing for his group's forthcoming performance at the US festival, Joe Strummer, singer/guitarist/spokesman for The Clash, talked about The Clash's role in the three day music event. Even though the US festival is already a part of the fairly distant past, Strummer's comments during this discussion are as timely and relevant as ever. His reflections on the state of the world in 1983 are those of a man who is deeply concerned with the fate of the human race. We all know what The Clash's lyrics have to say, and this represents a rare opportunity to find out what the man behind many of those lyrics thinks and feels about life.

During the course of the conversation, Strummer went on a twenty minute tirade in which he addressed topics ranging from the Russian Youth to Nuclear Waste to the Role of the Music Industry in rock and roll. The following article contains the heart of his soliloquy — subject by subject — in addition to Strummer's responses to various questions concerning The Clash and their part in, and views on, music, politics, and life in general. Read on, enjoy, and be enlightened.

— Jeff Goldman

“...95% of the American teenage population up to the year 1976 have a low I.Q.”

On the US Festival:

“It's not like it was in '57 . . . the human race is gonna be different! The big story is the money. That's the only glamour on the story. Now we're all human beings here, and we all like to have a day out. You know, 'let's have some fun' and all that. Everybody digs that. But if the only newsworthy thing is the megabucks, then what is the world, or this country, or me or you coming to?”

“I'm looking for an issue. I thought that Unuson would have an issue, or some clear relevant thing. But the information I received is on what smooth operators they are. They well may be smooth operators, and there's nothing wrong with smooth operation, but so what? What is it to be used for?”

“We're glad to take Mr. Wozniac's money. Because we're gonna take it to England and I'm gonna influence, give an international stage to some of the voices we have there in Britain. Because that's the only way to influence the debate.”

On Music:

“Listen, I'm in love with Rock and Roll because I'm not a businessman who follows it like an industry. I was a guy, like some of you people, crouching over 'Hootchie Cootchie Man,' trying to figure the chords out, because it promised a world that was within reach, that wasn't here, but could happen. And it was a carrier of spirit. And this is what we have to do. This is what we have decided to do.”

“We've been listening to music because it promised us something in the soul, in the spirit. It's gotta carry on because I've followed it this far.”

“I mean, is the music got anything to say anymore or is it just a little pocket, you know are we just a little shadow theater on the side, a side show on some cheap fairground?”

“You people are growing up, I'm growing up, there's some children growing up, and the time is now for things to change. Roll out the old and bring in the new, okay? Because it's gonna happen now or never.”

On the Music Industry:

“People would be too pleased in this so-called Record Industry to see us go down the can. They'd love to say, 'See, I told you so, those fucking limeys. What do they think they're doing? Good riddance. Let's get on with the cozy ride. We'll churn the



Joe Strummer.

records, you write about them, we'll sell them, and everybody will get burned in Hell to a sweet melody.

“I'm twenty years on from the hippie days. You see, all that wasn't for nothing — don't forget it. You know people grew up, and sure you get cynical because you have to deal with the world. It ain't easy. I don't find it easy gettin' up there with Van Halen. What do you think the record company would love? They'd love us to be a little rebel clique in a corner, like selling records in Stockport, Manchester. 'Lovely! Keep them under the carpet! It's a good gimmick. It'll help keep the youth interested in this pile of rubbish that we're pumping at them.'”

“People have got to hear other things, and we've got a responsibility now, because *Combat Rock* has sold a million copies in the United States of America, and now we have some clout. We need a stick to beat our record company with, because they've got a stick and they're beating us. Don't you see? They are beating us with a stick, saying 'Look, we don't need you. We can sell Men At Work or whoever it else is this month.' And they don't like people like Wozniac, and they don't like this Festival because they don't like people handing out large sums of money to groups, 'cause it makes the groups independent and feisty, and gets the whole thing under their control.”

On Britain:

“For some reason, in Britain, we still know what is real . . . sometimes. The scene there is *tame* now, *tame*, *muted*, *lovely*, little groups coming up, lovely little producers putting them out, blinding and bumping. A lovely, tame scene. Nowheresville. But I still think there are people in England who've got something to say.”

On the Russian Youth:

“Okay, so you can mass-process any type of information and shoot it anywhere in the world in the blink of an eye. But what's it gonna say when it gets there? Listen, Men At Work are gonna be on Russian television. (The satellite hook-up that occurred on the opening day of the US festival, one which transmitted ten minutes of Men At Work live to Russia.) Now, so you're a Russian teenager, and you think 'hey, I've heard of Charlie Parker and I've heard of John Lennon, and I've heard of Gene Vincent,' and then you rush to the T.V. and you shove your face in front of the screen for this delicate drop of illegal, forbidden culture that's supposed to be degenerate, and you get Men At Work. Are they gonna say anything to the Russian teenagers?”

“Listen, what do you think a Russian teenager is thinking? Is he thinking, 'Yeah, let's nuke L.A. I wanna nuke L.A.'? The hell he is. He wants a Charlie Parker album. You know, he wants a pair of red tag Levis with the three buttons here. You know what I mean? He doesn't want to nuke L.A. anymore than anybody here wants to flatten Petrograd.”

“The big story is the money. That's the only glamour to the story.”

On Nuclear Waste:

“Listen man, supposing you're digging your potatoes in Idaho, and Reagan decides to bury the pile ten miles down the road? What do you think it's going to do in those casks in the ground? It's not going to remain in a stable situation; it's gonna deteriorate. And underneath those casks is an underground river that runs and feeds half the feeding grounds in the state. And you already know that your atomic testing in Nevada has rendered, I'd say, 95% of the American teenage population up to the year 1976 to have a low I.Q.”

Q: You had mentioned that you were going to use your own money from the US festival to promote rock and roll in England. Could you elaborate on this point?

Strummer: Yeah, I'm going to record people that

SALE?

ain't been recorded. You know, a few people around in London, now that we have the ability, now that we've sold a million dollars in America and people like Mr. Wozniak offer us large meat bills to get up and do it.

Q: What would you tell Unuson to do with the money that they're making?

"—everybody's on heroin. People I know are dying like flies from it."

Strummer: I'd say mount a massive propaganda war against heroin. I'm isolatin' heroin because everybody, in all the major capitals of the Western world — London, Paris, and you know New York and L.A. probably — everybody's on heroin. People I know are dying like flies from it. You know, and I've never really moved in the heroin circles, so I don't have that many contacts in that world. But still, people that you'd never imagine had anything to do with that are dyin' like flies, the most un-heroin type of people. Now, you might think you're safe from it. In Britain and Paris, they're so chic and it's so Keith Richards and it's so wasted, and isn't it hip? They think they're snorting it, and they think they're safe. But they're gonna get a big surprise when the gram doesn't come through and they start turning in to liver. I mean, it's more than an epidemic. At least in Europe anyway.

Q: Where does the heroin come from?

Strummer: The heroin is coming from, I think, Iran. It has something to do with the Iranian Revolution, because the price. The Ayatollah went in, right; the Shah came out, and the price dropped — first by half — and even lower now. And the availability of it is like [snaps his fingers].

Q: But with all of the other problems in the world, doesn't heroin seem to be too specific of a problem to concentrate on?

Strummer: Hey, don't forget where heroin is — in the inner city. Now who comes to the inner city? Well, who colonized America? What kind of person was it? The person who gets drawn to the inner city, he's up for it, ready for anything. You know, he's got a kind of spirit, and heroin has knocked 'em dead. And if the spirit ain't there, it ain't anywhere. Those are the people that are supposed to . . . [pause] . . . You know, I can't say that London has a scene. If you went to London with me and said, 'Right Joe, we're here. Show me the town. Show me where London's happening, where the minds are thinking, where the ideas are going.' I could take you down to some kind of discotheque where people are standing around with cocktails, not proving anything. And then, I'd be stuck! You know, after you get bored in there for an hour, and we go back out on the street, and I'd be stuck! And it shouldn't be like that! Look, I was in school when The Summer of Love and all this thing happened. And either I was being conned, or something really happened then. There was people around then who had things happening. There was a multi-media exchange of ideas. But, it isn't anything like that in London now. There's no Jean Paul Sartre hotbed of simmering . . . I mean look what's happening in Paris now. Mitterand's sending the CRS out against the right-wing students, and the right-wing students have marched right in there and stole the whole show. And they're throwing bottles at policemen. 'Cause as soon as you see some bottles going at the policemen, I'll tell you what you do in England, you pick up the nearest bloody object and you throw it! Because the policemen are on our backs, night and day. It's not like it is in the U.S. Here, it's kind of cool; they cruise by. I'm only a stranger in town, but this is the feeling I get.

Q: But you don't know that, I mean, they carry guns here and they don't even carry guns in England.

Strummer: They say they don't carry guns, but what we have is called Immediate Response Units. An immediate attack and search and destroy unit inside



Photos by Geoff Loren

London. We're not talkin' about the Korean jungle or wherever this bloody war against communism that we're all supposed to be bloody fightin'. You know, in the streets of London, you can have armed men anywhere inside a minute. And that is a myth that they don't carry guns. They've got 'em out there. And they're trigger happy.

Q: Earlier you spoke of telling it like it is at the US festival, but in opening for The Who, The Clash came under a great deal of criticism for not challenging the audience, choosing instead to play a more 'commercial' set?

Strummer: True, I never enjoyed that Who tour. It never once clicked. I was too over-awed by the size of the crowds, just the big butcher-shop display of the whole thing. Now I'm looking back on it and I see it was like [raspberry], you know? I shouldn't have gone in there with that coward atmosphere. I should have gone into it with a bit of oomph. I don't mind admitting that we were shitless.

Q: But the crowd's going to be just as big at the US festival. Do you think you'll be able to deal with it there?

Strummer: Yes, because now I know that it's gotta be us. I mean, The Clash. I can't see anybody else gonna do our job for us. You know, supposing that things are gonna change, supposing that in ten years, a lot of people would die off who are bracing the corrupt thing that we've all built up. Supposing it's different. Everyone's gonna have to play some kind of a part.

I mean, look at the newspapers. They're all right wing in Britain, and they're all right wing here, and we got one or two that might be a bit liberal. But we're really reading the opinions of some rich guy who owns the paper. And the British people lap it up — 'More!' — and they get pictures of girls with their breasts, and the Queen Mother. That's what we subsidize on in England. We've bought the whole damn sting, you know?

Q: So are you using the US festival as a type of a big forum?

Strummer: Yeah, we want to make it quite clear that there's gotta be some change or some move forward. Listen, if we kick out those missiles in Britain, we're gonna need to link up with the Freeze people here, and we're gonna need to get the Russian youth [pause] I'd like to hear what they're gonna say. Never a peep is said out of the Russian youth. Man, they must keep 'em like this [puts his hand over his mouth]. Someday that's gotta break.

Listen, I cannot afford to go back to Stratford-upon-Avon and sit in a garret thinking that I'm really Roots, man. I'd love to do that, have one pair of shoes, and be really cool. But I'm only masturbating if I do that. Listen, I'm being presented, we're being presented with a chance, a platform that you just do not pick up every day on the street. Hundreds of groups would give two arms and legs to do it, and I want to use it. I'm not gonna go home, unless we're thrown off.

"Look, you've got to hit them where it hurts, in the wallet."

Q: Is it billed as us against them?

Strummer: Well, nobody's even told who 'them' is, right? 'Them,' who I say to be the enemy, the people who are in power, who have lived a way of corruption as if it were second nature, as matter of course, in the back payment Black Market economy style. Those, I say, they are 'Them' in an 'Us against Them situation.'

Q: As you've made more money and become more popular, has your basic lifestyle changed?

Strummer: Of course it's changed. Listen, I've been living in rented two-room flats. Do you think I'm gonna sit there being cramped up by old vintage versions of Buddy Holly songs 'till I can't slide in the door? You know I fucking put a mortgage down just like every other cunt and got myself a terraced house in London. And I'm gonna have a kid! Because I'm sick of this defeatist attitude of 'Let's all burn while the going's good. Let's party, party, party.' You can't tell a six-year-old kid who's going 'What the hell is going on, daddy?' 'Oh, party, son.' It just doesn't work.

Q: With the Jam split up and with the Sex Pistols as a part of history, do you see yourselves as alone now as the only socially/politically active group?

Strummer: You see, the thing is, Paul Weller in England is trying to draw a line down the Atlantic. And he's saying, 'Britain, we're cool, Europe's chic, a cup of cappuccino is hip, and a Gitane cigarette is it. But man, anything Yankee stinks.' He's trying to draw a line down the Atlantic. I think it's a waste of

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time. I mean, back to dog-eat-dog on the largest scale. The youth in England have got a very low opinion of American culture as it stands and is being transmitted today.

Q: *Where and how do we fit in? Where does it go from here?*

Strummer: Look, you've got to hit them where it hurts, in the wallet. We all know the whole world runs on the buck, and there's nothing that a buck can't buy . . . or so that is the philosophy that we have been educated in. Put your hand over your heart, and look at George Washington on the greenback.

Q: *What is the best way to tell The Clash's story?*

Strummer: Never mind us, we're irrelevant. The thing is, when is the old gonna change, or is the, are the new gonna become the old? I don't think it's so farfetched. It seemed to be a fantasy story, even five years ago, that Britain would throw its nuclear weapons out. Only twits, drunken idiots used to think that, they'd say. If you said that, you were a joker, a dreamer, a fancier, you know. But now it's a reality. Things are different.

Listen, I mean, I can't call you a fool if you have a bunker, because it ain't lookin' very healthy above ground. You know, I don't know if you've calculated the effect of what you're gonna get on your head, but we have in London, and it's, like, gonna be a big microwave oven. And nobody in England knows anything about it. We're blind fools. We've been fooled. I mean, is it really a fight to the death in El Salvador? Is it really a replay of 1962 and 1963? I mean, is it really gonna be 'If that little country goes, what about the little country next to it, and the little country next to that, and before you know it, India will be communist — Lyndon Johnson, 1968?' You know, is it that all over again? Haven't we got anywhere? The President of the United States is gonna get up and tell you, in very nicely constructed sentences, that 'We have to get in there and defend El Salvador because the cancer is spreading throughout Central America, and it's gonna be . . . Texas is gonna go communist if we don't!' Don't give me that, it's rubbish! Texas will never go communist just because El Salvador has a marxist or left-inclined socialist government.

Q: *What do you believe in?*

Strummer: I believe in a democratic form of socialism. You know, if it's voted in; and the socialist principle seems to be the most humanitarian of the ones that we have on offer.

I mean, what about God? Supposing God ain't some bloke in a beard in Heaven, but He's some kind of presence. I mean, I know what the Devil is. The Devil is that throbbing in your soul when you know you've done something, you can feel you've done something bad. Even though you try and talk yourself out of it, you can feel it. And that is the difference between right and wrong. And if right and wrong exists, then so must some journey for the human spirit.

You see, look, I know that I've watched less T.V. than you, because you can stand that flood of information, that hard sell [*smacks his hand*]. I tell you, it's like being whipped. I can feel it on my spirit, like it's being flayed by this incessant 'nyang, nyang, nyang, nyang, nyang.' Even to watch a great film, and try to get some escapist entertainment going because it's just too much to bear to sit there, thinkin', you know. Bang! Every five minutes 'Buy this! Eat that! Shove that! Squat with this!' I mean, is Unuson some kind of cat food? Because that's the way it's been marketed. It's not a cat food if it stands for anything. But what does it stand for?

Q: *United in Song.*

Strummer: United in Song . . . hooray. United in Song. What song is it? The song of a million dollars being counted on 45,000 watts of P.A.

Q: *It's Cash for Clash.*

Strummer: Yeah, Cash for Clash, and The Clash are gonna do something with their cash, not just piss off back to England whimpering!

Q: *Do you think you're gonna change the type of kids who come to the festival just to party California style?*

Strummer: Yeah, why not?

Q: *With your political message?*

Strummer: Yeah!

Q: *Some people would say that you're off your rocker.*

Strummer: I know I am! But you've got to make the effort or else nothing changes. †

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