48 THRILLS

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Maximum Penalty 20p.

The Clash (CBS)

The Clash LP entering at number 12 a couple of weeks ago must be the best thing thats happened to the boring album chart for a very long time. Even people who would have cynically dismissed them last year must be listening. And when a new group's debut album goes into the chart like that then people have got to take notice.

In the next few months there is going to be a load of shitty records put out under the punk/new-wave tag. Some of them are already on release. At least we've got one album that's gonna show up all that crap for what it is.

And this is the album, right from Terry Chimes' meaty drum intro to Janie Jones thru' to the football chorus end of Garageland.

Of course there are flaws, particularly in the mixing of Joe Strummer's rhythm guitar, which is far too low for my liking. Micky Foote's production though, is much better than on the single. But The Clash could make it on the songs alone.

Janie Jones will be the next single (B side is Cheat - the album version). This was announced just a few days before the tart came out of prison last week! M.Jones' lyrics for the song are about the bored office executive sitting in his office reading The Sun and thinking about Janie Jones. You get the feeling though, that he's so stuck in his humdrum life that he's never going to let the boss know how he feels about his oppressive job. That's the sort of realism thats typical of the lyrics throughout the album. It lacks some of the attack they give it on stage, but its bouncy enough to be a hit single.



Deny drags on a bit in comparison with some of the tighter tracks on the album, but the final one on the first side, London's Burning has never been anything but a classic. Enough's been said about it already though.

I remember a bunch of hostile Ted's heckling and bombarding The Clash during the first ever performance of Career Opportunities. (Last October when they were supporting Shakin Stevens at some college gig) Now they've got the chance to listen again as Strummer mocks the 'Do you wanna be' of the careers officer.

The phasing on Cheat is a worthwhile experiment, but apart from the great 'rules for the fools' verse the song is probably the weakest on the album. Protex blue is the only song on which Mick Jones is on lead vocal throughout. It's a nifty little tune, but whatever happened to the coarse, mangled rhythm guitar?

I didn't expect The Clash merely to lay down their established live set for their debut album, as some groups have done. But I never expected something as ambitious as what thay've done to Police and Thieves. The smoothness of Murvin's original is replaced by the toughness of The Clash. I wouldn't call it anything as stupid as White reggae - it's a hard, rocky version. Something very different from the original, but every bit as good in its own way. 'They're going through a tight wind' screams Joe at the start - the opening chords are the same as Blitzkreig Bop ! Jones' solo is simple yet wonderfully vital although his backing vocals (the'oh yeah' bit) sound fragile.

48 Hours (strange coincidence!) contains (I think) the only Strummer solo on the album, plus the great line 'Monday's coming like a jail on wheels'. At the recent Harlesden gig he went crazy playing that solo, moving up to the edge of the stage, his mouth gaping wide open.

But if there's one damn song that can make you break down and cry, its got to be Garageland. It's so much more than just a reply to Charles Shaar Murray's review of their gig last Summer at the Screen on the Green. This is The Clash saying that they are still basically the group that they were when they formed a year ago. It's also a bitter put-down of the'punk scene'. The 'scene' that used to exist at the Roxy club - the record company sharks who are exploiting some bands that are nowhere near ready for recording, the meaningless fashion and those groups that exist merely as a punk cash-in. The Roxy as such, has closed down but the 'scene' goes on, BUT where it still all really happens is back in the garage. The music is right there too, even including the garage harmonica played by Mick Jones, and that great all-together-now terrace chant at the end.

Fuck me! What an album!

Oh yeah, my copy jumps too.



REMOTE CONTROL FROM THE CIVIC HALL...

...or how about Guildford's Burning ? It doesn't really matter, except that this was the first gig on the White Riot Tour thats making May a great month for the nation.

The trouble when a band is as exciting live as The Clash are, is that if a gig is anything less than brilliant, it seems a let down. This one took place only hours after the groups return from France (they played gigs in Paris, Le Mans and Rouen) and that could be the reason why something vital was missing. It took until 'Police and Thieves' near the end before things really started to burn.

It was nothing like that great event in the Paki flea-pit at Harlesden a few weeks back, but it must still have been the best rock n roll Guildford has seen in ages.

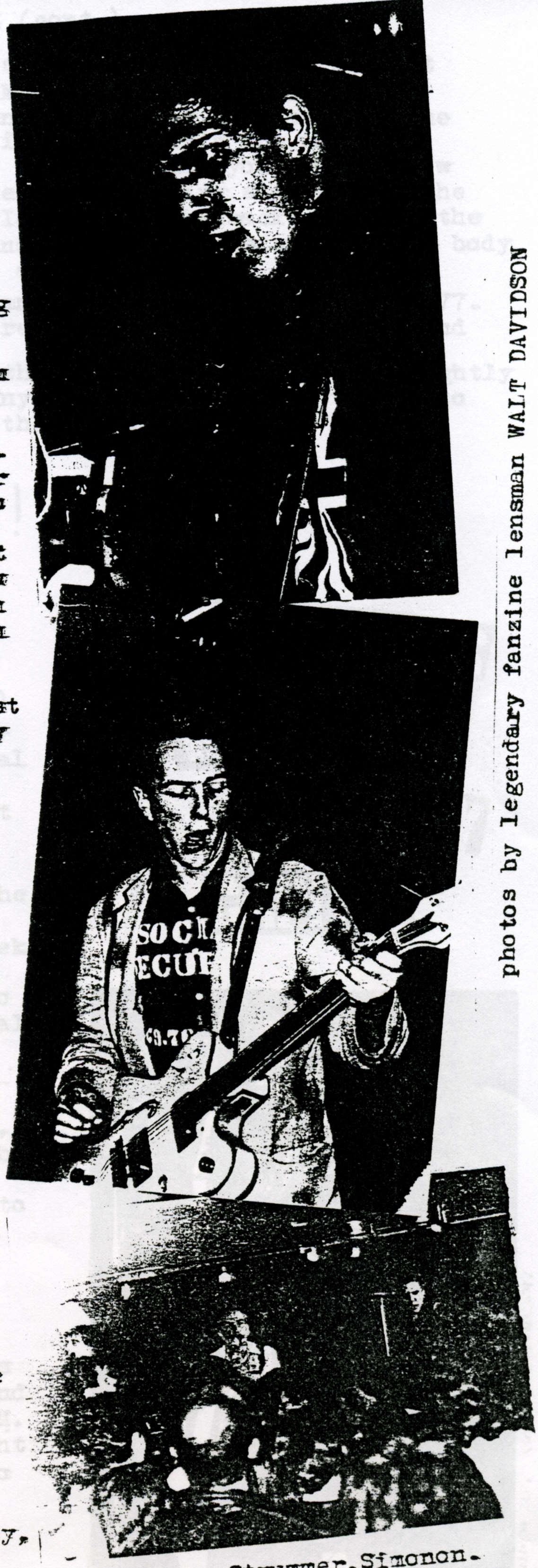
As usual, they hit the stage with London's Burning, following it with most of the tracks from the album (What's my name and Protex Blue were the only exceptions).

Hearing Police and Thieves live for the first time was an experience. They played the full six minutes and it looked great against the backdrop of the coppers running under the Westway. Strummer spat out the words, screwing up his face and twisting himself around the mikestand. At one point he fell backwards onto the stage and just kept on singing lying flat on his back ...pol-eece....pol-eece...pol-eece... It was incredible.

Almost as good was 'Pressure Drop". (Originally by Toots and the Maytals and part of the great soundtrack to 'The harder they Come")

Capital Radio was introduced with the words, "This is from an e.p. I haven't got my copy yet....but I know John Peel has". The song is built around a typically sharp Mick Jones riff and has a great "In tune with Nothing" chorus (more scandal about the e.p. later on).

Deny("for all the women in the audience") still sounds good live - better than it does on the album. Career Opportunities was dedicated to all the kids not at Guildford University, but why did Strummer sing the second verse twice?



L—R:Jones, Strummer, Simonon.
(Roxy, Jan 1st)

photos by legendary fanzine lensman WALT DAVIDSON

GUILDFORD CIVIC HALL (cont.)

Mick Jones (badly swolen finger) slid around the stage without pushing himself to the usual limits. Nick 'Topper' Headon fitted in perfectly behind his drum kit. It's taken them enough time to find the right replacement for Terry Chimes, but it's been worth the wait.

It ain't till you've seen the group on stage that you realize how important visually Paul Simonon is to the group. Always standing to the left of Strummer, wearing a new paint splattered Rickenbacker low on the hip he moves it as if it were a weapon, and jerks and twists his whole body as he plays, or stands, legs astride like a stone statue.

For the encore they gave us Garageland and a slightly altered 1977. The house lights went up just as they were about to return for a second encore.

It was a good enough gig to start the tour with. I was just slightly disappointed because I've seen better. Anyway, things are only going to get better. I can't wait to see them by the end of May.

ALL THE HITS AND MORE!

"Listen to the tunes on the Dr. Goebbals Show" goes one of the lines in the song Capital Radio off the Clash E.P. which you get if you send off your little coupon in the NME. (Goebbals was Hitler's propaganda guy)

As good as anything off the album, the song has a great chorus of "Capital -in tune with nothing! Capital - in tune with Hampstead!", taken from that hypocritical In tune with London jingle.

The song's been played live by the group and also on the John Peel show, and copies should be sent out this week.

It should have been out a few weeks ago but it's release has run into problems. But it's already got Capital on the run...

After someone had the excellent idea of spraying WHITE RIOT over the front of Euston Tower with an aerosol, a photo of the graffiti was going to be used on the sleeve of the e.p.

Somehow, word of this got round to the old blokes at Capital and threats started to be made.

I've heard rumours of possible legal action against the group, and even the sort of industrial blackmail (Do this, and we wont play any records on your label) that probably had a hand in getting the Pistols chucked off A&M.

Now it looks as if the E.P. might have to be put out in a blank, photo withdrawn sleeve.

Ree-pres-shun.

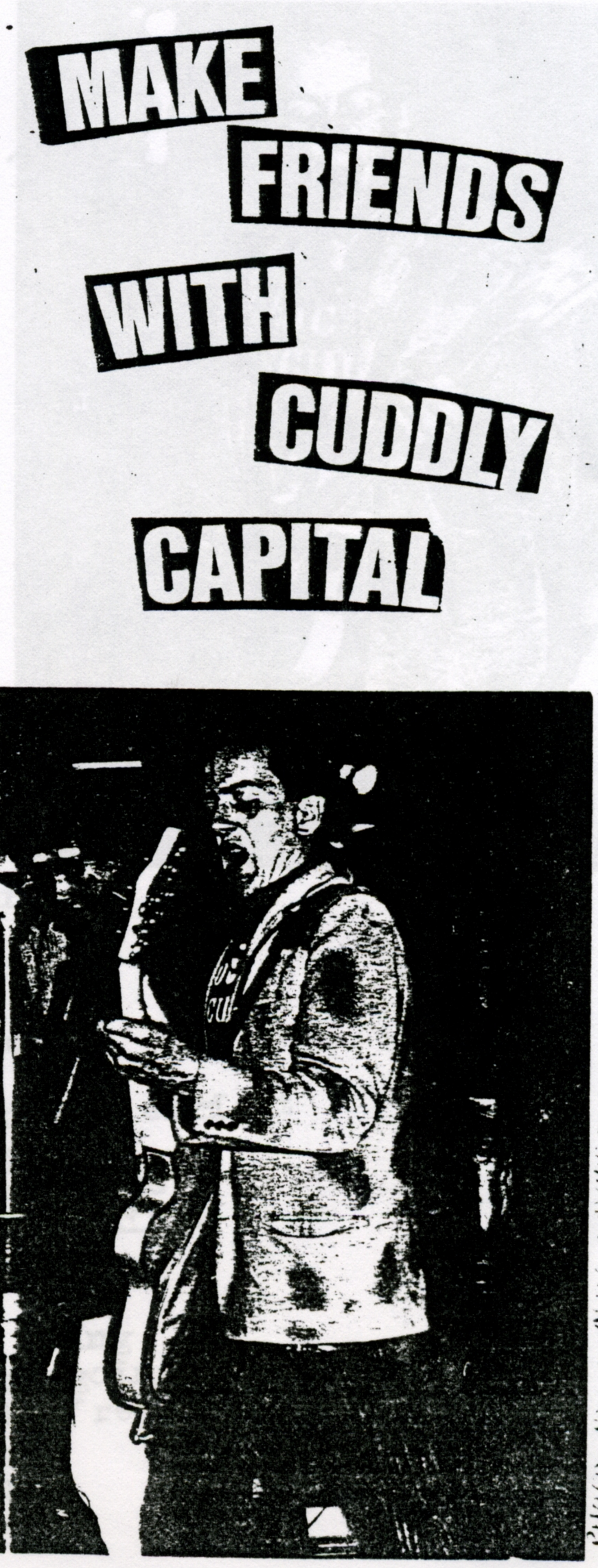


Photo by Kirby Anderson

...e in love with Rock and Roll. Wo!
He's in love with getting stoned. Wo!
He's in love with Janie Jones. Wo!
He dont like his boring job. No!

But he knows what hes got to do
He knows hes gonna have fun with you
And he knows when the evening comes
When his job is done he'll be over in his car for you

In his in-tray lots of work
But the boss at the firm always thinks he shirks
But hes just like everyone
Hes got a Ford Cortina that just wont run without fuel

In the invoice it dont quite fit
No payola in his alphabetical file
This time he's gonna tell the boss
He's gonna really let him know exactly how he feels

He's in love with Rock and Roll, Wo!
He's in love with getting stoned, Wo!
He's in love with Janie Jones, Wo!
He dont like his boring job, No-oh!
Let them know, Let them know!



PHOTO: CRYSTAL CLEAR



Back in the garage with my bullshit detector
Carbon monoxide making sure its effective
People ringing up making offers for my life
I just wanna stay in the garage all night
We're a garage band, We come from garageland!

Meanwhile things are hotting up in the West end, alright
Contracts in the offices, groups in the night
My bumming, strumming friend, Have I got new boots?
Someone just asked me if the group would wear suits!
We're a garage band, We come from garageland.

I don't wanna hear about what the rich are doing
I don't wanna go to where where the rich are going
They think they're so clever, they think they're so right
But the truth is only known by guttersnipes !
We're a garage band, We come from garageland.