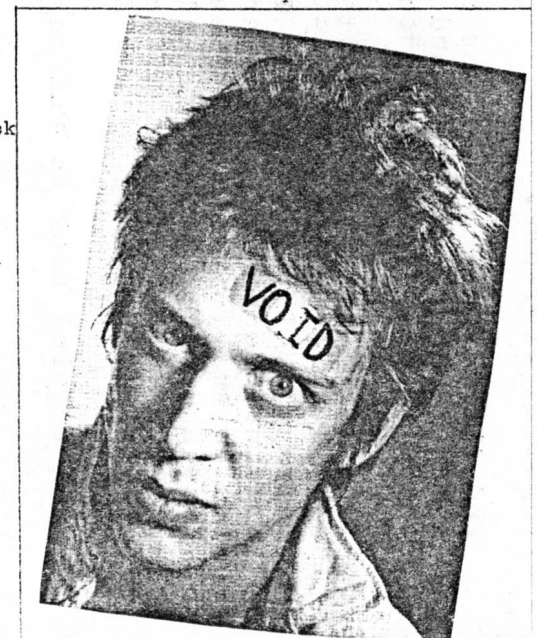
THE CLASH

WED. 27th OCTOBER....CLOUDS....CLASH COMPLETE CONTROL TOUR....

This review will be back to front 'cause the most significant part should come first. I first saw the Clash at the Playhouse in May, I bought the album and the singles, I read what the band had to say in interviews and like a mug I believed most of it. I really thought that the Clash were the one band to lead us out of the self-indulgent crap that all the Rod Stewarts and Rolling Stones were throwing at the kids. I saw a show in Clouds that proves conclusivley that the Clash have as much control as the Bay City Rollers. The set was basically the same as at the Playhouse with new songs like "Clash City Rockers", "The Prisoner" and "Complete Control". The new material certainly didn't have another "Capitol Radio" or "Garageland" in it.

The Clash stood out in the beginning because of their unique guitar sound. Well to my ears it's virtually disappeared, Strummer singing the last four numbers without his guitar. For a band who rejected the use of the "big stage show" how come they had a 40foot truck full of gear? And about 10 of a road crew. The answer is simple. The Clash are into "showbiz". It's great to go over and play in Ireland boys isn't it, especially if you get your mugs splashed all over every music paper, including 6 pages in Sounds.



O.K. so Strummer's voice was knackered but that doesn't make the bands "Oh it's only a small place, fuck it" attitude any better. The set itself was sloppy - the only guy in the band who actually seemed to be enjoying his playing was Topper Headon.

The saddest part of the lot was that a lot of kids have been so conditioned to believe that the Clash are tops that they thought it was great and so think that Joe Strummer used to rabbit on about "Don't follow leaders". And since I know that a lot of people are going to slag me for writing this, answer this question. How come there were 2500 kids at the Playhouse in May and 700 kids at Clouds in October?

Special guests RICHARD HELL & THE VOID-OIDS

Now Richard Hell was something else and that guy should be fair pleased with his band. They had problems like Marc Bell spending an hour tuning his drum kit and [redacted] Mick Jones spending 10 minutes beating it out of tune, and Topper Headon screwing about the monitor sound when the Void-oids were on stage. After all their problems can you blame Richard Hell dedicating his final number "I Wanna Be Your Dog" to the Clash. The set opened with "Love Comes In Spurts" which was pure power compared to the album track. The playing was so much better than anything I've heard on vinyl. Now Tom Verlaine copped the title of the "Ice King of Rock" on his tour earlier this year and I expected Richard Hell to be the next contender for the title, but the guy is so animated onstage that Tom Verlaine should cut off his own head. If this was a bad night for Hell, then on a good night he must be frightening.

Third on the bill were Lous, an all female French band who a lot of people liked but I found them a bit boring. I can't see them being terribly popular here.

After-bit:- Interesting to read the letters about the Clash's Irish jaunt in the music press. Seems as though all the Clash acheived was a few nice photos and a loss of credibility with the kids. So maybe I was wrong and the kids aren't as brainwashed as I thought. Now a week later all I can say is I feel sorry for the Clash 'cause they wanted to change the system and have complete control, instead they got sucked into the system and lost control. But with Big Money at stake, what would you have done?

Peter Campbell.