

# THE CLASH LEE DORSEY MIKEY DREAD

*Civic Auditorium,  
Santa Monica, Calif.*

*Admission: \$8.50 advance,  
\$9.50 day of show*

Any act that proclaims itself "the only band that matters" is setting itself up for a fall if it is anything less than phenomenal. However, not only did punk foursome the Clash not live up to its slogan and incessant media hype, it gave new meaning to the word rip-off.

Firstly, the excessive volume and distortion of the sound twisted the 22-song, 95-minute set March 3 into the sonic equivalent of one long car crash. And garish and awful lighting contributed to the hellish experience.

On record, the band is saved from being just another English punk band by its wry, socially conscious lyrics and melodic arrangements. On stage, it bludgeons its songs mercilessly and the lyrics aren't audible in the instrumental morass.

Singer-guitarists Joe Strummer and Mick Jones and bassist Paul Simonon offer little visual excitement. A couple of acrobatic leaps only served to bring to mind another English band, the Who.

The sonic blitzkrieg did have a few bright moments (as on the forceful reworking of "I Fought The Law" and "Complete Control") but these were few and far between.

The Clash always tries to educate its audiences by having unknown opening acts that play non-punk music. Mikey Dread opened the show with a lumbering 30-minute, six-song reggae set. He "skanked" (reggae rapping over prerecorded rhythm tracks) his way through some of the most tergid music that set the reggae cause back 20 years.

He was followed by the five-piece Lee Dorsey and band. Dorsey, from New Orleans, did lounge-flavored blues including "Working In A Coal Mine" in a tight, though unexciting, format. His 10-song, 35-minute set was better received than Dread's, though both received their share of boos.

The Clash ought to rethink its policy of only playing general admission, standing-on-the-