

Jamaica's Big Guns Duel at Reggae Sunsplash

By PAUL DABALSA

More than 2,000 Americans traveled to the Caribbean island of Jamaica this past summer for the first annual celebration of Reggae Sunsplash, a week-long musical event that brought together many of the big guns of Jamaican music. Attracted by the feisty rhythms of reggae, the Americans (including United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young) convened on the week of June 23 - June 30 at Montego Bay, the island's second largest city, and its leading tourist resort.

Montego Bay, or 'Mo Bay' as its population of 30,000 refers to it, is a town of hills rising from 40 miles of coves, bays, and beaches. Its residents are employed primarily in bauxite mining, sugar processing, hotels, construction, tourism, and boutiques. Reggae rhythms blast non-stop from the numerous small record shops around town. And children spend much of their time enjoying the turquoise waters and gorgeous beaches which constitute the island.

Despite the economic problems which historically have plagued the island, most Jamaicans are curiously jubilant and place great importance on leisure. Young Jamaicans will talk endlessly about the country's music, always certain to discuss how beloved Bob Marley is to the people. Since Marley's 1973 opus *Catch A Fire*, reggae has been more successful in uniting the people of Jamaica than all political efforts since Marcus Garvey pursued the



Jacob Miller of the Inner Circle Band.

development of black consciousness fifty-one years ago. Within the last decade, reggae has brought worldwide attention to the small island of Jamaica. Both its citizens and government are becoming aware of the enormous

financial potential of reggae insofar as attracting tourism and drawing record-sales dollars.

The more financially rewarding reggae becomes, the more of a political force it is also likely to become. Because of Jamaica's proximity to Cuba it is under the same pressures as other Caribbean islands like Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic to Socialize. The country's airwaves are cluttered with around-the-clock propaganda from at least one dozen different Cuban radio stations. And the week before Reggae Sunsplash, Fidel Castro, Prime Minister of Cuba, donated a physical fitness center to Jamaica, extending Cuba's interests on the island.

But while Cuba promotes socialism in Jamaica, reggae (a thoroughly capitalistic art form) is rapidly gaining worldwide popularity and becoming an important component of the Jamaican economy. Currently, there are several professional recording studios in Jamaica which are in constant demand by local bands as well as by American and British groups. There already exists a network of reggae studio musicians, which lend the genre a certain basic stability. And then there's the growing number of new bands keeping the music alive and fresh, and forecasting a healthy music scene for years to come.

Oddly enough, until Reggae Sunsplash, the Jamaican government had not encouraged reggae (instead pro-

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observation post

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THE CITY COLLEGE

Monday, October 16, 1978

Notes from the Military Affairs Desk

Eve of Mutual Assured Destruction

By BOB ROSEN

I'm writing to you from the Military Affairs Desk. If you're in a military frame of mind, you'll notice it translates in to the acronym MAD. That also stands for Mutual Assured Destruction, which means (nuclear weapons wise) it doesn't matter who turns the key first, in the end everybody dies. This acronym was pointed out to me a little while ago and I like it, so I pass it on to you hoping you'll roll it around in your mind for a while and find some significance. That's what I'm doing here.

First, though, let me offer a plug to the bunch of extremely dedicated and mad people who pooled their energies to bring you the first issue of OP for the 1978 term. In the past few years I've never seen people trying so hard to succeed driving themselves crazy with pressure trying to put out this rag. The frightening part is, I'm told, people join OP because there's less pressure here than at The Campus.

I've been associated with OP since 1971. It used to be an enjoyable place where I felt comfortable and my writing came naturally. But OP has always been a reflection of the campus and the campus a reflection of the world. I honestly believe one can turn to OP and see where the world is going a few years before it gets there. I don't know why. That's just the kind of people OP has always attracted. It's the best reason I can think of to come up to the office and take part.

I know people who have been involved with this newspaper since 1966. They've never seen it in as much trouble as it's in now. We are asking you to donate your bodies, your time, your talents, your love

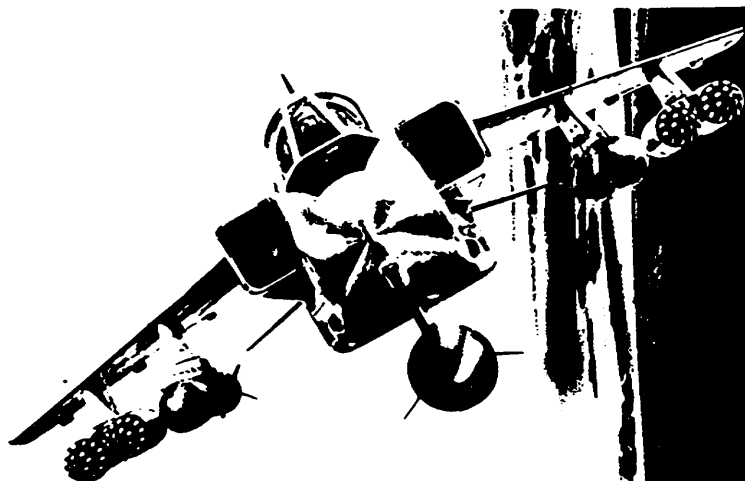
to OP because you cannot let it die. That's all there is to it. OP has helped too many people. At times it has been the most vital and alive part of City College. It was OP that originally let me make my statement on the Pentagon which had more impact than a story based on that interview printed in a national magazine. OP created the Military Affairs Desk and now is permitting me to sit at it at a time when I'd go crazy if life didn't allow me this one fantasy. OP is a fantasy world that anybody can take part in anytime they want. As crazy, self indulgent, irresponsible, depraved and sick as we've been accused of being for as long as I've been associated with it, I know it's the one thing that's kept a lot of people laughing and sane when they said life was so depressing, nothing could.

When you're talking about crazyness, depravity, sickness and fantasy, though OP is far outpaced by the land of classified information, nuclear war and Christianity, the Pentagon, where I was gainfully employed for a few months in 1975 as a speechwriter for the Secretary of the Air Force. This week's lesson from the Military Affairs Desk is gleaned from that experience.

I don't have to tell you, writing about Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) and the MX Missile System means having to understand such things as the SALT treaties, U-2's, spy satellites, verification, the Mintueman III, the Titan, the SR-71, MIRVed warheads, MARVed warheads, 12 target capability, the Cruise Missile, the B-1, the B-52, the Backfire Bomber, SLBM's, Triad, Titan, NORAD, SAC,

AWAC's the chain of command, Big Bird, Black Bird, security clearance, masturbating in a Pentagon bathroom surrounded by not less than 30 brigadier and major generals, the job of nuclear weapons which are not for killing people, but to deter killing, our most successful strategic bomber — the B-49, which never dropped a bomb in anger, Lieutenant Colonel Riddlebarger, the Policy Analysis Chief, who was Major Kong home from Vietnam, who referred to telephones as squawkboxes, milicrats as squirrels and chipmunks, getting killed as buying the farm, destroying Moscow with a barrage of nuclear warheads as cleaning out the Soviets' clock, who wanted me to finish graduate school and join the Air Force as a second lieutenant, who trusted me and got burned, Lieutenant Colonel Smith and the sleek silver missile badge he wore on his breast pocket, a momento of his tour of duty in the missile silos in Minot, North Dakota, Captain Rector, who wanted to convert me to Christianity and had already won a Meritorious Service Medal for converting 500 prostitutes to Christianity when he was stationed at Clark Air Force base in the Philippines, and said to me "Jesus wants you in the Pentagon. It is part of His plan," Captain Radzykewycz, who before being transferred to the Pentagon was responsible for recording the official Air Force version of the war in Vietnam, John McLucas, the Secretary of the Air Force, who employed five speechwriters to write speeches he never read, and finally 5C882, the speechwriting office called Policy Analysis because nobody

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Observation Post

*Voice of the Student Body, Conscience of the Administration
Watchdog of Human Rights, Keeper of the Sacred Flame,
Guardian of the Holy Grail, Defender of the Weak,
Protector of the Oppressed and Helper of the Poor
since 1947.*

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Letters

Dear OP:

President Marshak has once again displayed his true Marxist bent and flagrant contempt for this college's faculty by appointing a self-admitted Red as the acting dean of Humanities. This act is clearly another boost to his radical friends on the faculty who will go to any extreme to downgrade the Humanities, including driving out the few remaining professors who are trying to uphold standards against all odds.

Will this Red Dean undertake the purge that Theodore Gross was apparently unwilling to carry out? Is that why Marshak pressured him to resign from the deanship? Will we ever know the truth? Certainly not with a Red taking Gross' place, which is probably why "Lefty" Marshak found her so suitable for the job, at least until he could locate an outsider better qualified to do his bidding.

But Marshak may have finally dealt himself a death blow with this appointment. Marshak's political sympathies must now be obvious to everyone, and not even the newspaper strike will deter me and my colleagues from using every medium available to rally all good Americans to save City College by demanding Marshak's immediate resignation. If only we still had the House Un-American Activities Committee, I'd drag him down to Washington.

Professor Stanley Twitleaf
Prehistory Department



Ronnie Phillips

This editor wants to join you

Letter from the Editor

I've been up till dawn the last four nights working on OP. I'm exhausted. Last January, when I entered the Anyone-Can-Edit contest, I really didn't believe I would become the next Editor-in-Chief of OP. What self-respecting college newspaper would want a topless dancer/editor? The same one that printed a photograph of me nude, in leather manacles, snorting coke. Only OP.

Now, at the printer's, Paul Dabalsa, Bob Rosen, and I are typing ads, writing and copy editing the final pages that will comprise what I like to call my premiere issue. We have a bottle of Hennessy, some smoke and a few ups to keep us lively until we finish everything.

It is Yom Kippur, the afternoon of our second day here, and the people who run this shop have been really understanding. They know I only have a half-assed idea of what the fuck I'm supposed to be doing, so they're giving me all the help they can. Most printers wouldn't bother.

Ironically, this piece is the only one that's not finished. It's not good form for the editor to begin writing three days after the deadline, I'm told. I don't understand why I can never say what I mean until pushed beyond the verge of panic.

I'm disconcerted that people think just because I'm an S & M Drug Fiend who writes smutty articles I don't have anything valid to say. That's exactly what's always been said about OP. Isn't it conceivable that sexually permissive writing and graphics are healthy symptoms of a free press?

I feel it is the duty of a free press to agitate, provoke and liberate. That is the only way to change the social order. It is OP's duty as a free press to provide an accessible medium to air issues that cannot be discussed elsewhere.

I've already begun. Last June I called Ed Weberman, former OP photography editor, current lay-out artist at the N.Y. Post. I'd heard he was a sexual degenerate of the lowest order. I told him I wanted to do a live re-creation of Bobby Attanasio's Masturbating Nun. This notorious cartoon provoked the New York State Legislature to attempt to pass a bill calling for the censorship of all college newspapers in New York. I rented the nun's habit, bought the crucifix and masturbated while the drooling Weberman shot off a couple of rolls of film.

Provoked? Hot under the collar? Flashing visions of OP suspended and me disbarred? I understand. I also understand that when the press moves you to respond, it is effective journalism. Right now you might not be on my side. I clearly recognize the possibility of you being repulsed by the Masturbating Nun. But when former OP editor Fred Seaman showed me the erotic drawing, (Vol. 55, Number 2, February 12, 1974), I laughed. It was funny. I wasn't offended. If it's important, I was baptized Catholic.

I believe Attanasio lucidly demonstrated the objectives of OP as a free press. He provoked, and criticized society. He exercised sexual, political and theological freedom in the press.

I am a journalist committed to ideals of a democratic nation. Nothing is more important to me than continuing the traditions of A Free Press. I hope you will join OP in the crusade.



NOTICE

Budget Hearing

on Thursday Oct. 19 4 p.m.

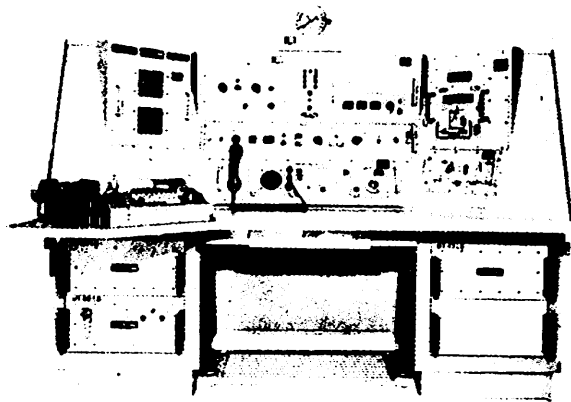
Finley 330

Treasurer

Prakash Ramlal

Day Student Senate

MIRV, MARV, MAD, NORAD, SAC, AWAC...



Minuteman III Command Control Console.

Continued from page 1
knew what it meant.

I've been writing about and living with that shit for three years, and if you think that's easy, try it sometime. You think it's a joke that the Pentagon drove me mad? I assure you it's not. Those things can be written about provocatively, and I've done it. If you don't believe it, please read my book, "Ground Zero Paranoia" should somebody ever find the good sense to publish it.

I've not been keeping up with the latest developments concerning the MX missile, which some people might suggest leaves me unqualified to write about it. It doesn't matter. The story never changes, only the names of the weapons systems.

Let me make a token effort to explain the thinking behind the MX, the latest doomsday device dreamed up by the highly skilled Air Force research and development labs. It's very expensive, more billions of dollars than can really mean anything to someone who's \$450 in the hole. It's being debated in Congress, in the press and where ever else that sort of thing gets debated, like over the summit tables in the ongoing SALT III negotiations.

The thinking behind the need for the MX Missile System is precisely the same thinking that has led to the development of every weapons system that has ever been implemented, and precisely the kind of thinking that led to the end of the world in Dr. Strangelove, when the Soviet Ambassador triggered the doomsday device. The Pentagon wants the MX Missile System because they are afraid if they don't get it, the Soviets will soon take over the lead in the arms race.

When you talk about the arms race, you have to understand that the people who count, the people who have the power to fuel it with money or say "ENOUGH ALREADY!" really believe there is an arms race and if they are not ever vigilant, the Soviets will take the lead and not necessarily blow us off the face of the earth, but tell us, "Comrade, we now have ten times as many nuclear weapons as you do, they are more powerful, they are more accurate, submit yourself willingly to our benevolent system of government and we won't blow you off the face of the earth." Men like Harold Brown, ex-Secretary of the Air Force, current Secretary of Defense, and good Jewish boy out of the Bronx High School of Science is one of those technocrats who get paid \$63,000 per annum to think about it all the time.

According to Mr. Brown and his colleagues, at the moment nobody has nuclear superiority, not us or the Russians. We are in a precarious state of having each other by the balls. They call it mutual blackmail

in the newspapers and Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) in the Pentagon. It means, no matter who launches the first missile or attempts to drop the first bomb, it won't matter. We will still wipe each other off the face of the earth, and we both know it. Provided nobody goes insane, there's nothing to worry about. This, as I say, is where we stand at the moment. By the moment, I mean, 3:18 a.m. EST, Monday, October 9, 1978. By dawn, this may no longer be true. You know the Soviets have not taken the day off to celebrate Columbus Day, or Canadian Thanksgiving. Russian scientists are working right this very minute under the most incredible pressures to make some kind of breathtaking technological breakthrough that will put them 20 years ahead of us in the arms race by the end of the week.

Don't laugh. When I was at the Pentagon in 1975, they said it would take the Soviets 15 years to develop missiles accurate enough to take out our 200 Minuteman III silos — housing 1150 missiles in Minot, North Dakota — which can only be taken out with a near-direct hit. They are approaching that kind of accuracy in 1978, and that is the reason we need the MX missile system, or so say the boys who have access to Top Secret information produced by the CIA, our network of spy satellites and spy planes, the U-2 and the SR-71, Blackbird.

The arms race sizes up these days a lot like the matchups in a Super Bowl. The Americans have smaller missiles with less powerful and fewer warheads, but we have the technological superiority to aim these missiles with the pinpoint precision needed to destroy "nuclear hardened" reinforced concrete missile silos on the other side of the world. The Soviet SS-18 is literally ten times bigger than our biggest missile, the Titan, but they just can't land it in your backyard. They can only kind of lob it in the direction of Baltimore and take out Washington too if the wind factor is right.

Now, with the great strides taken in accuracy since '75, they not only have bigger missiles, but ones that are almost as accurate. People who make a career out of worrying about this kind of thing are shitting in their pants and screaming, "It's the end of the Free World if you do not give us money to build the MX Missile System! We are talking about the end of civilization as we know it!"

We have to worry about the Soviets dropping their warheads directly on our Minuteman III silos because they know exactly where our missiles are. Suppose we were to construct a new, improved system of silos so that they couldn't know exactly where the missiles are. Suppose they

thought they were firing at a missile, but the missile was actually five or ten miles away. Then, even if they had pinpoint accuracy, it wouldn't do them any good.

That's the aim of the MX system, which connects the silos by a series of underground trenches. At the bottom of the trench is a railroad track. On the track is a car and on the car is the MX Missile. The car can ride up and down the trench, stopping at any point along the way for as long as the computer decides it should stay there.

The Soviets have nothing like this and they're not happy about it. Not only does the MX neutralize their recent break-

throughs in accuracy, but it totally fucks up their surveillance system. Surveillance no longer becomes a question of recognizing and counting silos from a satellite photograph. With the MX, you can see the silo/trenches, but it doesn't matter.

If we go ahead and build the MX, no way the Soviets are going to sign any SALT Treaties. If they don't sign SALT, they will continue building more missiles, more powerful missiles, more accurate missiles. So will we. And it's going to keep on happening until somebody blows up the world.

Now do you understand why Military Affairs Desk means MAD?

HEAD LINES

By HERB WEED

Dope purchasing is strictly "caveat emptor." You have to know who you are dealing with. The purpose of this column is to keep you informed on: how to buy dope, price quotations of whatever is going around, and the latest information dealing with the drug scene itself.

Did you ever wonder about consumer protection in the People's pharmacy? How do you know that the little piece of blotter has any acid on it? There is no consumer protection for people buying contraband. So please send in your quotations.

Certain rules apply when copping dope. First, know your dealer. If you buy from someone you know, then you probably won't get ripped off. Second, remember that the more you buy the higher you'll get and the cheaper your high. Third, never front money.

As of this printer's night, there is a plentiful supply of decent pot around, ranging in price from \$35-45 per oz. At the lower prices there are leafy varieties with brown-green coloration. For the higher budget there are buddy types, predominantly pale brown.

There is some excellent Window Pane available at \$6-7 a hit. Liquid and Blotter are also around at a decent \$2.50-5. Beware of mescaline because it's usually PCP or bad acid. Stay away from PCP, and Angel Dust, (the fashionable name for it.) One of its worst dangers is that it can precipitate a psychotic reaction, much more powerful than that of acid.

People are copping bootleg Quaaludes these days. The phony ludes have "Rorer 714" stamped on them, but the bootleggers don't have high pressure pill presses like the pharmaceutical manufacturers. Consequently, their pills are softer, cannot be sliced cleanly, and the indented area is ragged not smooth. One way to test the origins of a Quaalude is to snap it down the center line. If you can't break it cleanly, then it is probably bootleg. At any price, bootleg ludes are to be avoided. There have been too many reported ripoffs. Don't believe stories from a dealer like, "It's my last one, man. I had it in my pocket for two days, and it got a bit scratched." Quaaludes are selling from \$3.50 to \$7.00.

When's the last time you saw a real box of amies? Poppers are big now, commercially, but scoring a yellow box of amyl nitrate ampules is impossible. Butyl nitrate, the dangerous relative of amyl, is packaged both as a liquid and ampules, and packaged under such names as Cum, Locker Room, Rush, and others. The substance was first made available at the Pleasure Chest, and gay head shops. Now it has made its way out of the disco and into the bedroom. The pharmaceutical stuff smells better than the over-the-counter variety, but will get you hot. Consult your physician if you have heart problems — you may get a scrip.



Boston



Photo by Pamela Johnson

Dennis Brown dancing the night away.

Positive Vibrations at Reggae Sunsplash

BY PAUL DABALSA

Continued from page 1

moting calypso - the music of Trinidad) because of the music's strong connection to the Rastafarian cult and their ganja-smoking practices. The Rastafarians have made reggae 'their' music. Many of the genre's top stars are members of the cult. Some use reggae as a vehicle for preaching the Rastafarian message of love, peace, and anti-oppression. In general, Rastafarians are peace-loving people who worship Haile Selassie, the former Emperor of Ethiopia, as God. They refer to him as Jah. They regard Ethiopia as home, and aspire to go there one day. Many of them are direct descendants of the Maroons, 17th-century slaves who were freed by the Spanish when they fled Jamaica, and were left to fight the British for control of the island.

Two factors forced the Jamaican government to overlook its prejudice against reggae and to support Reggae Sunsplash. First, Rastafarians are no longer "outcasts" to the majority of the population. Only a small conservative minority still feels threatened by the Rastas, despite the recognition they have brought the island. Secondly, the Jamaican government could not ignore proposal that would attract thousands of tourists to the island during a traditionally slow season for tourism.

And so, the Jamaican Tourist Board became involved with Synergy Productions, the independent Kingston-based concert firm which first proposed the event, in the staging of, "the World's largest ever reggae festival." In the end, both groups deserved plenty of credit for their professional handling of this enormous event.

The primary site for the festival was Jarrett Park, an old soccer stadium which today is still used for much of Montego Bay's sporting events. In addition to Jarrett Park, there were beach parties on several afternoons, and nightly 'till-dawn' reggae dancing at a local disco.

Until the time of Sunsplash I had enjoyed reggae for both its flaws and strengths. Many of the musicians were amateurs trying desperately to assimilate the smooth technique of their American and British counterparts. But at Sunsplash the flaws were suddenly missing, and the musicianship in general was tighter than expected. Since then I have found a growing professionalism among groups like The We The People Band, The Revolutionaries and other reggae artists which is highly promising.

Opening night at Jarrett Park began with a new band from Montego Bay called Future World Incorporated. Instrumentally the group was impressive, but their music was too calculated and derivative of American soul groups to be of much interest. Next was Ras Michael and The Sons of Negus, a percussion-based outfit with fourteen musicians, including four bongo players and three female vocalists. They delivered a peculiar band of hypnotic, chanting reggae plus some funky material and an excellent song entitled "Run, Oppressor, Run" which was highlighted by a lively interplay between the group's four percussionists. Lloyd Parks and We The People Band, a group composed of studio musicians, performed on several nights both by themselves and as a backup band for The Heptones, Dennis Brown and U-Roy. The nine-man band is led by bassist Lloyd Parks, but the sound is dominated by a four piece horn section which contributed a series of surprising individual solos. The band remained onstage after their warm-up set to support Dennis Brown, one of the islands most prolific hitmakers. Brown's music is quite listenable, yet it never probes beneath a sweetly sentimental surface. If there is such a thing as Jamaican pop, Dennis Brown is it. U-Roy, who has an album out on Virgin Records in the U.S., called *Dread in A Babylon*, was next to perform and he proceeded to romp through an excellent set of original songs. The vocalist is somewhat of a Jamaican Peter Wolf in his colorful stage gear and fancy footwork. The highlight of his set were two songs from his Virgin LP, "Runaway Girl" and "Chalice In The Palace". The last guests of the evening were the best received by the audience, Jacob Miller and The Inner Circle Band. This band has an LP on Capitol Records and performed mostly selections from the LP. At 2:30 a.m., toward the end of the bands set, Miller lit a spill on-stage and the incident was reported the following day in both Jamaican dailies, causing Miller to have to formally apologize to the local authorities.

The second evening, was kicked off by Joe Higgs, a well known record producer in Jamaica, and his eight-men band composed entirely of studio musicians. The band's music often recalled James Brown and other American Rhythm and Blues artists.

Of all the groups to perform at Sunsplash, the Heptones, a 3-men vocal group, were the furthest removed from the Rastafarians. They followed Higgs on stage sporting three-piece double knit suits and resembling something of a cross between gangsters and Time Square pimps. Despite the contrived approach, the group's superior vocal harmonies and jumping R & B arrangements resulted in a rousing set.

Jimmy Cliff and Oneness followed the Heptones, playing, mostly songs from the album they were recording at the time in Kingston (and which has just been released by Warner Brothers), whose lyrics are preoccupied with a "return to Africa." The limp melodies of much of the new material finally gave way to songs like "You Can Get It If You Really Want It" and "Too Many Rivers to Cross"

which succeeded in getting everyone on their feet and dancing.

The last few nights featured Culture, Toots and The Maytals, Burning Spear and Third World. Culture, a first-rate trio of vocalists backed by a group of studio musicians called The Revolutionaries, was the major surprise of the festival. Their vocals carried the urgency and distinctive qualities of the best mainstream reggae vocalists like Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff and Toots Hibbert. The group, is presently very popular in Jamaica and England yet completely unknown in America, mainly because they remain unsigned by an American label.

Toots and The Maytals were the most musically striking group of the festival, with cookin' versions of "Reggae Got Soul," "Funky Kingston," "Country Road," and "Louie, Louie." Backed also, by The Revolutionaries, the guitarist's tasty soul riffs, the bassist's throbbing funky bass, and the drummer's cracking snare, complemented The Maytals soulful vocals. Toots and The Maytals have obviously siphoned freely from American artists like James Brown and Al Green, yet their presentation, retains the urgency and excitement of the best reggae. The Maytals' special brand of reggae is the most convincing fusion of American soul and reggae today. The enormous energy generated by The Maytals left the crowd dancing long after the band had left the stage, and resulted in the band being called back for two encores. Lead vocalist Winton Rodney led Burning Spear, another group to find their way onto American vinyl, through a set of jumping rhythms which featured such compelling selections as "Marcus Garvey" and "Slavery Days." The songs displayed a surprising amount of good guitar work, a punchy rhythm section, and churchy keyboard fills, combining for a very aggressive musical attack. Burning Spear's material still carries the political overtones of their early albums, yet the group never forgets to entertain. Burning Spear's 75-minute set made many of us in the audience recall that Bob Marley's music once was charged by socio-economic lyrics rather than seductive messages, and that a new school of reggae has now emerged which is totally, alienated to the political origins of the music.

Third world, a group with three albums on Island Records, closed the Reggae Sunsplash festival with an impressive set of rock-flavored reggae. The instrumental lineup consisted of two guitarists, a drummer, a keyboard player, a conga player, and a bassist. In many ways Third World was the most versatile of all the groups to perform at the festival. All the musicians doubled on vocals, the group busted out with several long instrumental jams, and drummer Cornel performed the only drum solo of the festival. In addition, Third World's lively stage act provided an appropriately exciting finish to a memorable week of reggae music.

Reggae Sunsplash 1978 ended on a positive note. MC Jake Waking announced that if the Jamaican government again lends its support next year, Synergy Production plans to hold Reggae Sunsplash 1979 sometime next summer.



Jimmy Cliff chats with fans backstage after his performance.

Photo by Pamela Johnson

North Academic Complex Debuts in 'Bloodbrothers'

By LEWIS PEABODY

So you were convinced that the North Academic Center (NAC) skeleton is nothing more than a blot on City College's Gothic landscape. And maybe you were getting a little nostalgic for that huge dirt-swept arena, Lewisohn Stadium, which you remember so fondly from *Serpico* as the site where Al Pacino cast a lonely figure way up in the bleacher stands as the last honest man in the New York Police Department.

For some reason, City College has long been a favored backdrop for movie-makers, and last year director Robert Mulligan discovered the NAC as a central locale for *Bloodbrothers*, a movie that fits in perfectly with the NAC's violent and uncertain past. In its first celluloid outing, the NAC structure shows much promise, providing interesting vistas of the North Manhattan skyline and a gritty atmosphere credible enough to make you think that real construction workers once labored on the site. Of particular interest to Harlem's Fight Back and other activist groups will be Mulligan's true-to-life casting: hardly one black face was visible amidst the film's construction crew.

Ironically, the scenes shot in the NAC's concrete-and-steel jungle involve a father's efforts to inculcate his son into the manhood of the electrical workers union and convince him that he shouldn't bother going to college since he would probably earn more money anyway with his union card. Not the kind of message you'd think the college administration wants the slimmest connection with. I hope the college at least extracted a decent rental fee for use of the site. (By the way, who pocketed that money?)

Back to the story line: the son (Stony) is 19, full of verve but totally unsure of where he's headed in life — in short, a working class hero whom plenty of City College students should be able to relate

to. Under pressure from his old man (Tommy DeCoco), he agrees to try the construction trade for two weeks after taking a job in a hospital as a "recreation assistant" working with kids, a pansy job if his father ever heard of one.

The family is superficially close-knit and Italian; under the surface it is a war zone, with alliances being formed by members of the same sex and generation. Stony (acted convincingly and engagingly in the James Dean mold by Richard Gere, does his best to protect his kid brother Albert from the wrath of their parents. In the end, Stony takes him under his wing and they run away together.

That's one set of bloodbrothers. The other comprises the older generation, Tommy and Chubby DeCoco, who work together, booze together, chase women together and decide on Stony's future together. Tommy (played superbly by Tony LoBianco) is the kind of guy who sweet-talks his wife one moment and beats her over the head the next. The sight of Tommy's wife (another effective performance, this time by Lelia Goldoni) standing in a hospital corridor, battered and bruised, and pleading for Stony's trust is one of the most painful scenes I can recall seeing on the screen. It's an example of what you might want to call socially redeeming violence.

Much of the movie is like that: wrenching violence done with meaning. Almost every scene packs a wallop, both literally and figuratively, as the movie takes us on an emotional rollercoaster ride. The advertising campaign for *Bloodbrothers* has been surprisingly sedate, focusing on Stony's personal dilemma while ignoring the gore. You almost might mistake it for a love story. As the tale of a working class youth in New York, it is far more satisfying and believable than *Saturday Night Fever*, and in comparison to Gere's other claim to fame, *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, in which



Richard Gere and Paul Sorvino in a scene from 'Bloodbrothers.'

he starred as the Diane Keaton character's sadistic lover, *Bloodbrothers* is hardly as depressing. After all, we aren't waiting in the dark for him to be finally killed.

In *Bloodbrothers*, the most intriguing part of the film is left incomplete as Stony and Albert ride off into the dusk. Can they possibly make it on their own? Stony is barely equipped to take care of himself, let alone his brother. At 19, he is pictured as just getting out of high school. He is leaving behind the one real job he's ever had, but then maybe he realizes that he can never work with kids when he can't even talk straight himself.

In any case, the flight of the bloodbrothers opens up the possibility of a new movie, a prospect that director Mulligan rejected outright when the question was put to him after this film was shown at the recent New York Film Festival at Lincoln Center. "I don't like sequels," he explained.

Bloodbrothers would appear to have special significance in Mulligan's directorial life since its theme remarkably parallels that of the first film Mulligan made almost 20 years ago, *Fear Strikes Out*, which happens to be an all-time favorite of mine. It should also be familiar to every diehard Boston Red Sox and New York Mets fan since it tells the story of ex-outfielder Jim-

my Piersall, who suffered a nervous breakdown under the pressure of living his father's dream of breaking into the big leagues.

Both films portray young males on the brink of making a decisive choice in their lives, unsure of which road to take although their domineering fathers are always quite specific about which direction is right. Gere's innocent face is even reminiscent of the young Tony Perkins, who played Piersall so well. Then again, Karl Malden, who played that father, never beat his wife (God knows, he'd never be able to make those American Express commercials if he had).

What is really interesting, though, is how Mulligan and his screen writers devised contrasting solutions for their leading characters. It probably says a lot about the differences between the Fifties and the Seventies. The only outlet for Piersall then was to go crazy and be hospitalized. Twenty years later, we've progressed to the point where Stony's only choice seems to be to run away, and he is led by Mulligan to do so. But just as Jimmy Piersall finally returned to baseball because it's the only thing he really knows, it wouldn't have been incredible for Stony to have ended up as a card-carrying electrical worker. But we'll never know.

'Skip Tracer': A Frightening Look at Capitalism

BY JEFF BRUMBEAU

As even the most reticent movie buff can tell you, the city has just hosted the 16th annual New York Film Festival, and the offerings were excellent. According to the director of the festival, Richard Roud, the objective this year was to "line up the best and most representative films of the year without worrying too much about which ones will become classics." Intentions aside, however, many of the movies screened at past festivals have subsequently become world famous, making each year's event something to watch for.

This year twenty-five films and several shorts were selected, eight of these from the United States and Canada, and the rest from abroad. Some of the better known filmmakers were represented, including Robert Altman (*A Wedding*), Fritz Lang (a three-hour reworking of his 1928 film *Spies*), Francois Truffaut (*The Green Room*), and Martin Scorsese (*American Boy: A Profile of Steven Prince*), but for the most part the program consisted of the not-so-famous and newcomers to the screen. One of these new faces is Canadian director Zale R. Dalen, who has made a

striking debut with *Skip Tracer*.

Dalen's contemporary drama about a callous man who collects unpaid debts for a loan agency (a skip tracer) is a frightening look at the control money has on our lives. Similar to *Blue Collar*, a recent film about assembly-line workers in a Detroit auto factory, the people we meet here are victims of an unsympathetic society where money is at the root of all problems. The middle class are portrayed as a 'trapped' mass, whose lives revolve around unpaid bills and credit payments. Those who cannot repay are shown as distressed and desperate, and provide a striking contrast to the powerful and confident skip tracer.

David Petersen plays the skip tracer John Collins, a three-time winner of his company's man-of-the-year award, who is looking to make it four. His success is a result of his incessant pursuit of each account. He will look to collect from people at home or at work. At times he will drive a moving van to the house of an absent client and clear out all the furniture, leaving only his calling card behind.

Collins' character is devoid of emotion. Like an emergency-room orderly, he is

hardened to the pain and misery around him. His job calls for the systematic listing of people as numbers and accounts to be settled. He is oblivious to their resentment, anger and anguish.

Following a failed attempt on his life, Collins becomes distracted, questioning and uncertain. His indifference suddenly appears to be only a facade, and for the first time we witness a glimpse of emotion.

Director/writer Zale R. Dalen has created his first film with strict economy and brilliant subtlety. His characters are believable, man-on-the-street portraits. In shooting the movie, Dalen has amplified the sordidness of human life by selecting scenes of offices, row houses and factories.

Robert Petersen assumes the tenacious obsession of the skip tracer as easily as if he'd just stepped out of the job. John Lazarus, who plays Brent, a young kid trying to learn the business by tagging after Collins, is equally as effective in his role. With great technique Dalen brings to the screen the power of big business and the inner workings of a man who is neither loved nor loathes, but is on his way to learning how.



David Petersen in a scene from 'Skip Tracer.'

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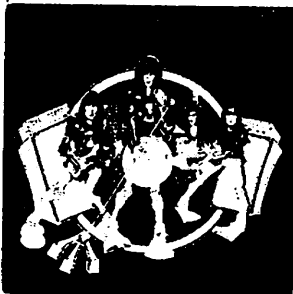
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OPOP RECORD REVIEWS



The Ramones
Road to Ruin

The Ramones have always found themselves in the peculiar situation of being either passionately loved or hated. Their detractors never thought they'd see the day when the Ramones would release their fourth album. But the truth is that since their debut two years ago, the Ramones have been unstoppable. This is a group that has been blessed with the finer things in life — talent, an original concept, great management, and a sympathetic record company. With every album the Ramones have defied those cynics who predicted the group would never find a mass audience outside of New York City, and would have to tone down their approach if they were to reach broader audiences.

Road to Ruin presents the band more uncompromising than ever. The attractions are still the same — fast, loud rock n' roll with some sense of humor. The album, however, marks the incorporation of a new drummer, Marc Bell, into the group. Bell, an athletic, high-powered, and untiring drummer, has played previously with Dust, Wayne County, and Richard Hell. Tommy Ramone who left the group earlier this year, was to have remained with them as producer, but is not listed anywhere on the Lp credits (T. Erdelyi and Ed Stasium produced).

The new disk opens with the group's statement of purpose, "I Just Want Something To Do," a positively addictive piece of adrenalin rock n' roll. The song sets the pace for other scorching rockers like "I Wanted Everything," "I Don't Want You," "I'm Against It," "Go Mental," "Bad Brain," and the album's climatic song, "I Wanna Be Sedated."

"Don't Come Close" is enjoyable pop in the same vein as earlier songs like "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend," and "I Remember You." "Questioningly," the longest track on the album, is a ballad which four years ago the group would not have recorded, but on an album with a cartoon for a cover it somehow seems appropriate. Which brings us to the energetic version of Sonny Bono's "Needles and Pins," which appears here. The source of the song would make it seem unfitting for

the Ramones, yet the group makes the song sound totally their own. One wonders if this is an attempt at versatility or just comic relief?

Again the Ramones demonstrate a marvelous gift for avoiding filler. Their high-decibel and furiously paced sound, makes even the best rockers today seem utterly fake. The Ramones are not only still the reigning rock n' roll band in New York City, but continue to rank among the most exciting and consistent groups in the country.

— Paul Dabalsa



DEVO
Are We Not Men?

With the hoopla that has accompanied the release of this record, you'd think these guys would really be from a different galaxy. But on the other hand, they'd probably think it's no fun to be an alien. It's much better, I suppose, to be a mongoloid and have your first record produced by a respected Avant Gardist like Eno.

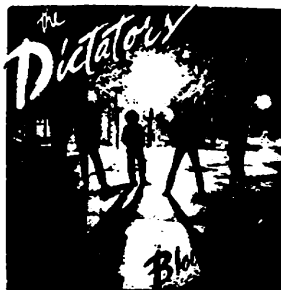
Devo is short for De-evolution, the concept which functions as a framework for the group's existence. (Their fans are called Devo-tees, what else?) I'm not quite clear on the concept of De-evolution at this point, but I think it advocates the shutting down of all machines and somehow surviving without them. Of course, when this happens the boys will have to unplug their Ampegs and return to their home of Akron, Ohio, to manufacture tires.

The group is made up by Mark Mothersbaugh (keyboards/vocals), Gerald V. Casale (bass/vocals), Bob Mothersbaugh (guitar), Bob Casale (guitar), and Alan Myers (drums). The album consists of some well produced and performed selections, mostly on Side one. Three songs — "Uncontrollable Urge," "Mongoloid," and "Satisfaction"—alone are worth the price of the album.

"Uncontrollable Urge" is a fast-paced number that plants an unforgettable hook in the opening bars, and rocks you further with its incessant rhythm. The group then does an admirable job on the Rolling Stone's "Satisfaction" (the only Stones song I can recall that has ever been covered well by another group). "Mongoloid" is Devo's signature song, and had the distinct honor of being the

band's first single to make the quadrophonic jukebox at Max's Kansas City. "Joeko Homo" is more or less the title track, with its anthem-like lyrics—"Are we not men? We are Devo!"—and is geared around a pulsating synthesizer rhythm which dominates the group's sound.

— Paul Dabalsa



The Dictators
Bloodbrothers

After the commercial disappointment of last year's pop-oriented *Manifest Destiny*, it makes perfect sense that the most inspired piece of music on the Dictators' latest disc should be a song called "Faster and Louder." The group has wisely reverted to what they have always played best—scorching rock n' roll.

Since their classic hard-rocking first album, *Girl Crazy*, the Dictators' prime strengths have been blunted in the search of a more commercial sound. During this time, Andy Shernoff, the group's principal songwriter, inadvertently converted the band into a vehicle for his personal visions, and lead singer Dick Manitoba reduced himself to an obliging vocalist from a commanding one. Shernoff and Manitoba are the two prime forces behind the band, yet appear to be total opposites. The former takes himself much too seriously, which translates into a self-conscious performer, while the latter is a natural frontman aided by his wild looks, acute sense of humor, and tendency for spontaneity.

Bloodbrothers is far more typical of the Dictators than the contrived pop on *Manifest Mutiny*. The new album contains their best work since *Girl Crazy* and appears to indicate that the band has re-found direction. In addition, Manitoba seems rejuvenated now that the music has regained its raw edge.

Guitarist Ross the Boss leads the roaring attack by burning out some good leads on songs like "Borneo Jimmy," "Faster and Louder," "Stay with Me," and the anthem-like "I Stand Tall." Rhythm guitarist Top Ten's power chording provides Ross the Boss something to grind against, while drummer Richie Teeter and bassist/keyboardist Andy Shernoff anchor the instrumentation.

"Baby Let's Twist," and "The Minnesota Strip" are also

standouts with plenty of hooks and guitar. Now that the Dictators are back on the right track musically, they may want to consider hiring new producers for their fourth album (the three so far have been produced by Murray Kingman and Sandy Pearlman). This could provide the band with some new approaches, and Handsome Dick may be able to sing "Next Big Thing" and finally mean it.

— Paul Dabalsa



Blondie
Parallel Lines

With Mike Chapman (Sweet) in the control booth, one intuitively feels that Blondie and their business cohorts had big plans for this album. After all, Chapman has made millions from producing hit records, so his services are not cheap. But you hope that Chapman will extend his streak of hit records with the new songs. Or you figure Chapman's name on the record sleeve alone will sell an additional thousand copies. Right?

Well, maybe not. Blondie's current dilemma is a result of their visit to England, which is where they first met Chapman. The group toured England late last year in support of the then newly-released "Plastic Letters." While in England, two songs from the album — "Denis" and "I'm Always Touched by your Presence, Dear"—suddenly zoomed up the charts and Blondie were overnight sensations. The group consequently extended its stay abroad, and when they finally returned to the States they had a totally new image. Deborah Harry's sexpot positioning was at first interesting, even though someone with an observant eye could have seen it coming. But the band suddenly resembled prep schoolers, and their new identity

was too disconcertingly wholesome to swallow at once. The entire band now practices their looks. I still have not gotten over it. There's not a hint of decadence in that band anymore.

The group's show at the Palladium earlier this year presented Blondie fresh off their European tour. Chrysalis records inflated the sales receipts by purchasing an unusually large amount of tickets, hung a huge banner on the Palladium marquee which read "WELCOME BACK BLONDIE" in bold black letters, and rented two spotlights to illuminate the banner. I knew right away that this was not going to be the "I'm-just-a-local-punk-rock" Blondie I have seen perform many times.

Inside the concert hall, Deborah Harry was busy titillating the front row of high school males by swinging her bare legs over the monitors and every now and then pretending to faint at their feet, only to get up again and send a personalized wink their way. The music too—both new and old songs—was stripped of fervor. And despite their cheapened approach the group projected a disturbing smugness which I have not noticed before.

Blondie hired an English singles producer (and dropped Richard Gottehrer, the producer of their first two Lps) basically because they're targeting on the British kiddie market, the same market that has allowed the Sweet to go into semi-retirement and are now buying Blondie singles with equal fervor. But have Blondie forgotten that it was Richard Gottehrer who produced "Denis" and "Presence"? Is Chapman just a symbol that they're moving up in the world?

As for the new Lp (this is the record review, remember) there is nothing radically new here. It provides absolutely no evidence of growth since "Plastic Letters." "Parallel Lines" is a slick production with too many embellishments which really don't enhance anything. The extraordinary pop sense that made memorable every song on the first two records has vanished. Now they feed us crap like "Fade Away and Radiate." And the funny thing is, there's not even a good single on the record.

— Paul Dabalsa

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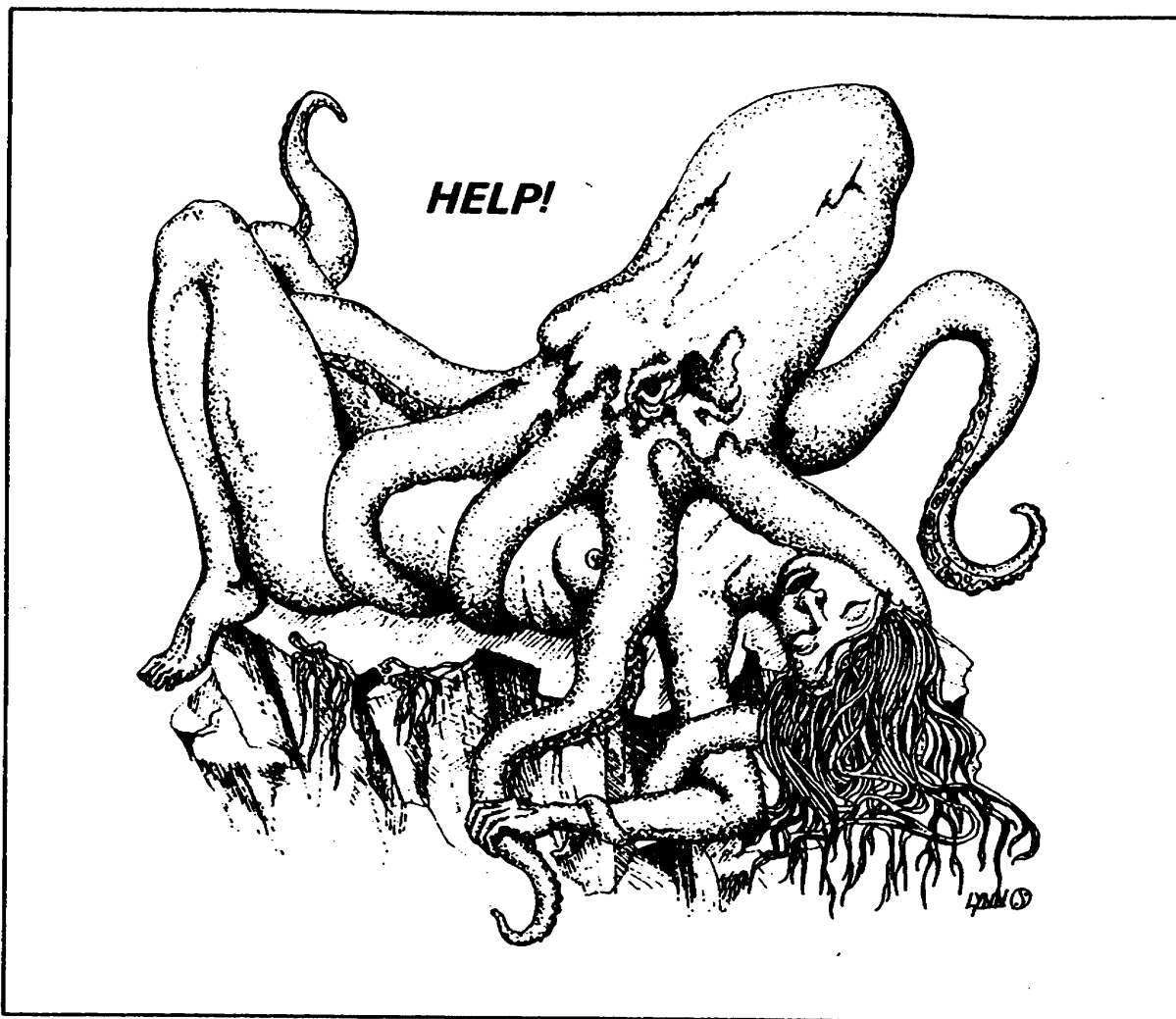


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