

Records

Aotearoa He Waiata Mo Te Iwi Tai e

I remember saying a few years back that Herbs' debut *What's Be Happen* was a milestone in New Zealand music. I said so because I felt that indigenous popular music had finally found an authentic voice. *He Waiata* ("Sing for Our People") confirms that sentiment. Young Maori people are rediscovering their culture, telling it in their own language, as well as the one introduced. There's a long way to go, but this album gives enormous cause for optimism.

To better understand this record, you'd be advised to write to Jayrem Records, PO Box 3054, Wellington, and ask for the publicity handout, which includes well-written explanations of the songs sung in Maori, which make up nearly 50 percent of the album. The sentiments of these songs are the strongest. They are unashamedly political in places, but then what are Maori politics? Right now, they hardly conform to any mainstream party line. The Maori nation, having been tossed and turned throughout its history, now

seeks to control its own destiny. For Caucasians, it is confusing. We are being shown a reverse side of the culture we have created, and the picture is not always pretty. Maybe if we listened more than we talked, we might learn something. The songs of young Maori people would be a good place to start.

The singing of Aotearoa grows ever stronger, and the production by Dennis Mason is as good as you'll get anywhere. Mason also sings on 'Young, Gifted and Black,' one of two covers. The other is Joy Yates and John Macrae's 'Whakarongo.'

The publicity sheet also contains another complaint on the lack of radio airplay for music of groups such as Aotearoa. Those who feel strongly enough about this subject might care to lend support to Auckland's Access Radio experiment next month. For further information, telephone 771-295.

Duncan Campbell

Various Artists

Massive 2

Virgin

Various Artists

Reggae Blasters Vol 2

Jayrem

Do local record companies really think reggae only sells in compilations? I must have seen five of

these in only a couple of months. Not that I'm complaining, mind you. Anything is better than nothing. I just think Virgin should consider re-releasing some of its classic Frontline albums (not just the comps), and that Jayrem should renew its search for other labels unavailable here.

The second Virgin collection is as streetbeat as its predecessor, and will thus probably sell more on cassette than disc (a common factor in reggae releases here). Its trend towards sticky sweet lovers rock may leave some people cold (I could do with some more grit, if you knowarramean). Tops are Aswad's 'Kool Noh,' Beres Hammond's 'She Loves Me Now,' Tiger's 'No Puppy Love,' Maxi Priest's 'In the Springtime' and Shinehead's 'Who the Cap Fit.' Has Virgin got the rights to his LP? All the above tracks, save the last, are archetypal UK reggae — slick synthesised skanking. Shinehead stands alone here, his roots rapping showing promise.

The *Blasters* set contains tracks available on other Jayrem LPs released here. A nice touch is the inclusion of Aotearoa's 'Stand Up for Your People.' I've seen Jayrem titles listed in catalogues overseas, so exposure in this company will do them no harm. What I can't understand is why they put Bunny

Waller's picture on the cover. He doesn't appear anywhere on the album.

Duncan Campbell

Singles Bar

Jesse Johnson (featuring Sly Stone)

Crazy (A&M 12")

Yeah, it's been on these pages before. But this is a monster remix that really cuts the groove, a reminder of what a genius Sly Stone is, a true jam-master. Great picture of Sly on the back looking real good.

Janet Jackson

Control (A&M 12")

Beyond anything else, a great song of personal affirmation, no one is gonna push Janet ("That's Miss Jackson to you") around anymore. A cleaner and more interesting mix than the one on the album, and a cool dancer.

Billy Bragg

Greeting to the New Brunette

(Chrysalis 12")

A varied five-tracker from Britain's own voice of conscience, the duet with Hank Wangford on 'Deportee' has a very nice country feel, but it's the title track with lines like "celebrating my love for you, with a pint of beer and a new

tattoo" that should stir a few hearts.

Cameo

Word Up (Mercury 12")

Big hit and the best rock and roll single for ages. A bit from T Rex and even the Kinks' 'You Really Got Me' mixed up into a big funk cocktail. Larry Blackmon is a genius of the groove and has one of the best flat tops in the business.

Mantronix

Who Is It (10 Records)

The most exciting release this month from the duo with their fingers on the B-boy pulse. A slab of smart noise with an engaging if old fashioned rap style. More beats than a round with Boom Boom Mancini.

ZZ Top

ZZ Top Club (Warner Bros)

And they keep on coming. Another set of remixes from Jellybean and Billy Ham. I think I prefer the original version, but 'Legs' sounds great in this disco mix and 'Stages' benefits from the more upfront production.

Hunters and Collectors

Is There Anybody Out There?

(White Label 12")

A protest song about violence on TV, personally I reckon that's the best place for it. Nifty use of Elvis's 'Little Sister' riff and good horn lines make this memorable. Love the photo on the back, there's

nothing like a night down at the league club.

Anita Baker

Caught Up in the Rapture

(Elektra 7")

Taken from the tense and dramatic debut album for Ms Baker. Slightly too operatic for my tastes but truly a beautiful voice.

Trouble Funk

Good to Go (Island 12")

"Take me to the bridge — go ahead." Yes, the beat goes on, New York might hip-hop but Washington go-gos. Nothing wildly new but the rhythm still burns rubber.

Lou Reed and Sam Moore

Soul Man (A&M 12")

Never thought of Lou as a soul man, but he did want to be black once. But then again there's a lot more of Sam on this than Mr Lou, he just sorta mumbles "soul man" at the end of the chorus. Method Singing perhaps. The flip has a new Sly Stone thang that doesn't get out of gear.

Dolly Parton, Linda Ronstadt,

Emmylou Harris

To Know Him is to Love Him

(Warner Bros 7")

Three great country stylists sing like heaven on this Spector classic. Dolly has the purest country sound, but the more urban feel of the other two fit in. Certainly the best cover of the month.

Kerry Buchanan

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