

## Straight Talk

Apart from their financial state, the four founding members of Dire Straits had little in common with the punk storm which was sweeping England in the year of their formation, 1977. Brothers Mark and David Knopfler, John Illsley and Pick Withers must have seemed unlikely bets as the next big thing.

Mainman Mark Knopfler, in Auckland for the band's Western Springs show agrees. "It was almost by chance really. All of a sudden there was a vehicle to do my own songs. At the time I was playing in a rockabilly, R'n'B group called Cafe Racers. We used to play pubs in London. I never wanted to do any of my own songs with them, because they just weren't the right sort of band.

"It was hard work getting Dire Straits off the ground, but if you have the right bits and pieces, then you just have to keep plugging to make it happen. It's a lot of hassles to get together a band and keep it, but in our cases it was worth it."

Armed with a five-track

demo that included 'Wild West End' and 'Sultans of Swing', they went in search of a record deal.

"There was a lot of record company interest. We had to go and visit heaps of A & R men in their tacky little offices. We got turned down by quite a few before Polygram signed us."

The single, 'Sultans', was not immediately successful in England, but did well elsewhere.

"It's got a lot to do with the radio. In Britain, Radio One wouldn't play it because it had too many words. They relented once it became a hit in the rest of the world. In America at the time, most stations were a mixture of MOR and disco. Somehow, 'Sultans' got picked up by quite a few stations. While we were touring there the first time, we visited lots of stations hoping to promote proper rock records, band records."

Before the recording of the current Straits' album, *Making Movies*, Mark's brother Dave left the band.

"Dave's not really a rock and

roller. I think it was the prospect of making another album and then touring the world to promote it. He hates press conferences and record company hype.

"He was also having trouble musically. The parts of *Making Movies* that he would have to play are more complex than in the past. We worked ourselves to death in the last couple of years, and I think the prospect of doing it again was just too much. At the moment he's trying to be a record producer."

Why two new members?

Because of the keyboards on the album, we needed someone to do it live. That's where Alan Clark comes in. I wanted two keyboard players, but I got overruled, as Alan is more than adequate. Hal Lindes has replaced Dave, but at the same time created a role for himself.

Production credits on all three Straits' albums differ. *Making Movies* was produced by Jimmy Iovine, most noted for Petty's *Damn the Torpedoes*.

"We use different producers because I don't believe in finding a successful formula and sticking to it. I feel it is important to move forward. I very much enjoyed co-producing with Jimmy. I might even try it by myself next time."

Mark Phillips

### 25 Nix Win Six

25 Readers win CBS singles by Pop Mx (originated in Chch), Adam Ant (UK No. 1 album) Newmatics/Meemeees (on Ripper), Swingers (Australia No. 1), Ray Columbus (No. 1 in Australia 1964) and everyone's favourite Scots, The Associates (on Stunn).

The chosen ones are: Neil Madsen Kamo, Suzanne Elliott Dargaville, J.D. McTaggart, Barbara Beyda Three Kings, M. Harrison Milford, Jenny Iversen Christchurch, Floyd McGovern Miramar, Valerie Parkes Rotorua, M. Ralm Hamilton, Joe Tooman Helensville, Warren Strickett Henderson, Philip Regan New Plymouth, Andrew Goodchild Timaru, Nicholas Lawn Dunedin, Helen Montgomery New Plymouth, Candy Gravelle New Lynn, Tereena Smith Hillsborough, Roger Hallmond Hamilton, Robert TCV15 Christchurch, P. Underwood Paeroa, Mark Sim, Stephen Brougham Hastings, Dave Paris Palmerston North, Erin O'Leary Hastings, Hamish Cowey Greenlane.

# SINSEMILLA

## HAS BEEN HARD TO GET



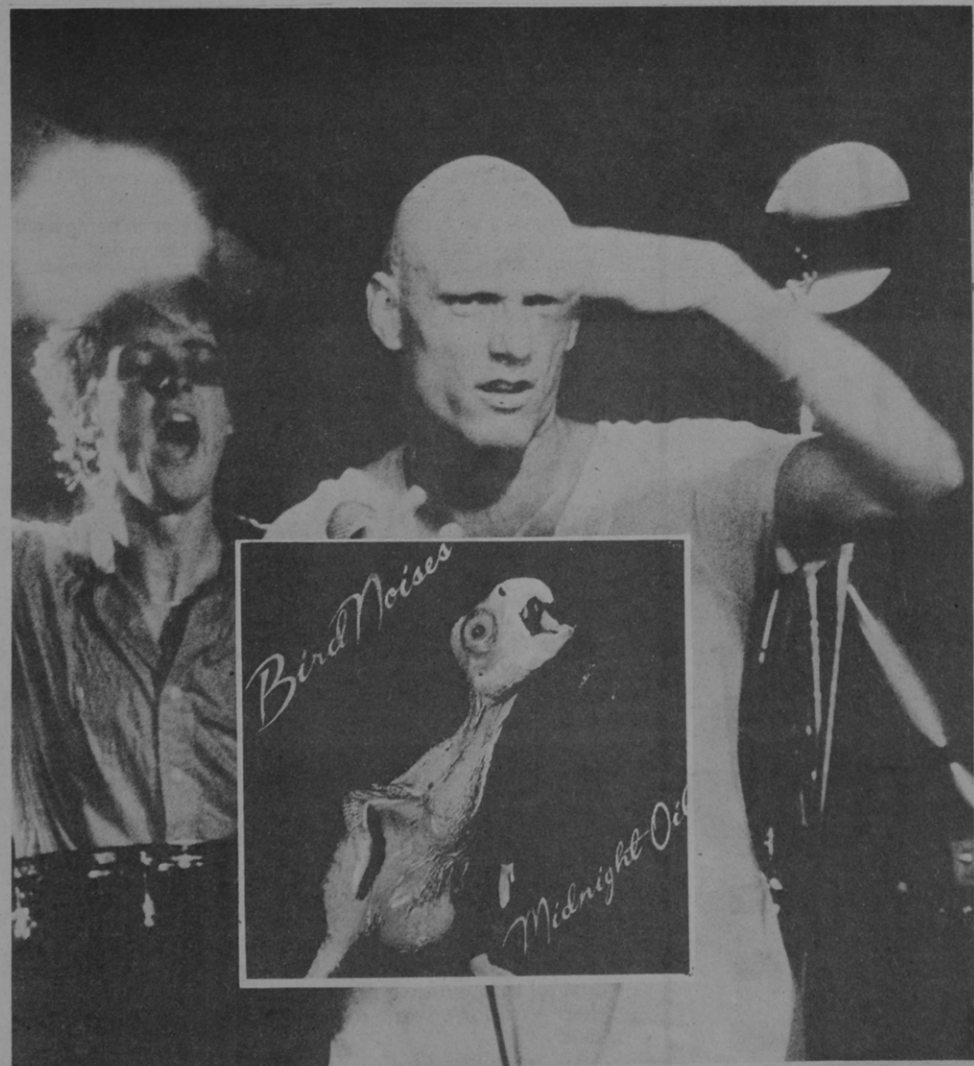
## BLACK UHURU

### THE NEW ALBUM



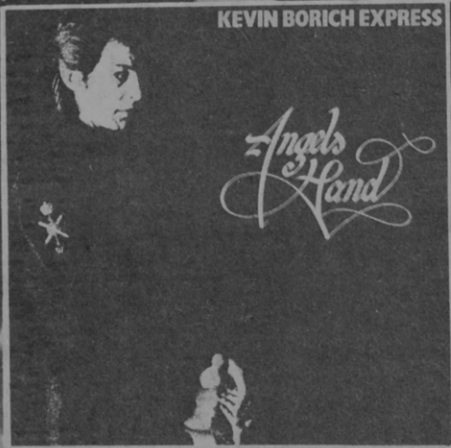
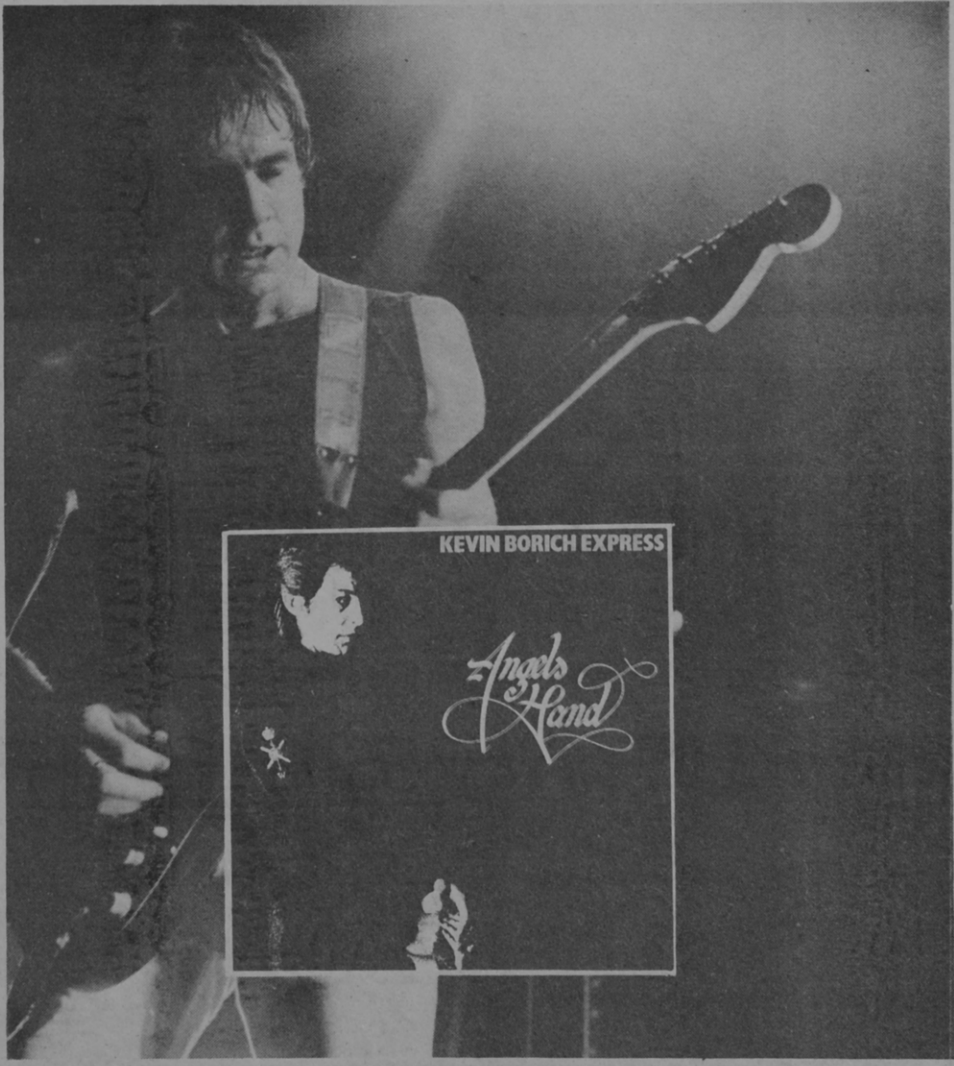
on Island Records  
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## MIDNIGHT OIL

### 'BIRD NOISES'



## KEVIN BORICH

### 'ANGEL'S HAND'