

retain some sort of perspective."

Dobbyn's debut solo single, 'Lipstick Power', was written in the dying days of Th' Dudes, and recorded straight after the split. Dobbyn and Ian Morris did it together with Rob Aitken, playing everything themselves. 'Bull By The Horns' was done the same way, so 'Repetition' was actually the first band single. It's the only one that will appear on the album, which is just being finished at Mandrill. For your information, it'll be entitled *Cool Bananas* (don't ask me why, I forgot to ask), and the next single will be called 'The Devil You Know'.

Dobbyn has several other things in mind, apart from a trip to Australia soon, to promote the band. He's sure that's where they'll end up. It's essential now, to survive.

"I'm confident about the album, I think it's great. It's good to be able to say that, because I didn't feel confident about the stuff I've done in the past. I liked the songs, but I didn't like the albums.

"There are other possibilities, too. I'd like to do an album of other types of tunes. I really like romantic, melodic music, piano-orientated ballads, very small production and very big production all on the one album. These would be songs that I couldn't use with D.D. Smash but could use on vinyl."

'Repetition' started out as a chord progression, with no lyrics apart from the auctioneer's call, which formed the base.

"At the time, the music business was on my mind. It'll always be a drag to me, unless I end up rolling in money, which I probably won't. But that was a drag at the time. In addition, I'm incapable of writing a song that doesn't relate to the love life I have at that particular time, or just friendships. So that song is a blend of the repetition used by the auctioneer, and the repetition in relationships, wanting to be loved the same way all the time, get routine, have a boring life without risks. It's probably a wee bit cynical for a pop song, and I've run into that around the country, as far as radio stations are concerned. There are only so many people in this country that they're going to make their money off, and that's not going to happen by playing an unknown quantity, which is what local product is."

Dobbyn suffers no illusions about the local state of the art, but he still thinks it's healthier than ever.

"It doesn't make sense as far as money is concerned, whether you're in music, theatre or poetry, or whatever. You're doing it because you love it. That's what I respect most of our performers for. I'm surprised there are so many people around doing what we're doing, and performing in other fields. I'm sure they can't pay their rent, because I can't. I'm overwhelmed by it, and I think it'll continue to get better and better.

"New Zealand music and New Zealand art won't stand for another slump. In the next five years, I'm sure it's all going to happen here, and people won't have to go abroad to prove themselves as being good. I mean, I know they are, I can go out any night of the week, see local theatre or a band, and know it'll be good.

"People are pissing in the wind when they say it's not good enough here. That's crap. It'll only get better with support, not 'Please can you support us', but 'Just come and listen to us, you bastards, we're good'."

Duncan Campbell

MICK JONES PART 2 - POLITICS

The Clash are political animals, and they make no apologies. Why should they? They grew up political victims, 'no future' was reality, not a cliché, and all had been on the dole by the time they reached their late teens. Austerity was a way of life, and such an existence breeds strong feelings. Hurt, anger, resentment.

With all that smouldering inside, you look for reasons, or at least symbols, of the forces that are working against you. In the Clash's case it was partly the police, but especially politicians, global warmongers. They wrote 'I'm So Bored With The USA' before they'd even been there. Why? Because America was right on their own doorstep, in most ominous forms.

"That song is about the Americanisation of Europe," says Mick Jones. "It's about all the McDonalds and Burger Kings that we've got. It's about the American deployment of nuclear missiles on our island, all these things that we don't want."

"It's about the way America pushes around small countries, like ours or any Central American country. It's not about being bored with the USA because America is a very exciting place to be. We weren't saying 'we're not going to go', we were talking about the American imperialist attitude."

"I couldn't wait to go to America. I first landed in San Francisco, and thought it was tremendous. It just opened my head up, totally. I was aware of the vastness of the place. Really, to see where you've come from, you have to go someplace else. Otherwise you wouldn't understand that the world didn't finish at the end of your street."

That broadening of outlook manifested itself in *Sandinista!* the album where Clash politics took on a more global view. The title was the name given to the underground resistance movement in Nicaragua, which overthrew the oppressive Somoza regime. Jones admits the gesture was misinterpreted by Clash fans.

"A lot of people didn't like *Sandinista!* because they didn't know what Sandinista was, and they were embarrassed because they had to ask their friends, or they had to find out, which was the idea. There was a media blanket covering the whole bloody thing, and people didn't even know there was a revolution there. We really wanted to have a title that was useful, for once. It was something that would draw people's attention to something that was going on at the time."

Well-meant sentiments, but misunderstood by some, nevertheless. A backlash, lead naturally by the NME, thought the Clash had become pompous and had turned their backs on what was happening in their own country. But Jones says this didn't last once the Clash returned to tour Britain last year.

"The people in Europe like to see us successful, because it

shows that there is a way out for some, especially in England. They'd like to see us more successful, because it shows you've got a chance. You've got three ways: you can be a boxer, a pop musician, or a footballer. Or you could be in the army, I suppose.

"You get stuck, and it can be very bleak in some places, especially up north. When we went back there and toured, I was thinking 'God, I'm from this place, I'm part of this'. They were so keen to see us, and I couldn't say there was any resentment, or anything like that. It touched us all."

Was Jones surprised at the riots in Britain last year?

"No, I wasn't surprised. Were you? I was surprised to see you had riots here. I think it's a fair indication of New Zealanders' attitude to fair play; I think it's very commendable."

"The difference is, it wasn't about apartheid in England. It was about the poor being up to their necks in shit, and it's just beginning to come up to their mouths, they're about to drown in it. And it was not only black people who were rioting. The media have tried to make it into a racist thing, because the English media is basically racist, the Tory press is incredibly so. They talk about sending people home if they're not English, and things like that."

"It's important to say that it wasn't just the black people who were doing the rioting, there were a lot of white people as well. In Liverpool, on the Royal wedding day, the police started charging the rioters in their jeeps. They killed this young kid who couldn't get out of the way, because he was a cripple. He was a white kid, and he just couldn't get out of the way."

So if the feeling was there back in '76, when you started out, why did it take so long to erupt?

"I think it needed a catalyst, like Mrs Thatcher. The raging cow."

"In New Zealand, as far as I can gather, people seem to have some kind of harmony, they're able to co-exist. That seems to have been the good thing about the anti-apartheid demonstrations here. It shows that there are a lot of people that care about peaceful co-existence, and were prepared to use love, backed by force."

Those last few words describe well the Clash's attitude towards their audience. They love their fans, but they also want to shock them, to force them into thinking about what's going on around them, and also about their own potential.

"We really feel our songs, and to sing them is a piece of guts, not just a marketing ploy. It's life, it's an experience, and if we can just reach a handful of them, maybe some really creative people will come out of that. And even those who aren't reached in that way might be reached in another manner, like they'll have had a great time, and there's nothing wrong with that."

Mick Jones is serious. He really believes he has something to offer. Others believe this too. Does he resent hero worship?

"People need a leader, but I don't want to be it. I'm still looking for someone who's got enough grey matter."

By the way, for those of you who were interested, the organ music played when the Clash first came on stage was a piece called '60 Seconds To Watch'. It was written by Ennio Morricone for the Clint Eastwood film *For A Few Dollars More*.

Duncan Campbell



...BRING THE MUSCATO"

