

# New Wave Bands Come Out Against Briggs

## PUNKS FOR GAYS

by Clark Peterson

"Senator Briggs wants everybody to be just like him," sneered Hank Rank, drummer for the punky "other wave" band Crime. "He has a right to want that, but we're against him trying to use the government to force his fucked-up ideas on the rest of society."

Crime is one of about six bands (including the Liars, Readymades, Offs, DV8 and Crispy Baby) who will play a benefit against the Briggs' Initiative Prop. 6, which will appear on November's state ballot. The benefit, which will also feature a film of the Mutants and Cramps at Napa State Mental Institution, will be held Sept. 11, at the Mabuhay Gardens (443 Broadway, S.F.). Tickets are \$3.50.

A few months ago, Crime refused to participate in another benefit at the Mabuhay, that one for striking mine workers. At the time they were quoted as saying, "Mine workers are just assholes who drive around in Cadillacs," but now they say there were misquoted and really were talking about railroad workers.

In any case, guitarist-vocalist Frankie Fix admitted that Crime was not the least interested in the miners' plight. "They would never go dig for an extra week so we could get out our new record," Fix snickered.

"This Briggs issue hits closer to home than the miners' benefit," Rank said, returning to the subject. "People have always

suppressed us as individuals and as a band. We're against suppression of any kind, and we think Briggs and his supporters are ghouls for bringing this dead issue to life. Who cares about sexual preference any more, anyway?"

Apparently some hard-core homophobes care, because a benefit planned for the anti-Briggs cause on Sept. 3 at Kezar Stadium had to be cancelled. "The organizer had the place

the guy received death threats, his apartment was broken into, his desk was rifled and his office was destroyed. They didn't take any money, they just wanted to disturb him. When he got calls telling him to cancel the show, he did."

"I talked to the guy," Strike added, "and he told me he's so fed up with gay politics, he's ready to turn straight. Can you imagine going to that extreme?"

Though much about the band seems to be a pose, underneath another pose, Crime seems to be serious about the gay cause. They say they want to pay back the gay community for supporting them since their inception, and this benefit is their "thank you."

"It's 1978," said Fix, "I can't believe we're even talking about being gay. It's like how black people used to be talked about and discriminated against. People are real slow. We're all sexual beings and that's all there is to it."

Another musician who takes a serious stance is Liars lead singer Dennis Kerr. He wants to show people the positive side to punk rock, a side he feels the established media has neglected, but his main thrust is for human rights.

"I don't like the idea that people can't teach in the schools because they're gay," he said in disgust. "It's a starting point because it could lead to kids not watching TV and restrictions on a lot more occupations. In a logical progression it threatens me; it could get more radical



Johnny Strike of Crime

rented all day and had 20 to 25 rock bands lined up," said Johnny Strike, Crime's other guitarist-vocalist. "People like Lily Tomlin and Leslie Gore were calling in to headline. Then



Dave Patrick

Liar Dennis Kerr: Showing the positive side to punk rock.

until people say, 'You can't put out your music because our kids will listen to it and you threaten us.'"

The benefit, which is expected to raise \$1000 to be distributed by San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk to anti-Prop. 6 movements in Northern California, is not expected to make much of a difference, however. The money is a drop in the bucket compared to the finances of the pro-Briggs backers, and many gays are already conceding defeat. "All of us think it's going to pass by a huge landslide," admitted Howie Klein, a San Francisco writer and gay activist.

Indeed, in the wake of similar measures around the country passing by 2 to 1 margins, the outlook is bleak. The pendulum of public opinion has apparently swung against gays.

"Ten years ago, people would have been up in arms and the initiative wouldn't even have been voted on," said Kerr. "But people are very apathetic these days."

Apathy at the polls would probably be welcomed by the pro-Briggs forces, for, as it's often been said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

# Vinyl Harvest

by Clark Peterson

This week's fare ranges in quality from Moe Koffman's excellent **Museum Pieces** to Cockrell & Santos' disappointing **New Beginnings**. The albums were rated on a scale of one to ten points: 10 points for perfection and one point for a total disaster. No LP reached the heights of 10 or sank as low as one merely because every disc was round with the required hole in the center.

**MOE KOFFMAN: Museum Pieces** (Janus). This is a flawless display of instrumental prowess -- rarely heard these days. Koffman, an invigorating flautist, has assembled an extraordinary package of jazz that goes down like greased yogurt. The LP's concept is ancient history, but that is merely a vehicle for the cover art and not the music. Canada's best-known jazz musician should perk up many Yankee ears with this gem. **Nine points.**



Harry Champlin: Ghetto soul from Marin

**BILL CHAMPLIN: Single** (Epic). The long-time leader of the defunct Sons of Champlin has gone solo. He tries to outfunk Tower of Power and even has a jivey song called "Yo' Mama." Similar to Boz Scaggs, Champlin also uses musicians associated with Scaggs. The result is a clean-sounding LP, setting unrequited love lyrics to formula funk, and often grunted in a cliched, "get down" fashion. If you like ghetto soul from a Marin County white

boy (an inside-out Oreo), this is for you. **Six points.**

**THE DIRT BAND** (United Artist). The problem with these Rocky Mountain High Men, chirping about how great it is in Colorado, is that they're so low-key they lack excitement. They skillfully play a multitude of instruments, harmonize like a nest of sapsuckers, and deftly handle each genre. Mickey Thomas, the amazing vocalist who recently quit the Elvin Bishop band, could have been the needed punch here but only sings for a few seconds while "For a Little While" fades out. A pleasant album, but John Denver lives too close to these guys for their own good. **Seven points.**

**DAVID GATES: Goodbye Girl** (Elektra). The lead singer for Bread mellows out here with mushy MOR (middle of the road) tripe amidst some decent stuff. Gates summons memories of Bread hits "Make it With You" and "Guitar Man" when he sings softly, and that may be good for making the Top 40 charts but will alienate rock fans. Fortunately, Gates has balanced such songs as the title tune, the theme song from the Neil Simon movie of the same name, with ballsier numbers using such famed session people as Jim Gordon, Larry Knechtel, David Lindley, Larry Carlton and Jim Horn. This helps, but the album sinks from the weight of sappy love songs. **Sniff, sniff. Five points.**

**BOSTON: Don't Look Back** (Epic). Boston has become a supergroup by combining simple, melodic riffs played on heavy guitars with Brad Delp's scrotum-straining vocals and lyrics by Tom Scholz designed for adolescents. Scholz masterminds the whole thing from producing and arranging down to engineering and mixing, not to mention providing the screaming lead guitar.

The result is high energy, commercial music that kids swallow

like fudgesicles -- snack music you eat with your ears. **Seven points.**

**COCKRELL & SANTOS: New Beginnings** (A&M). A husband/wife duo from Santa Rosa, Bud Cockrell and Pattie Santos have staked their claim with eunuchoid AM radio. This is far too wimpy for a progressive rock station like KSAN, especially since two of the songs are funky disco dreck. The singing by both Cockrell (formerly with Pablo Cruise) and Santos (ex-It's a Beautiful Day) is often affected. Not even Jaco Pastorius, Flora Purim or Eye-Ear-Toe Moreira can save this one. **Four points.**

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: Hotels, Motels and Road Shows** (Capricorn). A worthwhile sampler of southern bands highlighted by Wet Willie, Sea Level, Gregg Allmand and Elvin Bishop. Double, live set. **Eight points.**

**THE BOPPERS** (Fantasy). The best thing about the Boppers is their '20s zoot suits. This honky finds it hard to relate to their Afro Sheen sound, although they'd be a hit on Soul Train. Some good jazz in "The Visit (Stary)" but the rest is mostly soul and formula funk. **Five points.**

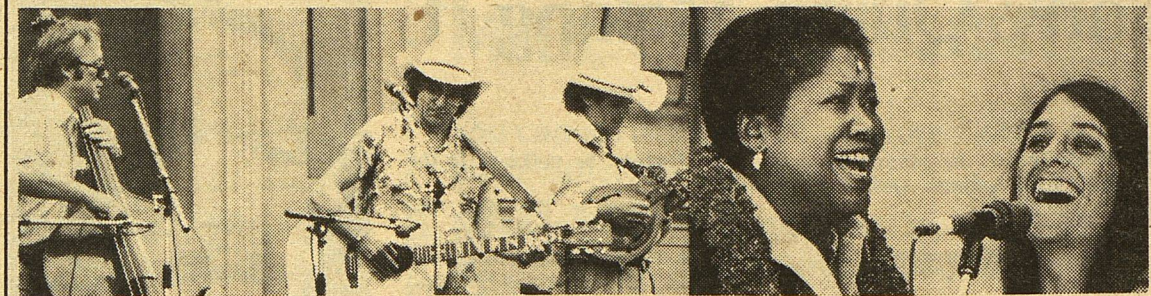
**GERRY RAFFERTY AND JOE EGAN: Stuck in the Middle with You** (A&M). This is a best of Stealers Wheel anthology from the group's three albums--released now that Rafferty has what may be the song of the year in "Baker Street." Naturally, all dozen songs here pale by comparison, even though they're hunky dory in their own right. **Seven points.**

**FANDANGO: Last Kiss** (RCA). Another album that cannot live up to its superb cover art (sensuous red lips), although it will

grow on you if you give it a chance. Lead vocalist Joe Turner and the band both sound like Bad Co. and Lynyrd Skynyrd. **Seven points.**

**JOHN KLEMMER Arabesque** (ABC). Woody Allen told Paul Simon in Annie Hall that when he gets too mellow, he tends to ripen and then rot. Tenor saxist John Klemmer gets too mellow here but staves off fermentation with some decent jazz, backed by drummer Lenny White and percussionist Eye-Ear-Toe. **Seven points.**

**KINGFISH: Trident** (Jet). Hur-ray! An album without disco, funk, schmaltz or mega-decibels! This Bay Area band, which briefly included the Dead's Bob Weir in 1975, has evolved their own style of basic rock and roll. The blues harp (actually a "harp-olek") is always scrumptious. **Eight points.**



Photos by Dave Patrick



## Bread & Roses

The Second Annual Bread & Roses Music Festival held over Labor Day weekend proved once again that music doesn't have to be loud to be heard -- or get its message across. The three-day acoustic celebration packed 'em into UC Berkeley's Greek Theatre, with dazzling performances by Jerry Lawson of the Persuasions (center) and Joni Mitchell with Herbie Hancock (left). The impromptu jams between musicians including Stephen Stills, Ramblin' Jack Elliot and Peter Rowan (upper left) and Odetta, and Bread & Roses founder Mimi Farina were another highlight.