

SINGLE OF THE WEEK!

SOUL SIDE: Bass 103 (Dischord)
Funking and stropky like a bulldog with a raging stiffy, Soul Side have their hearts on their sleeves and their fists clenched into tight little balls. Verging on the ground of political industrial funk cornered by The Beatnigs, these four white boys launch into what at first listening appears to be a fairly routine condemnation of South Africa—a topic so well covered by pinko popsters that it almost verges on the safe.

But listen harder. These American boys are singing:

"(This) nation's capital is like a little South Africa... Rise and burn the eyes of the rulers..." It's like when Billy Connolly walked onstage at the Nelson Mandela birthday bash and said: "This one's for Danny Mandela in Long Kesh." This record makes the right musical and musical connections.

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BEETHOVEN: Him Goolie Man, Dem (Santana)

Dem's back! The reincarnation of the face-biting incarnation rock chaos that once was known as Five Go Down To The Sea. And they have not let us down. The centrestone of this jewel of a record is the kidnapping, tarring and feathering, mugging, shagging and destruction of 'Day Tripper'. When the insane Donnelly screeches "I've got a good reason! For taking the easy way out!" You look round rapidly for the exits only to find them all blocked by mad dog-eyed boys from county Cork with evil lopsided grins and dreadful haircuts.

To take the ultimate acid anthem and drink it to death is no mean feat. Tense, nervous headcase? Yes, one fuelled by a dangerous mixture of LSD spiked with DDT and enough of the black stuff to keep the Guinness family in the top 10 potential 'napping victim's list for decades.

Of the other tracks 'Jehovah's Wombles' will strike fear into the hearts of anyone who has awoken screaming after dreaming sweatily about being visited by Orinoco and Uncle Bulgaria waving copies of *The Watchtower* and demanding your kidneys. Messy, messy.

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JOHN TRUBEE: Blind Man's Penis (The Only Label In The World)

Lurking behind the totally tearjerking headmashingly dull sort of C&W which is all too often blasted from the NME Chad Valley Record Player by the lovers of wanky twanging angst who lurk in its mouldiest corners in their long-haired scores (editing the *News* and *Video* pages etc) is a track of awesome spacey noxiousness. A "wierdo" phones up a motel and books a room. He proceeds to ask the clerk some "questions":

"Do you allow youngsters to urinate on the floor if they smash bullfrogs on the head with sledgehammers?"

There's a stunned silence on the other end of the phone. Then:

"Eh... I don't know..."
"If I went to the bathroom and I find 11 bullfrogs gagging on balls of hair, could I deessicate them and eat their internal organs?" and so on.

The questions get stranger, the sound effects and voice distortion increase as the phoner reveals his extra-terrestrial origins. The motel clerk, of course, couldn't give a toss as long as the alien pays in cash. Only in America. Or possibly the West Midlands. If this had a fast enough backbeat it would almost definitely be the first Angel Dust House classic. HIT IT! HIT WHAT! HIT ANYTHING!

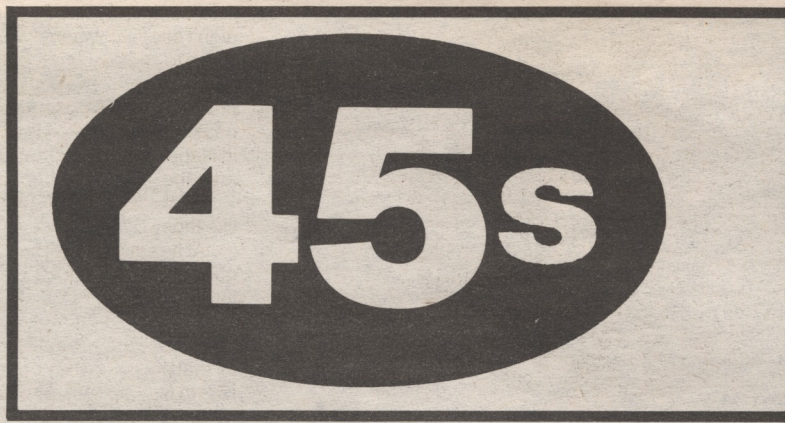
YOU SUCK: You Suck (The Only Label In The World)

An awesomely gruesome porno pic of a woman aching and achomping a distinctly Clint Poppie style little maggot indicates that this is not the new Tiddlywinks 'Anoraked By Love' EP we have been waiting for. You Suck are a poxy New York art band with about 50 members who storm along on the title track playing: Electric pencils! Gargling! Vacuum cleaners! Nailfiles! Balloons! Juggling! Typewriters! Rubik's cubes! Nails on a blackboard! and sign language. The lyrics are almost sublime in their simplicity:

"SUCK-SUCK SUCK SUCK SUCK SUCK—Who SUCKS! Your mother SUCKS—your father SUCKS—YOUR WHOLE FAMILY SUCKS!"

All of which begs the question—sucks what? Is this an attack on the bad habit increasingly prevalent among American children of merely sucking their food rather than giving it the good 50 chews it really needs for proper digestion? This is what punk rock is all about.

Forget, for a moment, the latent

**REVIEWED BY STEVEN WELLS**

cock rock popstar dickhead macho posturings of The Pistols and their ilk, and think of the Skiffle Punk of The Mekons 'Never Been In A Riot', The Part-Time Punks, The O-Levels, Jilted John and even, hell's bells, the UK Subs doing 'I Live In A Carboard (sic) Box'. The B-side is entitled 'Get The F— Off The Stage'.

KEITH LEVENE: I'm Looking For Something (TAANG)

Camouflaged behind a truly abysmal title track is the unworrdly Cops Too which features drumming reminiscent of the noise made by Nigel Lawson awaking to find himself buried in a steel coffin, crazy metal

machine invented to serve the spiritual needs of humanity would be to go back to 1968 and assassinate David Bowie. Andi sings in a really dreadful mockney accent *a la* the bloke from Sailor with the eyepatch who sang "A leetle glass owf champagne-ya!" Except not as funny. Andi is the cockernee equiv of ver Manc Smiffy. Except not as funny.

I had that Meester Bloodvessel in the back of a dressing room once where he bagged my "stash" of incredible rolling tobacco. He stuck the lot into one huge rolie which he rammed up his copious nostril and inhaled with one almighty stonk. Good to see he still hasn't come down.

final transition from pouting leatherboy to the thinking woman's expectorant. I mean, who in their right mind wants to become Billy Joel? It's dead ironic—a savage whine about how dreadful it is getting paid vast woggles for writing pop ditties. Very similar in theme to Dire Straits' 'Money For Old Rope'. So similar, in fact, that it shares the same tune. SHOULD BE A BIGGY!

BLUE WORLD: Hello Darling (Anagram)

I was having this massive argument with Divia, who is Indian British, about certain aspects of Indian culture. I reckoned that any religion

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JESUS JONES: Never Enough (Food)

What I like most about Nigel from Jesus Jones' vocals is the way he goes "Gasp! Grunt!" and then follows up with a delightful little Home Counties whine at the end of each phrase. Shit but this is a great record. Nigel has his voice constantly at that razor edge between singing and screaming as he roars out another bitter and spiked lyric which sounds terribly impressive but is actually about nothing very much at all.

It doesn't scrape the clouds in the way 'Info Freako' did and one feels they're going to be living in the shadow of that masterpiece for a long time. Jesus Jones are the legendary synthesis between Beatlepop, early '80s gurdy pop and goddamn awful punk rock. Their use of hip-hop technology is unsurpassed. If Public Enemy worked with the young Phil Spector they might sound this good—but I doubt it.

'Never Enough' works at many levels but it's most immediate effect is to smack you between the eyes like a demented Buzzcock. Imagine a terminally sick-from-cynicism Pete Shelley personalising a Duranduran Greatest Hits LP with a Black & Decker power hammer. Groovy.

git-ARRRRRR. Pretty damn fine sorta dance music thing. God, working with that fat, reactionary, beer-swilling, ginger-haired pillock must really do your head in. And the sirens! Did I mention the sirens?

PROWLER: Prowling Death Squad (New Renaissance)

Prowler! Spikes! Rivets! Thrash! Annihilation! Serpents! Devastation! Hatred! Anarchy! "Faggots?" "Uzi wielding scum?" "Red White and Blue?" Bullshit! Macho wank! And if you reeeally want to kill people so much, boys, you should seriously think about getting those stupid poodle haircuts seen too. I mean, not very US Marine Corps are they? Thank God for incredibly stupid people with access to cheap recording studios, you keep me ALIVE!

THE BUSTERS: Rude Girl (Unicorn)

ANDI SEX GANG: Assassin Years (Jungle)

BAD MANNERS: Skaville UK (Bluebeat)

Wharra hoot. A West German ska band who've taken their name from Mr Nee Nee Na Na Noo Noo! A bit like forming a soul band called Rowlands you might think. Aw hell, let's face it, ska was a lot of fun the second time round and this current ongoing blight of jerking pork pie-hatted clowns is nothing if not hilarious. Ska with a German accent has to be heard to be believed and no matter how they try The Busters cannot help but sound like a vimmed up oompah band. Which is exactly as it should be.

Also jumping in with a slap of skasploitation is Andi (what a stoopid name). People like "Andi" are living proof that the first use of any time

LES NEGRESSES VERTES: Zobi La Mouche (Rhythm King)

After the heights attained by 'Jo Le Taxi' the world was left stunned and breathless. A good French pop record! The laws of physics had been turned on their heads. Thousands flocked to rejoin the Catholic church. A chip shop owner in Huddersfield reported that a wormy piece of cod (you can see them wriggling about if you take the skin off and hold it up to the light) spoke to him claiming to be St Francis of Assisi and foretelling of much Gallic pop glory anyway.

"E tasted bloody revolting I can tell you," said Mr Eli Jennings. But lo! And so it has come to pass! A second great French pop single in the space of a year! Roll over Johnny Halliday and stay rolled over. Whatever next? A plague of East German comedians? A blight of Swiss limbo dancers? A pox of couth Aussies?

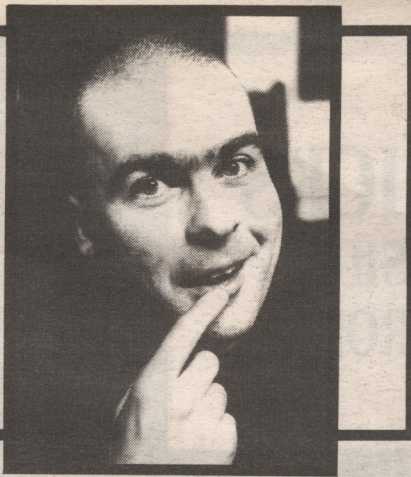
Cackling like Monsewer Sid James and bopping like Vinny Jones layered up at Annabelles, the Green Black Women shout in very loud voices about shit and vomit and knobs over a humdinging mish mash of Rai and 57 varieties of deeeeeesco. One day the Poppies will pig out on World Music and sound nothing like this. One day France will be the world's main manufacturer of pop music and then you'll be sorry.

The reason 'Zobi' is so strong is because it sucks in phrases and styles from every bugger without giving a damn about 'purity'. Exactly the opposite reason why the French language is so crap, actually.

Distinctly unstunted pop music.

JOHN COUGAR MELLENCAMP: Pop Singer (Mercury)

John Pussycat Melonhead makes the



sequinned axminster? I mean, after all the acres of music press interviews that painted Natalie Merchant and Paul Heaton as slaving devil dogs set to save the world from SAW I expected something a little more memorable than this. I've played both records half a dozen times each and now I'm going to try and hum one of them:

"HMMMMMM... er... la... no... diddy um der la..." See? It can't be done. This is not the sort of stuff the students currently kicking seven shades of shit out of Chinese State Capitalism are going to have blasting out of their Walkmans is it? Hence the wall slogans recently spotted on Beijing's Marco Polo bridge: HEATON NEEDS SAW LIKE A RUNNING DOG NEEDS A LONGER LEASH! and NATALIE FOR MAO'S SAKE WOMAN! CALL YOURSELF THE DAUGHTER OF 10,000 MANIACS?! MORE LIKE A THOUSAND BLINDLY RUNNING PUPPIES!

Yo summertime! And time for the Men That Should Be Hung to deliver a hunky, juicy cross between 'Holiday In The Sun' and 'The Chicken Song'. Or perhaps not.

The Junior Manson Slags are a disgrace to a great name. What is the point going into a studio unless you've got something at least moderately original or exciting to say? Do these people have money to burn?

BORIS GREBENSHIKOV: Radio Silence (CBS)

At first I grasped this record eagerly to my breast praying that Grebenshikov is Russian for "grebo". It isn't, it's Russian for "crap". All right, so they got Glasnost. Does that mean that every dodgy malchick with a flared trouser leg and a Wasp synth is going to have his clichéd mumblyings thrust upon the people of the West? Perhaps this is all part of the CIA/MI5 plot to sabotage *detente*.

CLANNAD: In A Lifetime (RCA)

Featuring guest vocals by BONO! I will be fair. I will not let the fact that Clannad have invited onto their record the biggest dickhead in popular music influence my opinion one way or another.

This record is total shite. No. Stupendously bland. Then Bono joins in and it takes a sudden nosedive.

It's his voice that really has me rushing for front row seats at the all-nite vomitorium. The FAKE emotional padding would have most pub singers blushing with shame. This record is a musical platitude.

U2: 3D Dance Mixes (Island)

Donny Osmond: Soldier Of Love (Virgin)

Two great remixes by two great pop singers who have done more to introduce me to the bliss of sacred worship than any others. In a very real way this 'Crazy Horses' style treatment of 'When Love Comes To Town' by Bono symbolises for me what rock 'n' roll, at its best, is all about. Bono's graceful vocals are really worked to the full limits of his range here, at one stage, you'd almost swear he was a large black man with the silt of the ole Mississippi sloshing about in his lungs.

In a very real way Donny's Bonoesque reworking of his post-Marie classic proves that these days we're definitely getting more Mormon for our money. The B-side features a heartwarming duo by the talented pair.

"I'm a little bit groovy!" sings Donny.

"I'm absolutely farkin magic!" croons Bono. I felt myself starting to cry. Cry because in a very real way Donny and Bono are 'Soldiers Of Love'. Soldiers of God's love for me and you and the dogs and rabbits and trees.

THE TRIFFIDS: Goodbye Little Boy (Island)

Where I come from Trifs are seven foot tall alien shrubs that catch and kill blind people for fun and food. Where The Triffs come from they are a seriously overrated pop band capable, presumably, of exciting the average rock hack into a state of near orgasm with the wishest and wishest dribblings this side of a Matt Johnson press release. BO-RING.

VIXEN: Love Made Me (EMI USA)

According to Terry, Vixen is the German word for "wanking". It is in England too. Or it is now.

ROBIN SCOTT'S M: Pop Musik (Freestyle)

A timely '89 remix (lest we forget the very basis of our precarious pop existence). Banal, trite, disposable, trashy and camp. Damn near the perfect pop record.

"Wanna be a gunslinger don't be a popsinger." Yeah!

YEAH!