

# The great political swindle

Jonathan Mann

*Drapeau*, by Brian McKenna and Susan Purcell, Clarke Irwin and Co. 392 pp. \$15.95.

Originally elected on a law and order platform, he governs Canada's organized crime capital. Once a fierce Quebec nationalist, and protege to national hero Abbe Lionel Groulx, he refused to take sides in the recent referendum. The head of an administration rocked by scandal and filled with corruption, his personal reputation remains above reproach

among his constituents.

He is Jean Drapeau, Mayor of Montreal. His career spans some of the greatest monuments Canada has ever known—Expo '67 and the '76 Olympic Games—as well as some of its shoddiest political intrigues.

*Drapeau*, by former journalists Brian McKenna and Susan Purcell, chronicles both aspects of the honourable mayor's career in a lively tone which makes for enjoyable reading the whole way through.

The authors clearly share the city's fascination with the man. Just as the city's voters can never quite stop themselves from renewing his (eternal) mandate, no matter what scandals greet them from the newsstands, so the authors cannot help but like him.

Machiavellian politics and demagogic theatrics aside, he's a lovable rogue. While there are more than enough of the lurid details of his career to please the mayor's critics, you're anything

but angry as you turn the last pages. Like all their neighbours, the authors are too charmed to be outraged.

While yielding to their subject's personal appeal would condemn most political biographies to the trash bin, any follower of Drapeau's career knows his curious charisma. It is the mayor's greatest achievement (and the book's most telling feature) that even his biographers cannot escape its influence.

## Records...Peters and Parkers

**Peter Green**  
**Little Dreamer**  
(Attic)

Those mellow, low-key, drifts blues just make you close your eyes, lie back and—if you listen long enough—you might just fall into a deep, deep sleep. (Insomniacs take note.)

Peter Green's latest solo LP is appropriately titled *Little Dreamer*. It's smooth, lazy, easy listening and completely lacks the vitality and soul-searching of vintage Green blues.

Once upon a time Green was the heart of a gutsy British blues band named Fleetwood Mac, who grew up without him to become a (sappy, if you like) California pop band. Well Green, to his credit, has stuck with the blues, and without doubt, remains a masterful exponent of the genre's lyric and riff.

This is particularly evident on such cuts from the new album as "Born Under A Bad Sign" and "Cryin' Won't Bring You Back" which feature clean, moving guitar lines neatly complimenting Green's lamenting lyrics. Both these songs are standard blues all the way, and are solidly indicative of what Green does best.

But *Little Dreamer* is not an innovative blues album. It offers nothing new to the stagnancy and redundancy that is predominant in blues music today.

It is disappointing that Green, who is fully capable of change and innovation, has put out such a static work.

The album is fine to listen to when you're not in the mood to concentrate or "get right into" what you're listening to. It would have made the top ten in the '70s.

Tony Farrell



Blue Peter meet The Hand in seedy barroom.

**The Human League**  
**Travelogue**  
(Virgin/Polygram)

*Travelogue* is the last human prayer from within an unfriendly city of synthesizers. This is 21st-century music whose rock ancestors are Iggy Pop and Gary Glitter, not Buddy Holly and Little Richard.

Human league don't write songs, they construct sad, beautiful, little symphonies. The instrument line-up is strictly synthesizers and vocals—no guitar, bass, or drums. Oh yes, one member is credited with slides and films.

Yes, Bowie, you've created quite a monster.

Elliott Lefko

**Trooper**  
(MCA)

Having been a Trooper fan for many years I was sad to find that their latest effort, titled simply *Trooper*, is a step down from earlier works. With the exception of three cuts ("Real Canadians", "Dump That Creep", and "Volunteer Victims"), this album has not much to offer. It has little life and still less promise, and

appears to be suffering from the absence of Randy Bachman, the group's original producer who Trooper broke away from after the success of their *Hot Shots*.

I can only hope that a future effort will return Trooper to their old style, producing quality lyrics and music that will keep their fans cheering and the record stores smiling. This album just doesn't cut it.

You'd better find Bachman, fellows...and fast!

Lloyd Wasser

**Graham Parker**  
**High Times**  
(Polygram)

Graham Parker cannot seem to break the North American market. His last album, *Up the Escalator*, was his worst effort ever. Yet it sold better than any previous effort. *High Times* is a collection of his greatest studio hits. Ironically some of the best cuts are from *Squeezing Out Sparks*, his 1979 release that should have been the album to break North America.

Parker's brand of striking rock and roll is shown on cuts like "Don't Ask Me Questions" and "Howlin' Wind", the kinds of tunes that leave Dylan and Springsteen panting at the song-writing starting gate.

Elliott Lefko

**Rough Trade**  
**Avoid Freud**  
(True North/CBS)

There was a time when Rough Trade could inspire hysteria. Their celebration of the erotic, made manifest in the on-stage antics of lead singer Carol Pope, was well-known all through Toronto's bar circuit.

That time, it would seem, has passed and Rough Trade have become 'produced'. Their new album, *Avoid Freud*, sounds like

it's been through therapy. The new tunes have a clean, controlled sound. Depravity gives way to delicacy. It's obvious that they've spent a lot of time in the studio, losing the edge from their angst.

The music, let it be clear, is still Rough Trade at its best—it's just a new approach. Most of the cuts are immediately catchy. But for those of us who've seen their live act, the first reaction is mildly disappointing. We like them sad and sick. Now, the Trade has gone the way of us all, and turned young Toronto trendy. We're all victims of fashion...

P.S. Contrary to the vicious rumours, the cover photo of Carol Pope is not Billy Joel.

Jon Mann

**Blue Peter**  
**Radio Silence**  
(Ready Records)

This second album from the local Blue Peter is a well-packaged, hard-rocking disc that is deserving of some repeated listenings. However, because they're still developing they show the influences of other artists, especially some new wave ones in the keyboards and vocals of singer Paul Humphrey. "I Walk Alone" is a thumping, shaking number reminiscent of early Ultravox, "Take Me To War" echoes Bryar Ferry on his slowed-down best.

Although these influences are present the group shows enough good playing and enough stylings to go beyond that. Credit should be extended for the album concept of young men entering and experiencing a war. As the group continues to evolve and take on the scars of battle they'll find that they really have something to sing about.

Elliott Lefko

**Lobster's choice**

There will be a Design Process Seminar this Saturday at 9:00 a.m. in Curtis "L". If you are interested, and able to wake up that early, and willing to miss *The Jetsons*, then make sure you're there.

Sophisticated cinema come to York at last. The Russ Meyer Film Festival begins Friday at 8:30 p.m. in S137 Ross with the classic *Vixen*. Make sure you see this film, often compared to such celebrated celluloid as *Teenage Nympho Pinball Repairgirls* and *Six Men, Four Women, And A Leather-Clad Goat*. The series runs Fridays until February 13. The price is \$2.50 per flick. Raincoats not provided.

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