

THE ALARM CHANGE I.R.S.

RJ

The first thing I think of whenever I hear this group is how much they remind me of a better known band of similar origins, namely U2. But unlike the aforementioned, who have become more of what they once were, The Alarm appears to be quite dedicated to the spirit they brought across the Big Pond in their earlier releases.

Firstly, these guys aren't trying to be too elaborate in presentation. The music consists of simple, but hardworking guitar, supplemented with unimposing bass, drums and keyboard - and oh, I almost forgot, in one tune, the Welsh Symphony Orchestra. Vocals are quite gripping and easily get the point across, when that is, there is a point to be made.

The songs themselves seem to fall into two categories, one good, one bad. Just to get the bad out of the way, the opening tune, *Sold Me Down the River*, which by-the-by is also out in single, is pale and whining and no doubt destined for forty recognition. Other tracks such as *Devolution*, *Workin' Man Blues*, *Love Don't Come Easy*, *Change* etc. are paltry, seedy songs which reek of an

overindulgence in pop folk/CW/blues.

I don't want to taint the album entirely though. There are some excellent tunes in here. Real emotion comes through in *The Rock, Hardland, Black Sun* and *Where a Town Once Stood* to name a few. The vocals are penetrating and passionate, with a solid beat that demands some volume in listening. One ballad, *No Frontiers*, is quite pleasing and lacks the sticky feeling of the lesser songs of the type tossed into the album.

The last tune in the collection, *A New South Wales*, makes a clean and sincere statement with the aid of choral and orchestral backing, and is a nice reflection that the band hasn't lost touch with themselves.

The overall picture is good, but needs some edition. Why they insisted on putting in some of the weaker songs is beyond me when they can and do offer more talented pieces. Earlier releases left me with a much greater feeling of honesty and "hey, let's do some tunes" that a lot of bands have lost or never had. Lets just hope The Alarm isn't setting themselves up for a rise to stardom, selling their souls and most of their talent on the way.

Banana pies in your eyes.

No Effects to Showcase at C.O.C.A.

MEATMEISTER RICH RENAUD POPS ANOTHER CONCEPT ON THE MEAT SKILLET TO SEE HOW IT SIZZLES!!!!!!

- Like Zowie Uncle Stevie I'm glad that I was able to reach you while you are on vacation. I have some zany info for you and your faithful readers.
- Well my pequeno companero mucho time has passed since our last dialogo.
- Si, I mean yes, and there is some news on the horizon.
- Digame, Tell me then what is the flashy technopop that you are spouting off about now.
- Like it's not about one finger technopop. It's NO EFFECTS!
- Ok so they have no effects but what is their name?
- No that is their name NO EFFECTS and that is what they are about!
- Let me see if I understand you my little meatmeister. Their name is NO EFFECTS and they play music without the flash of modern electronics.
- Like ya that's it two guys, two accoustic guitars and like pure music.
- Well what pray tell is their style of music amigomio?
- It's Rock and Roll done right. It's up home tonight without the stepdancing and country music. They range from raunchy Rolling Stones to laid back Simon and Garfunkel with a sprinkle of Tracy Chapman to add flavour.
- Who then are these masters of music?
- The two guys are Steve Cole and Billy Spearin and golly they have been together for five years now. Plus every now and then they have Bridget Sullivan to add that powerful voice of Chapman.
- Well my small friend adonde(when) and when can one catch this great act?
- Glad you popped that question at me Stevie. If you missed their last gig at the Social Club, then you can catch NO EFFECTS at the C.O.C.A. Big Ticket Friday November 3rd in the Social Club/Ballroom.
- C.O.C.A. Big Ticket????
- I'll save that one for next week. Just remember for pure music catch NO EFFECTS next week. Toodles.
- Ciao Meatmeister, Hasta Luego.

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