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rivals his stellar mid-1960s work. A single man back in the Village, Dylan renewed friendships and started some new ones, resulting in another strong album (*Desire*) and another tour, dubbed the "Rolling Thunder Revue." ("Ratso" Sloman documented the tour in his long out-of-print paperback *On the Road with Bob Dylan*.)

Conceived as a traveling minstrel circus that would hit unsuspecting northeastern US towns, the tour featured the likes of old-flame and folk queen Joan Baez, ex-Byrd Roger McGuinn, Joni Mitchell and assorted other scene-makers. Dylan captured the festivities on film that ended up as a four-hour, improvisational, mostly incoherent mess known as *Renaldo & Clara*. Although briefly reconciled with his wife (who played "Clara"), this time the marriage was over for good, and the couple divorced in 1977 after a bitter child custody battle.

Back on the road for most of 1978, Dylan embarked on a worldwide itinerary known as the "Alimony Tour," which featured radically altered versions of his chestnuts.

"GOD KNOWS IT'S FRAGILE/GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING" from "God Knows" (1990)

Dylan's 1978 studio record (*Street Legal*) failed to strike a buzz with the masses, despite some great imagery-filled songs. By the end of the tour, Dylan was wearing a cross, and he soon became a born-again Christian. For a solid two years, Dylan played his new Christian songs in concert, and nothing else. While the music was often moving, and his singing full of conviction, some rowdy audiences (shades of Newport) thought he went too far warning about the evils of rock'n'roll from the stage.

The Rolling Stones' Ron Wood was quoted as thinking Dylan was "alarmingly different, preaching to the audience. And even I was shouting at him, saying 'Come on! Get on with it.' I knew that he wouldn't stay that outrageously committed. I could tell that he wasn't to be tampered with though. You can't ever change what he's going to do."

Oddly enough, the *Slow Train Coming* album reached number two on the charts and was his second million-selling LP in the US, where the album's single, "Gotta Serve Somebody," gar-

GLOBE PHOTOS



Dylan carried on a long-term affair with Joan Baez while also dating soon-to-be wife Sara. In her autobiography, Baez admits to having been jealous of Dylan's fame.

nered Dylan's first Grammy (nominated in the Christian music category).

Dylan told journalist Kurt Loder in 1985 that he is a literal believer in the Bible, with the Old and New Testaments being equally valid, and he can converse and find agreement with both Orthodox Jews as well as Christians. "Eastern religions are happening too," Dylan commented, without elaboration. So how can a Jew become a born-again Christian and then

revert back to being a Jew? "Bob was exploring," explained Rabbi Mavis Friedman, who told a Dylan convention audience in May 1991 in New York that he's Dylan's spiritual adviser from Minnesota. "But he came home to his roots," insisted the proud rabbi, who received an endorsement from Dylan on his book about marriage. Friedman contended that Dylan was deeply religious, that in fact he wore teffilin (a leather strap worn by Orthodox Jews

around the arm and tied to the head during daily prayer) every day, even on the road! The Dylan experts in the audience found this hard to swallow, but didn't rebuke the holy man publicly.

While *Slow Train Coming* was a commercial and artistic success, the two follow-up albums (*Saved* and *Shot of Love*), which completed the so-called Christian trilogy, flopped by comparison.

Dylan returned to commenting on the secular world on his next album, *Infidels* in late 1983. One song ("Neighborhood Bully") pulled no punches defending Israel's military might, while an inside album photo showed Dylan in Jerusalem. He reportedly visited the Jewish holy land for the occasion of his son's bar mitzvah and rekindled ties with Orthodox Jews, later making several telethon appearances.

"ANY DAY NOW, ANY DAY, I SHALL BE RELEASED" from "I Shall Be Released" (1967)

Dylan toured Europe in 1984, and started the following year by participating in the "We Are the World" all-star single to relieve African famine, organized by Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, Lionel Richie and Quincy Jones. It all seemed a little disconcerting, Dylan standing side-by-side the likes of mainstream pop performers such as Diana Ross, Kenny Rogers, Cyndi Lauper and Billy Joel. But there he was, with a featured vocal. This artistically lame, philanthropic event prompted Dylan to get involved in similar benefits, such as the massive July 1985 "Live Aid" concert, where he suggested that some of the money should go to needy American farmers. Country singer Willie Nelson agreed with the suggestion, and Dylan performed at a "Farm Aid" concert two months later. In November he contributed a vocal to the anti-apartheid, all-star "Sun City" single and video. Dylan, who remained fairly private in the late 1960s, throughout the 1970s, and first part of the 1980s, became ubiquitous, publicly accepting awards.

Following a starring role in a terrible British movie called *Hearts of Fire* (in which Dylan plays—what else—an aging rock star), he embarked on separate tours with the more popular Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers and the Grateful Dead. What a cynic might peg as calculated moves to broaden his

audience, these tours insured that Dylan could still draw in hockey arenas and football stadiums.

Musically, Petty's Heartbreakers proved to be his best backing group since The Band. The seven-concert tour with the Dead, although it seemed to make sense (i.e., two of rock's legendary dinosaurs together!), didn't click quite as well. In fact, practically the only thing that Dylan experts agree on is that the Dead tour was a mistake. His next albums were mostly shoddy throw-aways, and he saved his best and funniest songs (particularly "Tweeter and the Monkeyman") for the tongue-in-cheek supergroup, The Traveling Wilburys, that he formed with Petty, George Harrison, Roy Orbison and Jeff Lynne.

Oh Mercy, his 1989 album, showed Dylan still could make a great album if he took the time and care. Producer Daniel Lanois pushed just the right buttons to get the most out of Dylan's new songs. But more importantly, Dylan put together a regular backing band led by guitarist G.E. Smith (of *Saturday Night Live* TV fame) to launch in 1988 what he called the "Never-Ending Tour," on the road virtually nonstop since 1988. Dylan's response in 1978 to Rolling Stone's question why he was touring then must still hold true today. "Is it so surprising that I'm on the road? What else would I be doing in this life—meditating on a mountain? Whatever someone finds fulfilling, whatever his or her person is—that's all it is."

"I WISH THAT FOR JUST ONE TIME/YOU COULD STAND INSIDE MY SHOES..." from "Positively Fourth Street" (1965)

In March 1992, the Associated Press carried a dispatch from Australia regarding a Dylan fanatic who trampled his mother to death to the strains of "One More Cup of Coffee (for the Road)." It seems that this middle-aged woman took a disliking (not unlike most mothers from that generation) to Bob's music, which constantly blared from her son's bedroom. One day she yelled "shut that damn thing off" one too many times. And the psycho offered her.

Prison officials thought it would be good therapy for the model inmate to be let out to see his idol perform when Dylan toured down under last year. No comment was forthcoming from Dylan himself, but one has to wonder about the strange things that go through the

minds of some people.

The British magazine *Q* quoted a Dylan camp official who said that they keep a database of about a hundred "potentially dangerous" fans. At times, Dylan is known to have bodyguards and is reported to employ what resembles a small militia protecting his Malibu home.

Bob Fass remembers that Dylan told him after the 1965 Newport festival, "I just can't walk around without a disguise. I used to be able to walk around and go wherever I wanted. But now it's gotten very weird. People follow me into a men's room just to say they saw me pee."

Dylan told Kurt Loder: "I'm comfortable wherever people don't remind me of who I am. Anytime somebody reminds me of who I am that kills it for me.... I don't have to go on other people's trips of who they think I am. A person doesn't like to feel self-conscious, you know."

In 1986, he told a BBC television interviewer: "Nobody knows me and I don't know them." He finds it irksome that some people who can relate to one of his songs often approach him like "some long-lost brother or sister. That ain't got nothing to do with me. I think that I can prove that in court."

Numerous common folk report encountering Dylan when they least expected it, most finding him to be very accessible. There's the New York cop who, when he noticed a Dylan entourage strolling along Central Park South, told his partner to pull over the police car. The uniformed officer started a conversation with him. Dylan wanted to know, "Are you going to give me a ticket?" Upon finding out no, Dylan branded him, "the coolest cop I've ever met."

Then there's Jim Keenan, a New Jersey stockbroker who stumbled upon Dylan at the Minneapolis airport waiting for his flight to LA. Keenan reports that Dylan flirted with flight attendants where they prepare passengers' food while the plane was airborne for three hours. At Dylan's request, the stewardesses kept feeding him those little liquor bottles. When a fellow passenger asked for an autograph and wanted a photo, a Dylan bodyguard appeared from what seemed like nowhere, whisking away the camera, which fell to the ground.

Journalist Keith Greenberg was in the dressing room before a Las Vegas boxing bout featuring Sugar Ray

Leonard, and found Dylan watching Leonard's losing opponent Donny LaLonde skip rope. Greenberg, who was getting celebrity fight quotes for *USA Today*, tried to introduce himself. Dylan, chewing gum with his mouth open, offered a limp handshake, not taking his eyes off the boxer. He declined to give a quote.

After a year-long sabbatical in California, an Australian tape collector figured he'd give it one last chance to try to encounter his hero face-to-face before going home. "I actually met Dylan!" he writes in a postcard. "It's true. On my last day in the US, I drove past his house in Malibu just as he drove out the gate! We followed him to the beach, and conducted a short conversation consisting of him mostly saying 'NO!' We didn't even get an autograph. What a weird guy!"

Dylan's dislike for journalists is legendary, as captured in *Don't Look Back*, in which the 24-year-old reduces a *Time* magazine reporter to a blubbering idiot. Even those reporters who are Dylan fans first, and journalists second, feel intimidated when meeting him.

"It was definitely the hardest interview I ever did," New York DJ Dave Herman says of his 1981 conversation that was broadcast throughout the country. Dylan strummed throughout Herman's questioning, despite the DJ's requests at least three times to put the instrument down. "It went like this for twenty minutes. I'm not getting any kind of direct answer at all," Herman remembers. However, a turning point occurred when an annoyed Dylan unleashed a diatribe: "I don't know what the big deal is about. I just write songs and I'm an entertainer and I make records. It doesn't have anything to do with talent. What I'd call a man with talent is a doctor, a healer, driving down a country road in the middle of the night, and he comes across somebody injured on the side of the road. And he gets out, and heals that person." Herman asked if he thought he could get into medical school. "Dylan started laughing and answering questions after that."

The DJ, who's met him three or four times, believes that "the way everyone perceives Dylan is exactly the way he is. His rudeness that isn't rudeness. It's very hard for him to be definitive about anything. It's his style. I don't think it's contrived or purposeful. He's just a non-committal person. He's a man filled with contradictions. That's the

way he is...painfully shy, almost asocial...confused and bewildered about life in general, but extremely focused as an artist."

Herman says he's sure it's very difficult being Bob Dylan. "Imagine what it's like to have that head on," he adds, considering all he's accomplished and his body of songs written during the past three decades.

Paul Zollo, the only independent journalist granted a comprehensive interview in 1991, also was in awe on the mere sight of his subject. "I interviewed lots of really famous people

Dylan has said in interviews that he doesn't know who turned him on to pot the first time. All he knows is that weed was plentiful in the Minneapolis coffeehouse scene circa 1960.

from Madonna to Paul Simon to Neil Young. Nobody was like sitting face-to-face with Dylan. There's a thing about his face, and seeing that face you've seen for so many years that close up that did get me quite nervous," says Zollo, the editor of *SongTalk*, the publication of the National Academy of Songwriters.

"I didn't know what to expect. He seemed to be in a pretty good mood and talkative," says Zollo, who had tried to get the interview for the previous six years. "You ask him one question, and his answer will bring up so many more questions," Zollo explains. "I wouldn't be sure how his answer related. After a few moments, I'd see him bringing it around, and it would be a very cohesive answer to my question. He's such a brilliant man and has so many interest-

ing ideas about things. I just got an hour of that."

But the interview did have its awkward moments. For example, Zollo asked how much time and energy does he put into songwriting these days. Dylan said, that "last record I did, *Down In The Groove*, came pretty easily." Zollo, who was faced with the moral dilemma of correcting Bob Dylan, chose not to point out that he actually made two studio albums since *Down In The Groove*.

A member of his road crew, who requests anonymity for obvious reasons, says that usually no one around Dylan ever has the balls to tell him he's wrong or that he fucked up. A notable exception was Rob Fraboni, the engineer of Dylan's Nov. 1973 album *Planet Waves*. After the first night of recording, Dylan asked Fraboni for the master tapes for fear that they would be ripped off and bootlegged.

Fraboni says that he assured Dylan the tapes would be safely locked at the studio, but Dylan insisted he had to have them in his possession. The next night, Dylan asked the then-22-year-old Fraboni if he wanted to accompany him to a Bobby "Blue" Bland gig.

"Dylan had this blue van. We're parking somewhere off Sunset Boulevard, and I turn around to look at the back of the van, and there are the tapes sitting in the back. I said, 'Bob what are you crazy? You're going to leave the tapes in your van on the street and you won't leave them in the studio?' Following Fraboni's outburst, Dylan admitted he was right. "But a lot of times people are impressed and don't do that."

Dylan can be swayed by a pretty face. Fraboni relays a story about a woman with long blonde hair hanging around the studio. During the playback of "Forever Young," she cracked: "Hey Bob, what are you getting mushy in your old age?" The next day Dylan informed Fraboni that the take of the song—which knocked out everyone who heard it—wasn't going to be used. "I jumped up and said 'What are you crazy? If you don't use that, I quit!'" Dylan left it on, after Fraboni's threat.

Jacques Levy, who spent several weeks alone on the East End of Long Island in 1975 with Dylan writing the *Desire* album, says that Dylan, like anyone else, doesn't like criticism. "But once you're on the inside in a relationship with him, anything goes." During their time writing songs togeth-

er, Dylan would often accede to Levy's suggestions about changing a line, and vice versa.

Levy points out that there's the human side to Dylan that people don't know. "We would go to the supermarket together. It was funny to have someone at the checkout counter see Bob pushing a cart."

"One time we stopped at a drive-through, fast-food hamburger place, sitting in the car waiting for our order. I see the door open up in the kitchen. It's obvious that word has bounced back to the kitchen that Bob Dylan is out there. A dishwasher, a young guy about college age,

comes running out to the car and bangs on the door. Bob rolls down the window. And the guy blurts something out like 'I've always wanted to meet you,' and thrusts a piece of paper in Bob's hand. And he runs. Bob opens up the piece of paper, and sure enough it's a poem. I don't mean a love letter to Bob. It was 'I want you to see my poetry'."

Dylan was touched, according to Levy. "How could you not be?"

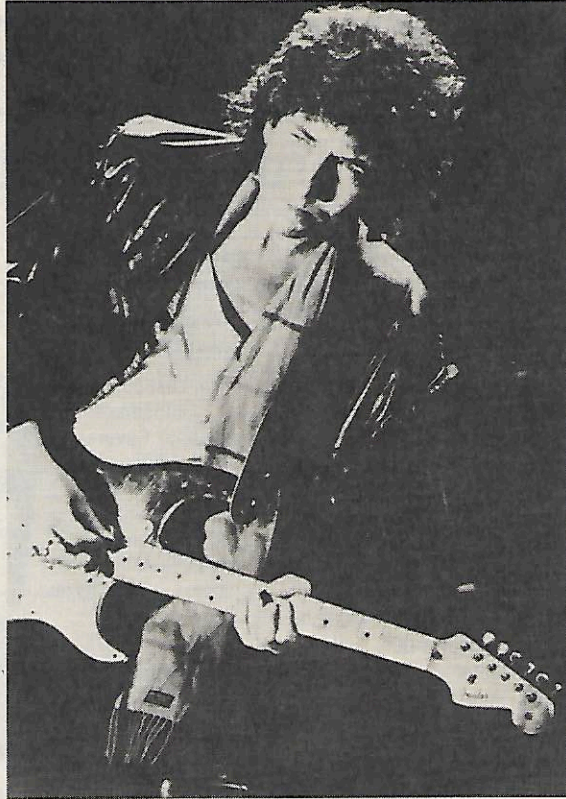
During that same time away, Dylan played matchmaker and hinted that Levy should "give that girl Claudia a call. I think she would like to hear from you." Some 17 years later, Levy reports that "Claudia and I have been married for a lot of years and have two kids."

D.A. Pennebaker points out that, "it's hard to make assumptions about Dylan. He's as strange a creature who ever walked the earth." The filmmaker notes that *Don't Look Back* was made at a time when people had to know about Dylan. "Dylan mattered, I don't know why. And he mattered to me."

"THEY'RE ALL GONNA BE THERE AT THE MILLION DOLLAR BASH..." from "Million Dollar Bash," (1967)

One has to believe that Dylan was dragged into Columbia Records' tribute concert last October, since he generally is embarrassed by such accolades. He

who wishes for anonymity could only view such attention as a nightmare. Radio Vision International, the show's producer, said the concert cost \$5 million to stage, making the unprecedented, high-ticket prices for a nonbenefit (\$35, \$50, \$80 and \$150 for music industry insiders and the press) necessary. As of a week after the event, Radio Vision, which assumed the financial risk alone, had only made back \$2.5 million in box office, merchandising, and domestic, live radio and pay-per-view television broadcasts. But Radio Vision expects to eventually



show a small profit, following a future US network and international TV deals, as well as the probable CD and video box sets.

Radio Vision should be applauded for avoiding obscene corporate sponsorship to underwrite the concert (the norm since the '80s), thus ensuring a healthy profit. A nice thing about Dylan is nobody could accuse him of selling out. Thankfully, there are no commercials to the tune of "Blowin' in the Wind" or "The Times They Are A-Changin'." Yet there was an uneasy feeling at the Garden that the majority of the audience was composed of not so much diehard Dylan fans, but rather yuppies who were there because it was

the in-place to be that night. Hence, it was something disingenuous to see aging baby boomers in business suits claiming to identify with Dylan. (By the way, Columbia president Don Ienner was booed while making a clumsy, too-long speech about what a privilege it is to have Dylan on the label's roster.) A cynic might notice that three-quarters of the artists who performed either currently record or recorded for Columbia at one time (i.e., back catalog opportunity?).

Of course, Dylan's music (39 songs that didn't even scratch the surface of his approximately 750-song repertoire) and a diverse assemblage of talents—from Sophie B. Hawkins to the Clancy Brothers—that amounted to the world's greatest copy band (led by Booker T. & the MGs and G.E. Smith) in rock history overrode any feelings of capitalistic compromise. There could have been a little more imaginative coupling (i.e., having Dylan perform with The Band a *Basement Tapes* tune, or Petty and Harrison join him for a Traveling Wilburys jam, or Dylan and Johnny Cash recreate their "Girl from the North Country" duet, circa 1969).

Personal favorite moments: Fuckin' Neil's searing guitar on "All Along The Watchtower" and general aura that he was having a great time; Lou Reed's bluesy take on the wordy "Foot of Pride"; McGuinn/Petty/Young/Clapton/Dylan/Harrison's trading of verses on "My Back Pages"; Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder and Mike McCree adding a tinge of contemporary hipness on an unplugged "Masters of War"; the sweet female harmonies of Roseanne Cash/Mary Chapin Carpenter/Shawn Colvin on "You Ain't Going Nowhere"; and the solo Dylan's greatest live performance of "It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)," in which he made every word count, especially "But even the President of the United States sometimes must have to stand naked" on the eve of the election.

Unfortunately, the disgraceful booping of Sinéad O'Connor for tearing up a photo of the pope two weeks earlier on *Saturday Night Live*, and her appropriate impromptu chanting of Bob Marley's "War" (the only non-Dylan song played), blemished the otherwise brilliant night. (Hadn't these close-minded assholes ever heard of art, or the First Amendment? The ugly scene brought back memories of

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DYLAN

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Dylan at Newport in 1965.)

"The way that Dylan handled the booing [in 1965 and 1966] is that he would plow right into those songs, and played the most amazing music I've ever heard. I was at the shows with The Band, comments Sloman. "Ironically, the song she was going to play, 'I Believe In You,' is about standing up for your beliefs in face of hostility."

Kristofferson, who praised O'Connor for her courage and integrity during her introduction, is in similar disbelief. "You would think that if there ever was a place where free speech was honored, it would be at a Bob Dylan celebration. It was depressing to me. There are a lot of confused people out there. I was standing up there, and she looked like Joan of Arc, for Christ sake, or some victim of the holocaust, with 18,000 people booing at her. The depressing truth, in spite of the feeling that the [1960s utopian] spirit was still there, especially when you heard Stevie's soulful 'Blowin' in the Wind,' is that beneath the surface is the ugliness that reminds you a large portion of the population a couple of years ago was waving flags over the fuckin' Gulf War. It surprised me that someone was so clearly misunderstood. [The ripping of the pope's photo] was one of the most courageous things to come out of *Saturday Night Live*."

Both Sloman and Kristofferson are convinced that Dylan had no idea of what was going on. Sloman notes that Dylan didn't have a monitor in the dressing room where he stayed before hitting the stage. "I have to believe he didn't know, or he would have done something about it," says Kristofferson.

That's debatable since Dylan didn't make any public statement afterwards about the incident. And, as Joan Baez used to say, although Dylan may write amazing political songs, he seldom follows through with political actions.

It is telling that when Dylan finally emerged at his tribute he chose to play "Song for Woody," his ode to Woody Guthrie, which he wrote when he was a mere lad of 19. ●

ED NOTE: Dylan's latest album, *Good As I Been To You*, has recently been released by Columbia Records.

RASTAS

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"Good news," announced Damon, a leprechaun of a man whose use of Jamaican patois jerked me off balance at first. "I and I hear dat Jo Menell gwan come down tomorrow by mule; so we don't wan' you to say nuttin' 'bout no film from 1981 until tomorrow night, when I and I gwan set up a dance wi' de Twelve Tribes Sound System from Tucson. We a-go mek it a surprise fe de people. So we wan' you to do your second show tomorrow at two in de afternoon, instead of in de evenin'."

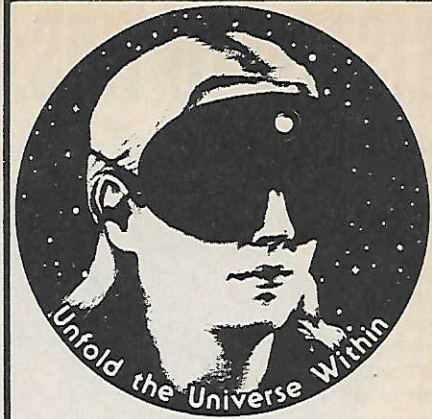
Damon escorted me to the Lodge, a modern two-story building with full amenities at the rear of the Village. Later, in a deep and velvety blue twilight, we walked to a snack shop next to the helipad. I ate a sparse dinner of Indian fry bread—a soft, thick pizza-sized confection topped with powdered sugar. The snacks available—greasy tacos, french fries and other high-cholesterol foods—helped explain why a high percentage of the 500 or so Supai are large and ungainly.

Over dinner, I learned that the Denver-based uranium company, Energy Fuels Nuclear (EFN), had obtained a permit to mine at the very spot where the Supai believe the world is reborn every five years. Joe Sparks, lawyer for the Supai, later told me: "Two mines have been approved for production—one on private land where the mineral rights now belong to the government and another in the National Forest. Both mines will leech into the regional aquifer and into Havasu Springs, which will then become contaminated." The Springs feeds into the Colorado River, which runs through the Canyon and provides much of Los Angeles' drinking water.

"If holding ponds break, the waters will run right through the Village. Radioactive dust will settle on the watershed, eventually concentrating on the lower levels [of the Canyon], where it will settle on Supai Village. After they're finished mining, EFN is responsible for the sites for only ten years. Uranium, as you might know, has a half-life of ten thousand years."

The Supai filed a religious-freedom suit against EFN and the Forest Service to no avail. Last year, District Court Judge Roger Strand ruled that religious practices at sacred sites are superseded by the government's right to use the land and

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