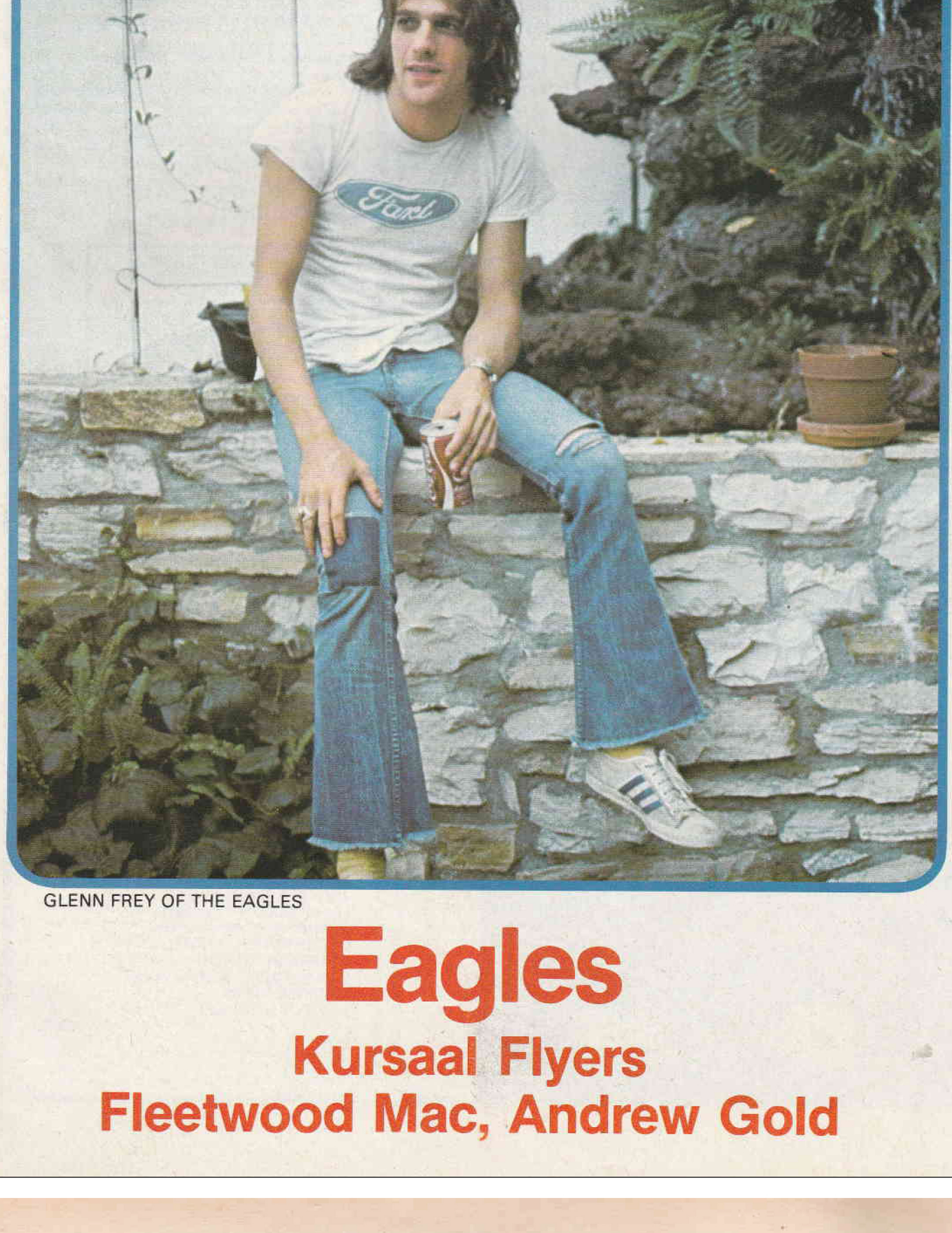


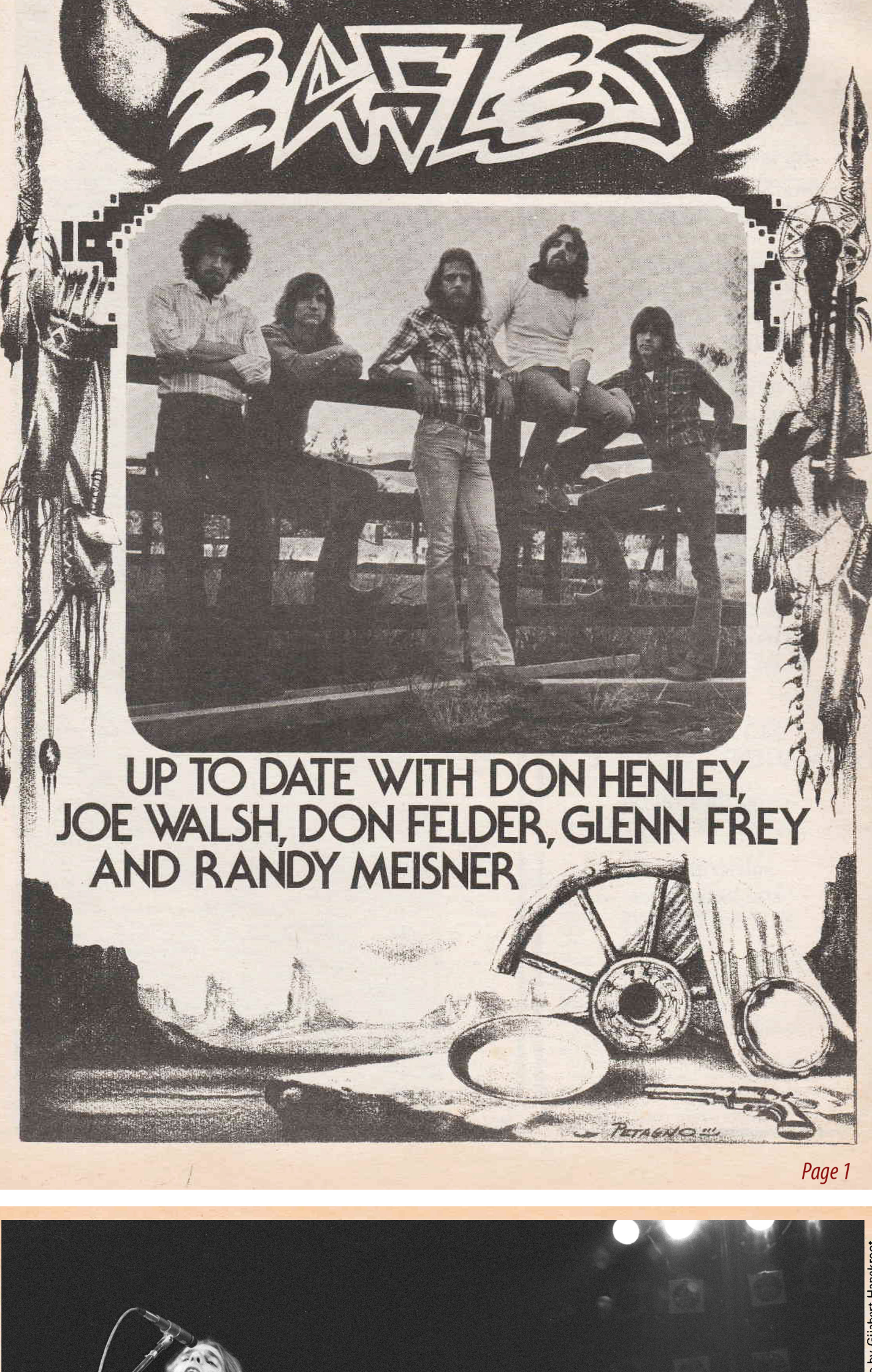
The Rock Magazine



GLENN FREY OF THE EAGLES

Eagles

Kursaal Flyers
Fleetwood Mac, Andrew Gold



UP TO DATE WITH DON HENLEY, JOE WALSH, DON FELDER, GLENN FREY AND RANDY MEISNER

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A rare sight: Frey, Walsh and Leadon as Eagles together!

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Our good friend Constant Meijers, who runs the Dutch music paper Muziekkrant Oor, maintains close contact with the Eagles that he managed to lay his hands on a tape of their new album almost as soon as it had been mixed. Not only that, but he arranged for them to call him up to discuss the album for the benefit of Zigzag readers!

Thursdays, the 18th of November, 00.30 hours, the telephone rings.

CF: Hello, Constant? Hey partner, this is Glenn, how are you?

ZZ: I'm fine, thanks, how are you?

GF: Oh, I'm fine, we are in Minneapolis, Minnesota. We got a night off tonight, so we're going to a hockey game.

ZZ: I have to tell you guys that your album knocked me out.

GF: Oh great. I'm glad you like it. We didn't get done with it that long ago, about a week and a half, two weeks. We were out on the road for a couple of days, then back to the studio, back and forth, back and forth. Pretty crazy schedule — but it turned out real good. We're really pleased with it — but then we usually are right when we finish an album.

ZZ: I don't know for sure yet, but I have a suspicion it's your best ever.

GF: I'm hoping that's the way it will turn out, there are certainly a lot of potential singles on there. We were pretty happy to find our recording technique and our songwriting all come together so well at the same time. This album is kinda like... I hate to compare it with 'Desperado', but in some ways it's almost the modern day version of that same story. But believe it or not, everybody is here 'cause, I don't know, everybody is the phone to talk with you. So maybe I can pass the phone round and the other guys can talk too.

ZZ: Okay, I have a couple of questions for the others... can you tell me about the songs on this album, Glen?

GF: Oohh... that's complicated. I mean, everybody was intensely involved in the writing and directors discover what it's all about so they write two of the songs on the album. There's a new kid in town and 'Victim of Love'. The first

side starts with 'Hotel California', then 'New kid in town', 'Life in the fast lane' and 'Wasted Time'. The second side is 'Victim of love', 'Pretty maids all in a row', 'Try and love again' and 'The last resort', which is the one that everybody is raving about... Henley really outdid himself on that one, he wrote most of the words.

ZZ: How has the group changed since the arrival of Joe Walsh?

GF: Well, it's as good as we thought it would be; the guitar playing is much more to my liking now... and the musical platforms we are working off on this album are also more to my liking, incidentally. On stage, songs like 'Lying eyes', and that sort of country-rock-balloo-soft-rock material, which comes very easy to us didn't change at all when Joe came into the band, he has a fluent enough style to fit into that kind of music. What really does get me off, as far as his arrival is concerned, is our ability to do 'Hotel California', and 'Life in the fast lane'. Those are a challenge and real exciting to play.

ZZ: It seems as if there is more rock 'n' roll in the music now, a more gutsy approach — but there also seems to be more consistency in this album, it's certainly more than discernible on 'One of These Nights'.

GF: I think you may be right there. I have the feeling that we'll surprise a lot of people with this record and that the critics on the East Coast all spoke too soon! 'Hotel California' puts our whole existence into perspective. Anyway, I'll hand you over to Joe.

Joe Walsh: Hi man, what are you doing?

ZZ: I'm holding the phone to my ear! Listen... when we last spoke in September '75, I don't always aware that you were going to join the Eagles?

GW: It wasn't really definite enough to announce or brag about. I was sort of waiting to see what happened — but there was talk about it.

ZZ: How do like being part of an established group?

GW: Oh, I like it a lot; it's great... a whole lot of weight off my shoulder! It was a little frantic, you know, getting the album done; we were just a tiny bit behind schedule on it, so we

had to rush around to finish it off. We are just finishing up a real busy year!

ZZ: During that same interview you expressed the feeling that you were afraid the Eagles were in danger of becoming a little bit lazy during 1976.

GW: I wish you would get lazy! I amend my statement!

ZZ: Did you contribute a lot to the production of the new album? It sound as if you did.

GW: Well, I just plugged in as a part of the group. There are little places where I'm shining through, and places where I was playing keyboards and stuff.

ZZ: Who was the organ?

GW: That's me. I had freedom to come up with some arrangements, which I did, and sometimes I was told what to play which was fine, it worked out very well as far as I'm concerned.

ZZ: As far as the production goes... well, the Eagles never achieved this kind of feel before, but you have. So I get the impression that you had a hand in the production.

GW: Might be, might be. I was able to contribute ideas as a result of working with Fogelberg, but I'm not responsible for all of the album by any means. I just feel as if I made my presence felt, in a positive way.

ZZ: Which songs did you write?

GW: I wrote 'Pretty maids all in a row'.

ZZ: Are you still involved with solo projects?

GW: Yeah, that's the way it goes. I'm in the process of signing up with Asylum Records, so as soon as that's done I might get started. Probably next year.

ZZ: But no plans to reform Barnstorm in the near future?

GW: Maybe, based around an album sometime next year. It depends if the Eagles get lazy or not.

ZZ: At what stage of the lifespan of a group are the Eagles currently standing? I remember you holding some interesting theories on the lifespans of groups.

GW: Oh, that's a hard one to answer. I think it is a little bit positive, I'm certain there is another album or two in everybody, though it's getting

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kinda hard for Don and Glenn to keep writing whole albums of consistently neat stuff. It gets harder and harder to top it, just to prove to yourself that you're going somewhere artistically... but everybody in the group is writing now, and a whole lot of ideas are always floating around and that's really a good sign. Randy and Don Felder are really starting to write; they're bringing their ideas in, which all adds to the continuing strength of the group.

ZZ: Did you contribute any synthesizer playing to the album?

GW: Yeah, there are a few little things in there, but you wouldn't really be able to say 'Oh, there's a synthesizer part'. It's more like just colouring certain passages... a little noise here and there, to make it sound a little more interesting.

ZZ: Are you happy with the way things are going?

GW: Yeah, pretty much... but I tell you, I really think we're about to end and relax in the country for a while. Things are happening pretty fast and you really need to put it together and sleep it together. We put in a really hard year, starting with a tour of Australia, Japan and New Zealand last January, it's been a really good year, but I think we are all looking forward to a little bit of time off.

ZZ: Can anybody tell me what Bernie Leadon is doing right now?

GW: I really don't know. I think it was Bernie's wish to go and lose himself for a while — so nobody would know what he was doing — so I guess that he's happy. I didn't really know him that well, although I respect him as a musician; I got an insight into how good he really was, when I had to learn all his licks... and he's good! Well, I hope to see you soon, hang on for Henley.

Don Henley: Hallo, Constant.

ZZ: That's a picture of the Beverly Hills Hotel in California; very elegant and very decadent at the same time, it's a romantic place and you can see all kinds of people there — you see a lot of tourist types, a lot of very glamorous movie star people, and a lot of phoney people. A lot of the people too. A lot of people have parties there, so it's a big wide angled photograph of the inside shot from a crane about 100 to 150 feet up in the air, at sunset. There are black silhouettes of palm trees and the sky is a kind of rusty, smoky colour. We superimposed a neon sign that says 'Hotel California', because we couldn't use the name Beverly Hills Hotel: we'd probably have been sued.

ZZ: Hollywood seems to have been mentioned in several songs over the last year.

DH: That's even happening in the movie business too, L.A. and Hollywood. Every few years they exploit L.A., and Hollywood, you know. New people coming in, new songwriters and directors discover what it's all about so they make and make a movie, or a film about it. We just had Warren Zevon's album about L.A. and now there's... which would be called 'Welcome to L.A.', a new movie out called Rudolph, who is an understudy of Robert Altman. Anyway, back to the sleeve: the inside is a big wide angled photograph of the inside lobby of an old hotel in Hollywood. Once upon a time, it used to be very elegant, but now it's a home for old people, some pimps and young

already started changing a couple of things. Did you go and vote?

DH: No. I wanted to, but we were on tour and I couldn't. I told my mother to vote, though. I'm having fun! It's easier for two people to share lead guitar than to have one person having to carry the burden all the time. It really is fun to be able to swap parts, back one guy up, then the other guy switch off, then play together for a few bars... there are so many permutations.

ZZ: I remember Don Young once saying that the Eagles were the Buffalo Springfield of the seventies. He seems to have been right after all!

DH: Is that right? Well, there's one song on the album that we joke about being our Buffalo

and that surfaced a year ago last month. It was hard, and it gets harder. Your previous effort becomes your new yardstick, and you have to go beyond it, you know. This album is not the next predictable step; it's very different. I like the 'Hotel California' track too; I like the song — I'm very proud of that one. It's very cynical, but that's alright. It's our bicentennial year, you know, the United States is 200 years old, so we figured since we are the Eagles and the Eagles is our national symbol, that we were obliged to make some kind of a little bicentennial statement using California as a microcosm of the whole United States, or the whole world, if you will, and to try to wake people up and say 'We've been okay so far, for 200 years, but we're gonna have to change! We're gonna continue to be around'. So I'm really pleased with the album. It was hard though. We were going out on tour and recording at the same time. In fact, we had to finish the album during the start of our tour; we played three concerts in three different cities, and then had to get a lear jet and fly back to Miami and record all night until six o'clock the next morning. Then we had to fly back to the next town and play another concert... that's the way we finished it. We weren't even at the studio for the last two mixes, Szymczyk had to mix the last two tracks and bring them out to us, on the road, so we could hear them.

ZZ: Did you all contribute specific things to the production? The whole sound is very straight, open and honest.


DH: We all contributed to the production, maybe even more so than Szymczyk. We tried to keep the sounds true and I think that this album is the best since 'Desperado', probably... from an artistic standpoint, anyway. This is a concept album, there's no way to hide it, but it's not set in the old West, the cowboy thing, you know. It's more urban this time.

ZZ: What is the group's solidarity? I remember you holding some interesting theories on the lifespans of groups.

GW: Oh, that's a hard one to answer. I think it is a little bit positive, I'm certain there is another album or two in everybody, though it's getting

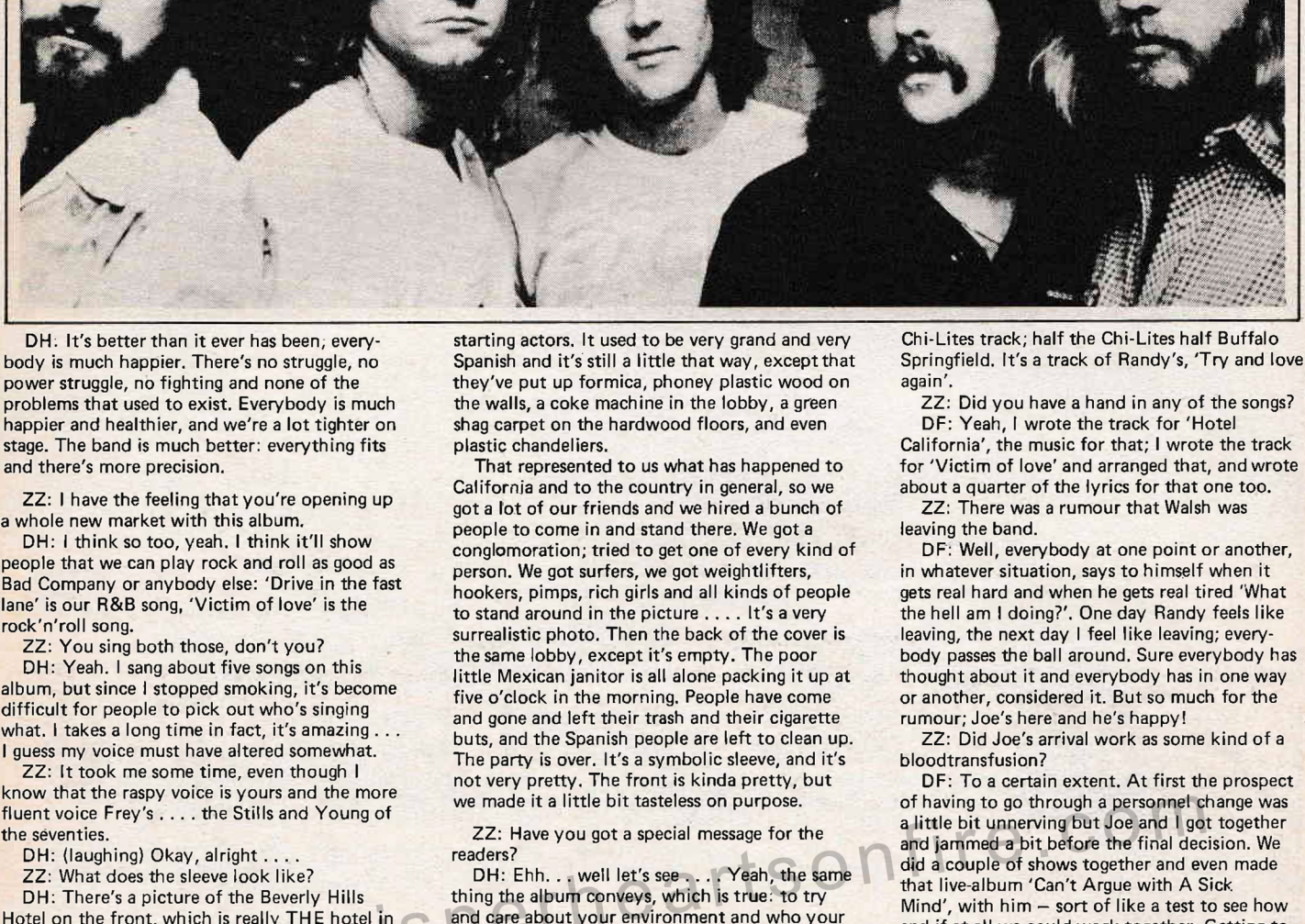
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DH: It's better than it ever has been, everybody is much happier. There's no struggle, no power struggle, no fighting and none of the problems that used to exist. Everybody is much happier and healthier, and we're a lot tighter on stage. The band is much better: everything fits and there's more precision.

ZZ: I have the feeling that you're opening up a whole new market with this album.

DH: I think so, yeah. I think it'll show people that we can play rock and roll as good as Bad Company or anybody else: 'Drive in the fast lane' is our R&B song, 'Victim of love' is the rock 'n' roll song.

ZZ: You sing both songs, don't you?

DH: Yeah, I sang about five songs on this album, but since I stopped smoking, it's become difficult for people to pick out who's singing what. I takes a long time in fact, it's amazing... I guess my voice must have altered somewhat.

ZZ: It took me some time, even though I know that the Frey's is stills and the more fluent voice Randy's... the Youngs and Young of the seventies.

DH: (laughing) Okay, alright...
ZZ: What does the sleeve look like?
DH: There's a picture of the Beverly Hills Hotel in California; very elegant and very decadent at the same time, it's a romantic place and you can see all kinds of people there — you see a lot of tourist types, a lot of very glamorous movie star people, and a lot of phoney people. A lot of the people too. A lot of people have parties there, so it's a big wide angled photograph of the inside shot from a crane about 100 to 150 feet up in the air, at sunset. There are black silhouettes of palm trees and the sky is a kind of rusty, smoky colour. We superimposed a neon sign that says 'Hotel California', because we couldn't use the name Beverly Hills Hotel: we'd probably have been sued.

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starting actors. It used to be very grand and very Spanish and it's still a little that way, except that they've put up formal, phoney plastic wood on the walls, a coke machine in the lobby, a green shag carpet on the hardwood floors, and even plastic chandeliers.

That represented to us what has happened to California and to the country in general, so we got a lot of our friends and we hired a bunch of people to come in and stand there. We got a conglomeration; tried to get one of every kind of person. We got surfers, we got weightlifters, hookers, pimps, rich girls and all kinds of people to stand around in the picture... It's a very surrealistic photo. Then the back of the cover is the same lobby, except it's empty. The poor little Mexican janitor is all alone packing it up at five o'clock in the morning. People have come and gone and left their trash and their cigarette butts, and the Spanish people are left to clean up. The party is over, it's a symbolic scene, and it's not very pretty. The front is kinda pretty, but we made it a little bit tasteless on purpose.

ZZ: Have you got a special message for the readers?

DH: Eh... well let's see... Yeah, the same thing the album conveys, which is true: 'to try and care about your environment and who your leaders are. In America we have gone through a big period of anti-nationalism. It was considered not chic, it was considered corrupt to vote, or to care who was president. Everybody said 'Oh well, it doesn't make any difference any way'. So tell young people not to get so caught up in their own little lives, because we all have to live here together; try to read and find out what's going on and try to care about their country, their environment and the planet, and to care about who you let govern your life. Right — that's it... I'll hand you over to Randy.

Randy Meisner: Hi, how are you? I've been sitting here listening and it sounds like everybody pretty much covered everything. So, I hope to see you in April. Here's Don.

Don Felder: Hallo Constant.

ZZ: Hi, Don how are you? You're playing some pretty mean guitar on this new album!

DH: Aha, you think so? That's a good to hear; I'm having a great time playing with 'W'. We're having fun! It's easier for two people to share lead guitar than to have one person having to carry the burden all the time. It really is fun to be able to swap parts, back one guy up, then the other guy switch off, then play together for a few bars... there are so many permutations.

ZZ: I remember Don Young once saying that the Eagles were the Buffalo Springfield of the seventies. He seems to have been right after all!

DH: Is that right? Well, there's one song on the album that we joke about being our Buffalo

Chi-Lites track; half the Chi-Lites half Buffalo Springfield. It's a track of Randy's, 'Try and love again'.

ZZ: Did you have a hand in any of the songs?

DF: Yeah, I wrote the track for 'Hotel California', the music for that; I wrote the track for 'Victim of love' and arranged that, and wrote about a quarter of the lyrics for that one too.

ZZ: There was a rumour that Walsh was leaving the band.

DF: Well, everybody at one point or another, in whatever situation, says to himself when it gets real hard and when he gets real tired 'What the hell am I doing?'. One day Randy feels like leaving, the next day I feel like leaving, everybody passes the ball around. Sure everybody has thought about it and everybody has in one way or another, considered it. But so much for the rumour; Joe's here and he's happy!

ZZ: Did Joe's arrival work as some kind of a bloodtransfusion?

DF: To a certain extent. At first the prospect of having to go through a personnel change was a little bit unnerving but Joe and I got together and jammed a bit before the final decision. We did a couple of shows together and even made that live-album 'Can't Argue with a Sick Mind', with him — sort of like a test to see how and if at all we could work together. Getting to know each other. At that point we just had such a good time that we were really no question about him being able to, musically or personally or in terms of enthusiasm, join this band. Everybody really felt positive when he joined. It took him a little bit of time to fill in various areas of his musical vocabulary that he wasn't quite as well versed in as in others, and that took him a little while to get the hang of singing certain parts that he'd never previously done. He was a bit uncertain about it at first, but everybody felt real confident. When the first little sparks of new enthusiasm, and the first couple of jams where everybody got gassed-out about, started happening, it was like when a new band gets together! In some ways, even now, it seems as if we're still a new band, 'cause anytime you take on new personnel, it takes years for the new guy to lock in. But it's really come a long, long way since Joe joined. If I were to sit down and try to think of another person — musically and personally and tastewise and creative wise — to fill the spot that Walsh has filled, I don't think I could come up with an alternative: he's really done so many amazing things. Anyway... and we have to go now, so take it easy over there, and we all look forward to coming back to Europe real soon.

Constant Meijers

Titled 'Hotel California', the new Eagles album is scheduled for British release on 10th December.

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