

# Jefferson Airplane Lands in City

Fifth Estate Collective

1967

Nearly 4,000 young people jammed into the Ford Auditorium on Friday June 30 to hear the Jefferson Airplane. Three thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine people enjoyed themselves.

The *Detroit News* didn't.

Their reporter came on like a middle aged Brenda Starr equipped only with platinum hair and a super-hostile attitude towards rock and roll, folk-rock and Grace Slick:

"Gracie insisted on posing for the camera with a poster depicting the American flag marred with an obscene slogan. (Ed. note: The 'poster' was a leaflet declaring that Gary Grimshaw should not have been arrested for having paraphrased "Make Love America, Go Fly a Kite," on a kite.) "What's the matter?" she asked cutely. "Doesn't the *Detroit News* allow freedom of the press?"

"In addition to free love and free sex, members of the Airplane advocate the use of marijuana to open the mind. If Gracie's backstage performance is any indication of her vision and perception, her mind should be opened, cleaned and fumigated."

So much for the *Detroit News*.

The Jefferson Airplane was good. Real good. Lead singer Grace and Marty Balin practically made love to the audience as they went through "It's no Secret" and "Find Somebody to Love." Paul Kanter held his guitar like it was an auto-harp, half infant when he sang Donovan's "Fat Angel" and the audience was right with him when he told them to "Fly Translove Airways, Fly Jefferson Airplane."

It got us to the press conference on time.

Uncle Russ, who was running the show, told us before the concert that the backstage question and answer period would have to wait until after 11:00.

When it happened, he waited until Brenda Starr finished her questions about "the role of LSD in psychedelic music" and "the effect LSD has had on the psychedelic revolution."

Our conversation went something like this: Do you vote?

"No, we don't. Politics and music are the two dirtiest businesses in America today."

Do you think people should smoke grass?

"If it works for you, do

it If it doesn't, don't."

What do you think about Detroit?

"Since music is a logical extension of the industrial-technological revolution, Detroit was an appropriate place for good music."

What are you going to do next?

"If we knew what was next, we'd be doing it. We are going to Europe in the fall, though."

As Marty thumbed through the latest *Fifth Estate* I asked him what he felt about the underground press.

"Groovy. It's real, it's there. We read the (Berkeley) Barb and the (LA) *Free Press*. Hey, you print Cobb cartoons. Groovy."

Before the hassle with the obscene kite leaflet when Grace told the *News* that “Grimshaw’s arrest was where it’s really at,” we talked about their White Levi’s commercial. The New Left is pissed because Levi workers are striking while the Airplane is singing about ducks.

“Actually people weren’t as mad about the strike thing, as much as they were about us doing commercials in the first place. We didn’t know about the strike. A lot of radio is ‘ugly’ music, especially commercials. We wanted to change that.”

Maybe if they had a hit record...



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