

THE POLICE

August 1981

The facts are clear...as far as music lovers are concerned the world is controlled by The Police. It's tough on all the other bands and singers who hoped to beat the blonde trio to the top of the music biz polls, but the evidence speaks for itself.

Belgium's Radio Havalind named The Police "Group of the Eighties", and we have a decade to go! Japan's Music Life readers called them "Brightest Hope of the Year", the German Phono Akademie Award for Discovery of the Year went to The Police and in the U.S. Rolling Stone's Critics' Poll named them Best New Artist.

In all, 1980 saw The Police receive reader or critics' poll recognition 45 times around the world, 21 of them number one and/or two position. We could go on but it's obvious, if Ford has the World Car, The Police is the World Band.

1980-81 has been a banner year for The Police. Zenyatta Mondatta was the group's first platinum L.P. with U.S. sales over two million and worldwide sales over five million. In the United States, the album yielded two top ten singles - "De Do Da Da" and "Don't Stand So Close To Me", and remained in the top twenty album chart for an astonishing thirty weeks. In addition, The Police's worldwide tour took them to the far reaches of the earth where they played to an estimated global audience of over two million people.

The punk movement was started as a reaction against the old rock values and Stewart could see that, in many ways, the New Wave musicians were absolutely right. The kind of people he admired

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when he was starting out were groups like the Jimi Hendrix Experience and Cream, both three-piece units who played great rock music and yet who stuck, originally, to basic equipment, inspiring young musicians with a style that was financially within reach and not \$40,000 worth of equipment away.

Stewart decided that he would form a band which would turn the clock back to keeping things simple and inexpensive, and at the same time produce fresh, vital, and interesting music.

They would write their own material, record it on their own label, and coordinate the business themselves in order to retain total control of their destiny. As Miles puts it, "The philosophy of The Police has been three-piece, condensed, recording cheaply, keeping everything basically as simple as possible, and capturing that element of what made rock music great in the first place".

The Police got to the top by breaking all the rules. You simply can't make a hit album (Outlandos d'Amour) for a mere \$6,000. You can't just stroll into a recording studio without any songs or even one rehearsal and produce a second hit album (Regatta de Blanc). But The Police did it.

Another convention that The Police have defied is with the content of their songs. The unusual lyrical content-in story form-is a prime reason for the chart-topping of such songs as "Roxanne", "Message in a Bottle", "Walking on the Moon", "Don't Stand So Close To Me" and now "Every Little Thing She Does is Magic".

The voice on all these hits and most of The Police cuts belongs to one Gordon Mathew Summer, alias Sting.

The most significant event of his early life was when one of his uncles emigrated to Canada and left behind a guitar. Sting soon discovered an affinity for the instrument and music soon became a consuming passion.



He learned to play by strumming along to Beatles and Stones records but at fourteen he discovered jazz. The unusual chords, intricate rhythms and improvisation opened up new musical horizons for him and it wasn't long before he became interested in jazz bass and bought himself a bass guitar.

It was Stewart Copeland, founder and driving force behind The Police, who thought up the band's name and recognized the charisma of guitarist-singer Sting. It was Stewart who formed Illegal Records to release the first single from The Police called "Fall Out".

With his father's cosmopolitan background in the C.I.A. which took him to several different countries, Stewart could have been anything from a businessman in the Middle East to a movie-maker in California. But he decided at the age of thirteen that he wanted to be a rock drummer. At first, his father wouldn't take his ambition seriously and told him that he couldn't be a musician unless he was prepared to practice for four hours a day.

Stewart's father knew what he was talking about because he himself had been a trumpeter in the Glenn Miller Band. Stewart showed his determination by finding some strong cardboard boxes and using them to practice his drum rolls on-for the required four hours a day, of course! Realizing he was serious about wanting to be a drummer, his father relented and soon Stewart had his first real drum kit.

It's Andy Summer's nimble fingers that produce those deceptively simple but effective guitar phrases which have done so much to put The Police's records in the charts all over the world. Playing the guitar has been his whole life and there was never an doubt in his mind about what he wanted to become-a better guitarist with a pile of gold discs and awards to prove it!



Andy had been impressed with The Police during a spell on tour with them in France and as a member of another band and the next time he was in London he went to see them at the Marquee Club. They invited him to play a few gigs with them in a four-piece with himself and Henri Padovani on guitars. Then, in August 1977, Henri left and Andy was installed as a full-time member.

The Police played their first gig with the now familiar line-up of Stewart, Sting and Andy at Rebecca's Club in Birmingham on August 18th, 1977.

By the time he was fifteen, Andy was playing bands around his home town of Bournemouth. It wasn't long before he caught the eye and ear of another Bournemouth resident who has since become a well-known rock figure, Zoot Money. He joined Zoot's band and that was the start of a brilliant career which has taken Andy all over the world and has seen him play with all sorts of musicians including the Animals, Kevin Ayres, Kevin Coyne, plus a stint in Eberhard Schoener's Laser Theatre in Germany which led to The Police appearing there after Andy had joined them.

When The Police chartered a plane to fly to Cape Kennedy to make the promotion film for "Walking On The Moon", Stewart filmed a great sequence of Andy sneaking up to the plane, clambering into the cockpit and trying to figure out how to make the machine fly.

So, The Police are now three years old...and the world is theirs.