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Cover story: Shelly and A&M say Thank You Canada.



Thank You Canada from Shelly & A&M



COVER STORY

by J. J. Linden

A&M Records of Canada are very excited about a new single release with a message thanking Canada for the Tehran embassy's efforts in the escape of six U.S. diplomats from Iran. The single is titled Thank You Canada (Love, Shelley), and features a narration in the voice of eight-year-old Shelley Looney, an American girl from a small town near Detroit.

The single originates in the U.S. from Tom De Angelo, an American who works at Windsor, Ontario's CKLW radio (station name Johnny Williams). De Angelo, who crosses the border each day to go to work, was very moved by the feelings of gratitude toward Canadians and by the spirit of friendship that grew between the two countries as a result of the event. He decided to do something to show his gratitude. His first impulse, as a DJ, was to narrate something himself, but he rejected the idea in

favour of Shelley Looney, his young next-door neighbour.

Working through Rock City/Trillium Productions, and using top Detroit area studio musicians, De Angelo recorded the single at Detroit's Pac-3 Studios. Under the narration was an instrumental/choir background of the Raye-Jacobs classic This Is My Country.

With the recording quickly completed, De Angelo took the single around the industry and quickly secured release deals in the U.S., through Phonogram/Mercury, and on A&M in Canada. Joe Summers, A&M's Senior Vice President and General Manager, notes, "One of the partners in Pac-3, who used to work with me, called me up Monday and played it over the phone. His comment to me was that even though it's not a 'tear-jerker' record, they played it in the studio and the people just kind of had chills. So he sent it up here and we picked it up last Wednesday (Feb. 6)."

Owing to the topical nature of the song, speed in readying and releasing the single was of the essence. A&M was very successful. "We got the tapes on Thursday morning (7th)," Summers points out, "and we had product on Friday afternoon." In addition, by the next Tuesday, product was shipped to the dealers, and it began

reaching the stores by Wednesday, a particularly fast job considering the single is enclosed in an A&M-designed picture sleeve. The front of the sleeve includes the title and the crossed flags of Canada and the U.S. The back features the lyrics of the song in the form of a letter written in childish print.

Thank You Canada is the type of record which transcends the standard sales-oriented, heavy promotion campaign. "Our approach to it has not been one of exploitation," Summers stresses. "We think it's one hell of a message, but we're not out 'hyping' it per se. We're taking it in and saying listen to this. Almost anyone who listens to it gets a chill and gets a feeling from it. It kind of promotes itself in that sense. It's very exciting."

This non-promotion promotion has proven very successful. The single has been gaining solid airplay right across Canada, and was even reported on the all-news CKO network. American stations have also heavily supported the record, including top rotation on four Detroit stations.

The sales approach to the single is similar. Rather than mounting a sales campaign as such, A&M are making stock available to people who will hear the single on the radio and are almost sure to ask for it. A&M have also sent a copy to Mr. Taylor, the Canadian Ambassador to Iran, who engineered the escape of the American diplomats.