

Buffalo Springfield interview: part 2

Ed Note: This is part two of J.R.'s interview with Bruce Palmer of the Buffalo Springfield

by j.r. jeldes

staff writer

I got the attention of the crowd-control guy nearest me. (Who turned out to be a Mr. David C. Himmelker—the stage boss for the Guess Who and Buffalo Springfield.) He bent his head close to my mouth, so he could hear me, and I lied and shouted, I'm a writer for the University paper, and I want to interview the lead bassist." I say *lied* because before this piece (if it does get published), I've never written for this or any other paper for that matter. It worked; I got the interview and my answers.

As soon as B.S.R. (the "R" being for "Revisited") went off stage, Mr. Himmelker whisked myself and Brian Lemons, a

friend, after them and to the R.V. they were cooling off in. I hastily acquired paper & ink, explaining that I hadn't expected to interview anyone to a beginning-to-get-skeptical Himmelker; and, this is the conversation [some of it paraphrased] I had with a Mr. Bruce Palmer—lead bass, founder, and along with the drummer, the only remaining original member of Buffalo Springfield:

me: Mr. Palmer, I have a lot of questions I want to ask you; I don't want to interview you on your music. You see, when saw you tonite and heard your playing, it was like looking backwards into time for me. You don't dress like or even physically resemble modern day rockers. It's my guess your band's been around for quite some time. When did you first start to tour as Buffalo

Springfield?

BP: Way back in 1967.

me: The year of the summer of love, and coincidentally, my birth, which probably lets you know that I'm not an *old fan* of your group. (I then noticed a peculiar lightbulb seperating the front and back of the R.V. The wire that actually does the glowing, was shaped like the 3-pronged, universal peace symbol, instead of the common line.)

me: That's an interesting lightbulb.

BP: That light has always been with me, since I first started touring, twenty years ago.

me: Really? Great! A peace symbol...listen Mr. Palmer: what I really want to accomplish in this interview is to compair the mentality of the society you rocked in '67 compared to today's in '87. Do you think there's a big, or

central, difference between people then and now?

BP: "The love is all gone." me: I don't think I understand you. Do you mean people are more introverted, militant or what? BP: The feeling that we used to share with our audiences that we were all looking and hoping for a global peace just isn't there.

me: What is the biggest audience you've ever played for?

BP: About...70,000 in a stadium in W. Germany.

me: Incredible. You know, maybe one reason you don't feel that today's people don't care about peace is that none of us are being sent en masse to die in a foreign land; we don't have a Vietnam going on.

BP: "Today you don't have a 'Vietnam' going on, but what about tomorrow?"

me: Hmmm...You sound as if you feel we're near war or something. Do you have any thoughts as to what's going on in Central America?

BP: "Nicaragua is more possible today that Vietnam ever was; and not just in our government's politics. Today, the majority of Americans would rather go to war than not."

me: OK, let's lighten the mood a tad and change the subject from War & Peace. What do you think of today's mass media as compared to how it was back in th 60's? Specifically, Rolling Stone magazine.

BP: "There is no parallel between the press in '67 and '87, and I've never read Rolling Stone."

me: You've never read Rolling Stone? Not even a peek at their charts?

BP: "No, never. Well, maybe once or twice! (He

gestured with his hand when he said that, and I noticed he was wearing a rainbow colored bracelet.) me: A friend of mine has something exactly like your bracelet. He picked it up at a Grateful Dead concert and uses it as a keychain.

BP: (turning and addressing a woman behind him) You got this for me at a Dead show, didn't you? (she nodded "yes")

me: What do you think of the Grateful Dead?

BP: "I think the Dead's music is the *most* boring music I've ever heard! All of their songs sound the same!"

I did get my answers. The man began his music in the 60's an altogether different time and place than the 80's. He was a sincere gentleman. I didn't agree with all of his view on today; however, I did respect them.

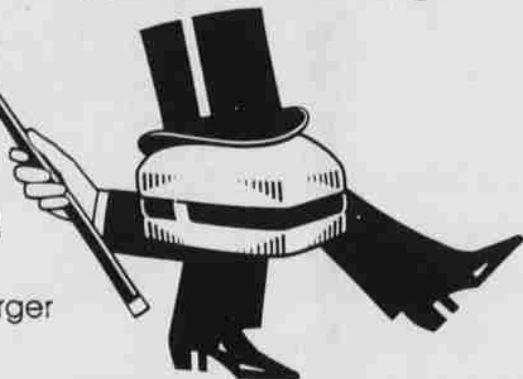
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