

Anti-Flag anti-establishment, pro love songs



Anti-Flag

For Blood and Empire
RCA
www.anti-flag.com

JOHN KMECH
Arts & Entertainment Staff

If you like your punk with a heavy dose of political and societal commentary, then there's the likelihood that you'll find Anti-Flag's latest release, *For Blood and Empire*, an excellent album. Unfortunately, the polemics of the album are also its greatest downfall, in that the guys really are preaching to the chorus. Taking a somewhat more upbeat approach than their previous releases, the band's subjects of discussion are no doubt worthy of scrutiny, such as depleted uranium and the media's effect on self-esteem. Yet Anti-Flag's razorblade-like musical execution will make most casual listeners tune out after being told to stand up and fight for the tenth time. Anti-Flag's goals are noble and there's good material here, but the band needs to realize that subtlety and nuance can be a more powerful method of making their voice heard than a direct blast to the face.

Anti-Flag

With Rise Against, Billy Talent and Moneen
Thursday, 25 January at 8pm
Rexall Place

JOHN KMECH
Arts & Entertainment Staff

When rocking against oppressive regimes or the ongoing corruption of the Bush Administration, it's crucial to have a working sound system, as veteran punk-rockers Anti-Flag discovered during their worldwide tour this year.

"We were at a May Day protest in the UK last May, and we did a free show in a club in London," explains Pat Thetic, the group's percussionist and founding member. "[The authorities] said, 'You can't let these kids in here,' so we said, 'Fuck you, we're going to do the show anyway.' So we do a show and everything's falling apart. The PA system wasn't working and everything was crazy. It was a complete disaster, but it was an amazing experience at the same time."

Despite technical problems, the concert and protest still ended up turning into the video for "War Sucks, Let's Party," one of two singles off of the group's 2006 album *For Blood and Empire*. Featuring the band immersing themselves in a crowd with English bobbies and activists alike, the video encapsulates what the band has focused on during their decade-long career: punk rock, political activism and continual touring. Having spent almost all of 2006 and now part of 2007 on the road promoting their



new album, the boys of Anti-Flag are certainly committed to their societal ideals. But could there be a softer side to the guys that once sang, "This machine kills fucking fascists?"

"The last two records have been pretty dogmatic," Thetic notes, speaking of *Empire* and 2003's *The Terror State*. "Because we're stupid, we feel as though we should say something. We should just give up and let someone else say it, but we feel as though nobody else is saying it, so we take the hit when everybody says, 'Shut the fuck up.' The world hasn't gotten any better, but we feel as though we want to talk about something else for a little bit. Maybe this next record, we will stray and have a little bit more personal freedom. So you may

see some Anti-Flag love songs in the future."

Even though some may wonder if romantic punk rock ditties may constitute an ideological about-face, the band no doubt continues to stand up for what they believe in, working in close quarters with several non-profit organizations. The group is currently donating portions of ticket sales to the African Well Fund, and works with Military Free Zone, which helps keep American students' names off of military recruitment lists.

But Thetic explained the group's most ambitious success has come due to their work on depleted uranium awareness.

"We got a Depleted Uranium Study Act to pass Congress," exclaims an

enthused Thetic. "On the record, we have a song called 'Depleted Uranium is a War Crime,' and what we were trying to do was raise people's awareness about the problems with depleted uranium. We joined together with a Congressman who put together the bill and we supported the effort to get the ideas out. It passed, so there's going to be comprehensive study of depleted uranium."

After fighting for change and still having to put up with broken PA systems, the few triumphs garnered taste that much sweeter.

"That was a victory. In political activism, victories don't happen very often," Thetic laughs. "So as far as something to celebrate, that was something to celebrate for us."

University of Alberta
JOURNALISTS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS PRESENTS

INFORMED IGNORANCE
the Effects of Today's Global Media

JANUARY 22-25, 2007
EXPLORE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR GLOBAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL MEDIA.

Featuring:
Robert Hackett - News Watch Canada
Allan Mayer - Editor in Chief, Edmonton Journal
Bob Weber - Canadian Press
Chibu Lagman - Pacifica Radio
Linda Dumont - Edmonton Street News
Colleen Ross (Keynote) - CBC/JHR
and many more...

Forums, U of A Power Plant:

Monday:
Canadian Media, It's Audience and its Blind Spots
Tuesday:
The Voices in Special Interest News
Wednesday:
Foreign Media Formats and the Coverage of Foreign Affairs
Thursday Keynote:
Colleen Ross (CBC/JHR), Media in Development
U of A Engineering Teaching and Learning Centre 001

JANUARY 19, 2007
Pre-Party
WITH GRASSROOT DEVIATION WITH RED RAM
at The Sidetrack Cafe

SPONSORED BY:
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA STUDENTS UNION
Walter & Duncan GORDON FOUNDATION
AP!RG THE GATEWAY EDMONTON JOURNAL

Each Evening Begins at 7pm
For more information email jhr@apirg.org
<http://www.angelfire.com/planet/jhr-alberta/>

The World's Hottest Commercials

January 26 to February 8 at Garneau Theatre

EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
CLIO AWARDS
nexopia.com

A fundraiser for the Edmonton International Film Festival
www.edmontonfilmfest.com

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. PULL PIN HOLD UPRIGHT
TIRER LA CHEVILLE TENIR VERTICALE
2. START BACK 6 FEET (2 M)
REARMER A PRES (2 m) DU FEU
3. AIM AT BASE OF FIRE
SQUEEZE, SWEEP
USER LA BASE DE FEU
PRESSEZ, ARROSER EN VA-ET-VIENT

917 BOUNCE I HAVE AN IDEA PARCOM
INTERCAMP ★ Heineken