

# GOVERNMENT ISSUE

Frank POE interviewed Tom Lyle of Government Issue through the mail late in 1985 and it went something like this...

**POE** Government Issue has a long history and many records out, why do you think you've been able to keep it together for so long while other bands form and break-up constantly?

**TOM** Well, I'm sure that has to do with the fact that we're not afraid to undergo slight personal changes from time to time, I mean, the G.I.'s could have just called it quits in 1981 when bassist Brian Gay left. Like, Minor Threat, rather than replace Lyle Fresler when he left for college, broke up. Thankfully Lyle gave up college and Minor Threat reformed in April 1982! Well, back to us... Brian Gay left the G.I.'s in the fall of 1981, Brian Baker (X-Minor Threat) joined on bass, then the original guitarist John "God" Barry left in Oct. 81, Brian Baker switched to guitar, I came in on bass. Brian Baker left in April 1982 to reform Minor Threat, and I switched to guitar. Confused? So am I.

**POE** Do you keep in touch with x G.I.'s?

**TOM** Well, Brian Baker is still a big force in the G.I.'s, not playing, but helps out at shows and in the studio with excellent support and advice. Mitch Parker (On "Boycott Stabb" and Various comp.cuts) is in a band called Crippled Pilgrims. Rob Moss (X Artific. Peace) was in the band for a few months, but he left to go to college in Boston.

He's on a few cuts of the live lp. Mike Fellows ("Joyride") is in Rites of Spring now. He left the band to "find himself" in California, he came back a few months later and formed R.O.S.. Lenny Leonard ("The Fun..", "Give us Stabb") just left after we returned from Calif. 8/85 because he was upset with our hectic touring and less than organized stage appearances, you know, getting knocked over by stage divers and shit. Now in the band is X. Minor Threat bass player Steve Haggren, who will be on our new studio lp due out this winter sometime. **POE** Is "Make an Effort" out of print? How many of each color vinyl was printed?

**TOM** Yeah, its out of print. There were 1000 made on black vinyl, and 1000 made in clear vinyl, I think. There might have been about 1500 clear ones made, but I'm not sure. They have different back covers & lyric sheets you know?!

**POE** How about "Legless Bull", how many printed?

**TOM** Only 1000 were pressed.

**POE** How'd you get on "Underground Hits, Vol.2" on Aggressive Rock Produktionen?

**TOM** They sent us a letter and \$200 they asked for 2 songs, but we gave them 3. Ain't we nice?

**POE** The song "Sheer Terror" is on a lot of your records. Why do you record so many versions?

**TOM** We're not sure. It was on "Make An Effort" cause we thought it was

so different from "The Legless Bull" version. It was on "Boycott Stabb" cause we wanted an "extended version. The "Joyride" version is kind of a joke. Did you know that Mike Fellows is singing on the "Joyride" version? **POE** At the beginning of 1985 I heard rumours that G.I. would release a double lp. Instead you released one on Mystic and one on P.O.Y.

**TOM** No, no. The double album was supposed to be one record live and one studio. But we decided to break them into 2 releases. The live lp should be out any day now. The "Give Us Stabb" ep is out takes from the "Fun Just Never Ends" sessions.

**POE** Why'd you cover Faith's "Trapped" on "The Fun Just Never Ends"?

**TOM** I've always been very influenced by Mike Hampton's (S.O.A., Faith, Embrace) guitar playing, HE RULES!! The version of "Trapped" is a tribute to Faith.

**POE** Will Government Issue continue putting out the same quantity of music in the future?

**TOM** No, MORE Quantity, and I hope more Quality!

**POE** Tell us about tours.

**TOM** In 1982 we went to California with Scream. We played in San Francisco a few times and Santa Cruz, but our L.A. show was cancelled, drag. In 1983 we toured the entire USA. In 1984 we got as far west as Minneapolis and as far south as Miami. In the summer

of 1985 Mystic records flew us out to California to play some Golden Voice shows. All inbetween these larger tours we go on "mini-tours" mostly on the East Coast.

**POE** Do you have any pets?

**TOM** I have no pets if you don't include Stabb or the cockroaches in my apartment.

**POE** What are some of your fav. upcoming bands?



## DISCOGRAPHY

- Give Us Stabb or Give Us Death (Mystic Records, 1985)
- The Fun Just Never Ends (Fountain of Youth, 1985)
- Joy Ride (P.O.Y., 1984/ German pressing: Aggressive Rock Produktionen)
- Boycott Stabb (Dischord Records/P.O.Y., 1983/ English repressing: Dutch East India Trading)
- Make An Effort (P.O.Y., 1982)
- Legless Bull (Dischord, 1981)
- Featured on Various Artists LPs: Covers (Mystic, 1983), Copulation (Mystic, 1983), Flipside Vinyl Fanzine #1 (Gasatanka, 1983), Bouncing Babies (P.O.Y., 1983), Underground Hits, Vol. 2 (Germany, Aggressive Rock Produktionen, 1982), Flex Your Head (Dischord, 1981)
- Featured on Various Artists Cassette: Cursed Earth (D.S.I. Tapes, 1985), Can It Be? (Metrozine Tapes, 1984)

## VIDEO

- Flipside Video #7 (Flipside Video Productions, Inc., 1985)

TOM Rites of spring, Embrace, Oh,  
I don't know , I'm no judge of  
those things

POE Do you know how many shows G.I.  
has ever played?

TOM Yeah, I made a list. Last count  
was about 150.

POE Does living so close to the  
nations capital influence the scene  
in D.C. both lyrically and how  
shows are run?

TOM Yeah, I think it makes it less  
political. Until recently, with  
the uprising of the anti-apartheid  
thing, which has pretty much every  
body upset, the scene has been  
very apolitical. I'm not sure , but  
maybe its because of the overdose  
of politics in the DC news and TV  
thats kept it out of the lyrics and  
shows.

POE If you were on "Lets make a Deal"  
the gameshow, which door would you  
chose, door #1, 2 or 3 and what do  
you wish was behind that door?

TOM Huh?

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ISSUE**



POE You signed my letters "see you  
in hell" what do you think hell  
is like? (Note: he signed this  
one " XXX ")

Tom In your letter, not all. I  
try to make all my letters diff-  
erent. I guess I said "see you in  
hell" cause when I die I hope to  
go to hell so I'll be with all  
my friends.

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# GOVERNMENT ISSUE

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