

# Janis and Bobby McGee

By THE MISSION SINGERS

Sometimes a song makes it big simply because it's a knock-out song, like a recent song called War. Other times, though, a song depends almost entirely on the performer.

Roger Miller and several others recorded Me and Bobby McGee almost two years ago, but this song (written by Kris Kristofferson and Fred Foster) had to wait for a real-life Bobby McGee: Janis Joplin. She made it the Number One song it is now; she made it come alive.

To some people, perhaps, the very name of Janis Joplin is now discouraged. After all, they might say, she killed herself with drugs; to continue talking about her, to continue to praise her, is to tempt her fans to follow her example.

Well, of course it's crazy for anyone to try drugs because someone else did. But that's really not the point. The point is that Janis Joplin could really bring a song to life. She did a lot of shouting and wailing, but she also knew how to sing; and maybe Me and Bobby McGee was the best song she ever sang. Dislike her if you like, but respect the talent she used so well. And be sad she's gone. She was a friend to a lot of people.

Me and Bobby McGee is a song about many of those friends. It's a song about a mood of a generation. It almost echoes, at the end of a decade, the words of another great song written at the beginning of the 1960's by Bob Dylan: "I goin' down that lonesome road, gal; where I'm bound, I can't tell."

For that's one of the problems that has plagued young people for the past couple of years. They haven't been able to express themselves. That may sound odd to anyone who thinks he's seen and heard nothing but student protest and rock festi-



JANIS JOPLIN

vals and youth adulation wherever he's sturned.

But as Thomas Wolfe put it: "The young men of this land are not, as they are often called, a 'lost' race — they are a race that never yet has been discovered. And the whole secret, power and knowledge of their own discovery is locked within them — they know it, feel it, have the whole thing in them, and they cannot utter it."

Perhaps the most common "generation-gap" dialogue between parent and child during the past four or five years went something like this:

Parent: "For crying out loud, you complain about everything. What do you want?" Child: "I don't know what I want. But one thing for sure, I know what I don't want!"

And off he' or she would go. Millions of them "headin' for the trains" or thumbing a ride on a diesel trailer, playing sad old blues songs on a tiny harmonica; they'd go "from the

coal mines of Kentucky to the California sun."

And they'd throw away almost everything they knew, and call it freedom. But that kind of freedom is "just another word for nothin' left to lose." The attempt was honest (it certainly made a lot of people think a little more critically about the plastic world they'd been building) but the effort to reach the Promised Land, the Utopia of Walden II, the Nirvana of freedom in a vacuum, was doomed from the beginning.

It was doomed because freedom really means never believing that anything is ever "good enough for Me and Bobby McGee."

Freedom means thinking that we always have the opportunity to enjoy life more, to live better. Freedom is never having to be satisfied that we've lived enough. Freedom is the ability to live with — not to survive — the conditions we find ourselves in.



—Photo by Ernest Guido

## Oratoricals Winners

State chairman Kenneth Spears congratulates David Hayes, Aquinas Institute, winner of the Rochester diocesan oratorical contest, sponsored by the New York State Council Knights of Columbus. Looking on are runner-up Jo Ann Amore of Bishop Kearney High School and Diocesan Chairman Edward L. Miller.

## CDH Task Force Members Named

Members of the Task Force for the Campaign for Human Development in Ontario, Yates and Seneca Counties were announced recently by the diocesan Office of Human Development.

Representing Ontario County are: Father Kevin Murphy, Mrs. Michael (Dorothy) Everest, Richard Lang, Sister Kathleen Kircher, A. Dion Robinson.

III, Mrs. Thomas (Jackie) McCormick and Jerome VanBuren.

Representing Yates County are: Mrs. William (Adelaide) Moore and Mrs. Edward (Ann) Creary.

Representing Seneca County are: Father David B. Callan, Richard Dombrowski, Mrs. Keith (Florence) Beck, Mrs. Caesar (Maureen) Pacitto and James Winnek.

## Parish Groups Ready 'Follies'

The Men's Club and Women's Guild of St. John the Evangelist, Humboldt St., will present their Spring Follies, 1971, on Friday and Saturday nights, April 23 and 24, in the Mercy High School auditorium.

The theme of the song and dance revue is a tour of the United States.

## First Penance Program Begins

King Ferry—Parents' meetings in the First Penance program offered by the Rural Education Center began this week.

A program presented here last night will be repeated at 7:30 tonight, April 14, in St. Bernard's rectory, Scipio Center, and at 7:30 Thursday night in the education center's Ludlowville trailer.

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