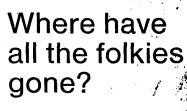
## **TRENDS**

BY NORMAN SNIDER



MAGINE, if you will, the following scene: it's a Saturday morning and the intrépid Trendspotter is soaking in his bath. He has been there for a period of time sufficiently long that some observer might be justified in thinking he is modelling for a portrait of Marat. From a distant room, on the FM radio, walts the sounds of The Jazz Scene on CJRT, just coming to a close. Then, before he can make a move, the music's changed, and it's the dreaded folk music of yesteryear, and the relentlessly cheery Joe Lewis. Now, rather than leap out of the bath and spread watery torrents everywhere, the intrepid TS settles back to listen to that program's inevitable fare: Joan Baez, the early Dylan, country blues. Ah reader, what floods of memory are evoked. Suddenly a whole vanished world, rival to the Lost Continent of Mu surfaces in front of his eyes. The lost world of folk music! And he experiences, as if in a vision, that vanished milleu of Martin guitars, the Half Beat Coffee House, the Mariposa Folk Festival, Sonny and Brownie, duffle coats, scraggly beards, Travis picking, records with such arcane labels on them as Arhoolie and Delmark. Ah, folk music, where have you gone? Where is Joan Baez now? Phil Ochs is dead, Tom Rush and John Hammond no longer record on major labels, Sylvia Tyson is on local TV, Peter Paul and Mary are reduced to the occasional nostalgia concert. What happened?

The obvious answer is that rock and roll happened. Once Bob Dylan turned traitor to the great acoustic God and plugged in, folk music was doomed. Its practitioners had two ways to go; they could either try to rock or they could transform themselves into "singer-was taken by such former folkies like Joni Mitchell. Bruce Cockburn and Murray McLauchlan. They changed and survived: it was the interpreters of the music of others like Baez and Rush that tumbled into obscurity. The less obvious answer is that, with time, the notion of what constitutes "folk" material in the radition that went to the proper since the folk music of others like Bae