

**JONI MITCHELL:
DOG EAT DOG**
Geffen Records

Give 'em hell, Joni!

The songwriting is as sharp and the music punchier than ever on **Dog Eat Dog**, the 14th album by Canadian-born Joni Mitchell, who composed such folk masterpieces as "Both Sides Now" and "The Circle Game."

Here, Mitchell makes a highly successful foray into electronic pop, taking brave steps that are always anchored by her distinctive soprano and her cutting lyrics. Among Mitchell's side musicians on **Dog Eat Dog** are James Taylor, Don Henley, British synth-wiz Thomas Dolby, and, keeping up her jazzy traditions of the late 70s, Weather Report reed-man Wayne Shorter.

Mitchell wastes no time making her points on **Dog Eat Dog**, and she leaves no icons unscathed. Her "Tax Free," which cuts TV evangelists to the quick, is perhaps one of the best, most insightful songs of popular protest in recent memory.

Also quite to the point in their own different ways are "Smokin' (Empty, Try Another)," "Ethiopia," and the gutsy "The Three Great Stimulants."

Throughout, Mitchell remains very much her own artist, using music as a beautiful tool to make knowing observations of the world. Chalk another one up for a brave artist. A minus.

**DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS:
DON'T STAND ME DOWN**
Mercury Records

If you can approach Kevin Rowland

OFF THE RECORD—JIM ZEBORA

