Monday, September 23, 1985

Daily Nebraskan 'Scarecrow' sincere Americana about love, family, justice, hope By Kyle Foster

JOHN COUGAR MELLENCAMP

Staff Reporter

John Cougar Mellencamp, 'Scarecrow," PolyGram Records "The highway between John's house and the studio where these songs were recorded cuts through a stretch of Indiana where the land is fertile and full of growth. It is from this land and its people that these songs are born, and though it is not necessary to know this to enjoy and appreciate them. it does lend a certain understanding for those who care to think about such things."

George M. Green, 1985 John Cougar Mellencamp's latest album, "Scarecrow," is a grand achieve-ment that establishes Mellencamp as a major voice in U.S. music today. In "Scarecrow," Mellencamp has tapped into the U.S. conscious better than anyone since Bruce Springsteen's "Nebraska" album. He's done it with sincerity,

Record Review

No flashy image to sell. No flashy backup band. Mellencamp has constructed the songs around drummer 'nation the nation causes war. Kenny Aronoff's simple, straight and the songs a fuller, richer sound.

Mellencamp's voice has mellowed. Nation warm tonight? He has matured. Mellencamp, no longer the bad boy of U.S. rock obsessed with whips and motorcycles, has established not as insightful as Bob Dylan, without the appeal or history of Springsteen, yet every bit as sincere and emotional.

This album is about family, the Especially justice.

lel involving the family, the nation and you now. the importance of justice for both.

birth to a son called Nation/ life. Then she walked away/

When a mother leaves her baby son, the son cries. When Justice deserts a the people where it is that I come

When a Nation cries/His tears powerful beat. Mellencamp and Larry fall down like missiles from the myself in this small town/ And Crane's acoustic guitar takes the edge skies/Justice look into Independoff the harsh electic guitar and gives ence's eyes/ Can you make everything all right/Can you keep your

> The justice theme rings throughout the record. On the title track, "Rain On The Scarecrow," Mellencamp asks where justice has left the family farm.

Well there's 97 crosses planted in the courthouse yard, /97 families who lost 97 farms/ I think about my grandpa and my neighnation, liberty and justice. It's about bors and my name/ And some Americana of all kinds. It's about nights I feel like dyin' like that hopes and dreams American style and scarecrow in the rain/ Rain on love. It's about freedom . . . and justice. the scarecrow. Bleed on the plow/ This land fed a nation. This land On "Justice and Independence '85" made me proud/ Son, I'm just Mellencamp constructs a triplex paral- sorry they're just memories for

The album is dedicated to the memory

Courtesy Polygram Records

No I cannot forget where it is that I came from/I cannot forget from/ I cannot forget the people who love me/ Yeah, I can be people.let me be just what I want to be.

"Minutes to Memories" is the story of the wisdom of an old man passing the span of three generations. There are no free rides, no one said it'd be easy/The old man told me this, my son; I'm telling it to you.

Mellencamp has said that "there is nothing mere sad or glorious than generations changing hands."

Even "Lonely Ol' Night," the album's radio hit, is more profound than Mellencamp's earlier hits, "Hurts So Good" and "The Authority Song."

There is a lot of truth in "Scarecrow." Not everyone may agree with Mellencamp's populist ideas, but at the emotional level this record rings true.

The tunes are great too.



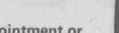
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of July/So his parents called him His grandmother sings one of the tracks, Independence Day/ He married called "Grandma's Theme." "Small a girl named Justice who gave Town" reaffirms his faith in the rural G.P.A. scale.

He was born on the fourth day of his grandfather, Speck Mellencamp.

Where there is truth there will be justice.

I'll give "Scarecrow" 3.985 on the

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