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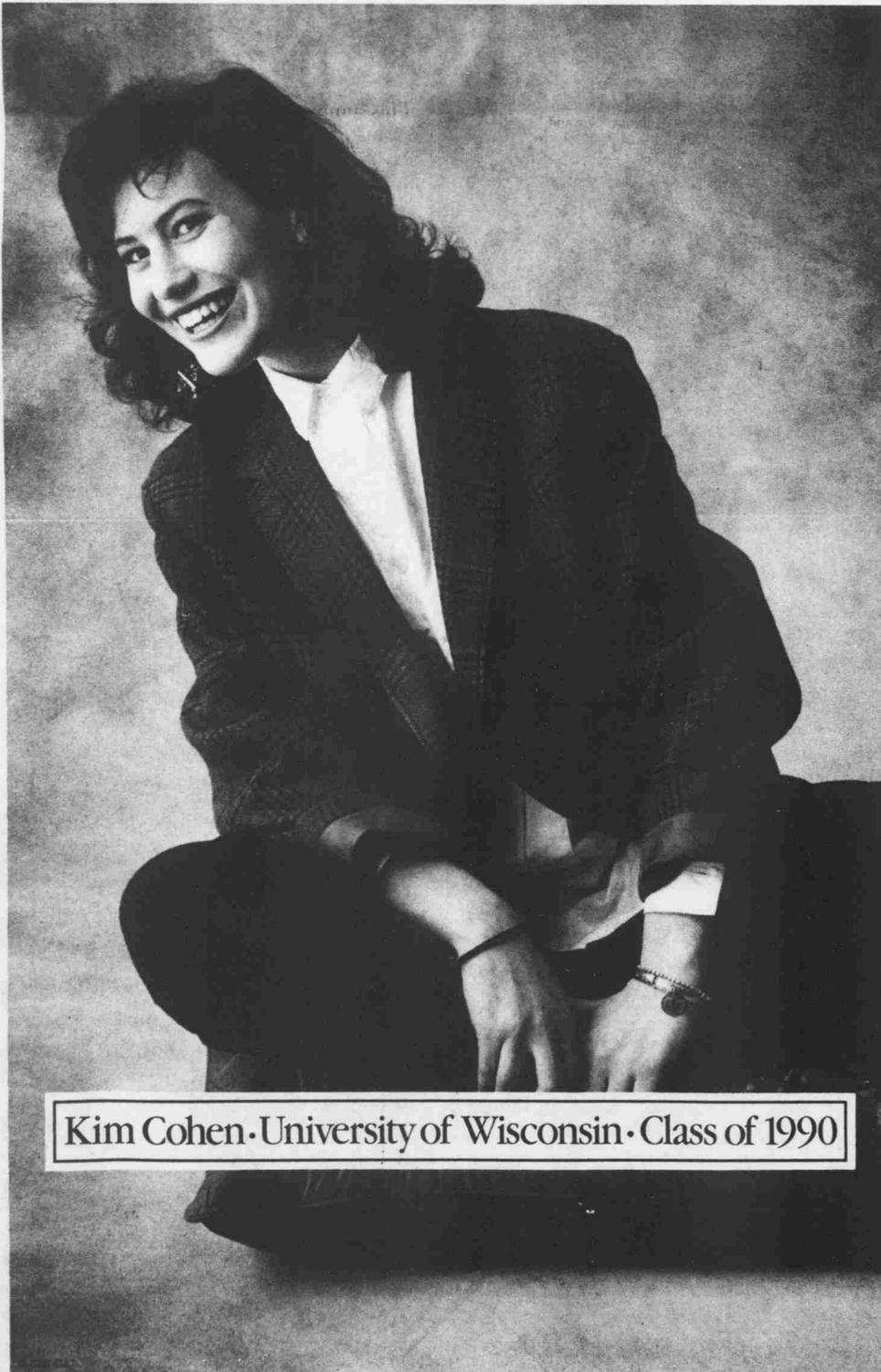
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Band issues volatile new statement

Australia's politically-charged Midnight Oil has just released its best album so far this year. Only one word can describe the music and lyrics on the 10-song LP *Diesel and Dust* — potent. This is the band's sixth record but only its third U.S. release.

The Oilers use a double guitar attack of Jim Moginie and Martin Rotsey and a compact rhythm section of bassist Peter Gifford and drummer Rob Hirst to produce infectious melodies and a resounding beat that allow charismatic lead singer Peter Garrett to take on the problems of Australia and the world.

James Burrus Album

Midnight Oil is political without being pretentious. The Oilers' ego never rises above its desire to write great music and improve life on Earth.

To understand the problems of its country's first inhabitants, the band toured some of the Australian aborigines' remote communities in the Northern Territory. The first song of the album, "Beds Are Burning," asks the Australian government and people to return land back to the aborigines. "The time has come to say fair's fair, to pay the rent, to pay our share . . . it belongs to them, let's give it back." The song "Dead Heart" describes the spirit and perseverance of the people. "We carry in our hearts the true country and that cannot be stolen."

Much had been said about the twin cyclonic guitar attack of Moginie and Rotsey as well as the passionate voice of Garrett, but Hirst is the core of the band. Recognized as Australia's best drummer for seven years running, Hirst could also hold the title of the world's premier beatkeeper. He shifts the Oilers into fast and slow speeds flawlessly on "Put Down That Weapon," a song in which Garrett pleads for nuclear disarmament, and rips and rocks throughout the rest of the album.

While Midnight Oil has not come anywhere close to reaching the amount of success in the U.S. as it has in Australia, the members are hoping their music can speak to people of all nations. Hirst says Midnight Oil wants "to write Australian music, which people overseas could get into and understand, which would enlarge their whole vision of Australia past vegemite sandwiches and kangaroo hops." *Diesel and Dust* should do that. If this album isn't in your record collection, it ought to be.

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