

# David Cassidy grows up

By VERNON SCOTT  
United Press International

**D**AVID CASSIDY, who sold 20 million records, starred in *The Partridge Family* and packed concert halls, turned off his career like a water tap three years ago and walked away from it all.

The youthful millionaire bought an estate in Hawaii, a horse farm in Santa Barbara, Calif., and let the rest of the world go by.

During the frantic four years of the television series Cassidy was a teenage idol whose public appearances fostered riot control precautions. To youngsters he was Elvis, the Osmonds and Elton John all rolled in one.

His image was wholesome, drugless and romantic. There was no telling how high his career might have soared. But David quit cold after a concert for 40,000 screaming fans in England.

It was a matter of self-preservation.

Now David, 27, has surfaced to star in a two-hour episode of television's *Police Story*.

"I'm glad the mania is over," he said. "It was an incredible trip and tremendous experience to go through. I enjoyed it. But I stopped because I was overworked. I didn't think I could take that part of my career any further.

"It seemed everyone had a piece of me, pulling in different directions.

"There comes a time when overwhelming success at an early age be-

comes too much to handle. The only option that made sense to me was stepping back from it.

"The whole phenomenon of David Cassidy was a bizarre way of life. And I was fortunate to have come out through the other side with my head on straight. I survived.

"The key to survival is that I left the experience at the peak. It didn't leave me. Rejection is what really takes its toll on young people in this business.

"When I hung 'em up there were all kinds of offers waiting for me — TV series, record contracts and even movies. But I refused to let anybody with tons of money seduce me into going on.

"I didn't retire. I just wanted a rest. I told myself, hopefully, when I returned the people who cared for me would care for me again."

Cassidy has matured considerably. He married actress Kay Lenz seven months ago. His baby faced good looks have given way to attractive masculinity. His voice has deepened and he's developed a sense of humor about himself.

Cassidy discovered the public isn't as fickle as he had heard. During his hiatus he traveled around the world twice. He was recognized and besieged for autographs in the U.S. and abroad, due in part to endless reruns of *The Partridge Family*.

When the *Police Story* episode was filmed at a Los Angeles high school (Cassi-



David Cassidy and Dee Wallace in bedroom scene from *Police Story*.

dy plays a narc) barriers were erected to keep kids from swarming all over him. But the old frenzy was gone.

"I was flattered by the positive reaction of the kids. It would have bothered me four years ago. But this time I loved it.

"I wouldn't want the old intensity of the past. I'm coming back because I think it's time to act and record again. It's not a popularity contest I've come back to.

"The fans confused me with the character I played, Keith Partridge. I see the reruns once in a while and I really can't relate to him. Reruns represent a time warp where people never get old.

"I wonder what goes through Jackie Gleason's mind when he sees replays of *The Honeymooners*. He's not the same man now. And I'm not the same person who began *The Partridge Family* when I was 19.

"My singing voice is different now. On the show they sped up the sound track to make my voice higher.

"I wrote a flock of songs during the last year or so and I plan to make an album of them. The songs are different from what I used to do.

"But my primary interest is straight acting, the kind of thing I'm doing in this *Police Story* segment."