

Give David Cassidy a complete say in his life, and be sure he'd follow his own inclinations ... maybe get into some tight situations, but he'd always have the common-sense to get back into the right direction. But being part of a television set-up like the successful Partridge Family means that he has to be directed, has to be ruled and controlled by the people around him.

Despite the occasional outburst where he honestly feels he could chuck it all in tomorrow or sooner, David has the professional approach which enables him to say that he WILL accept instructions. And when he's in a specially good mood, he'll admit that a lot of the instructions have been very good indeed for his career.

You must remember that every album and single ever released by the Partridge Family and by David on his own has turned gold ... like King Midas of legendary folklore, David has that kind of touch. He touches a song with his gold-plated tonsils, and it turns to gold. I Think I Love You, Could It Be Forever, How Can I Be Sure ... oh, you just read through the discography of the Partridge scene and you know that everything has been positively huge.

Joining the Partridge television scene meant that David was caught up in big business. He recalls one day going out to

buy a packet of cornflakes, getting back to his home ... all ready to tuck in when, wham!, there was his own face turning outwards from the back of the packet. Smiling at him! It was a shock. It was part of the high-marketing technique which went on once the Partridge Family really hit the highspots.

Shops in America, more than anywhere else, are almost cluttered with articles endorsed by David. He insists on being honest about this ... he only endorses things that he can honestly say he enjoys. He'd just forgotten about those cornflakes, that's all ...

He sometimes wonders and worries about the image that has been his since the series hit the top of the ratings. "All the things that are written about me make me seem somehow untouchable", he says. "But I just want you to stress that I'm a human being. I'm no super-human, just a human being. One of millions, except that I'm able to enjoy a special sort of position in life because of being in show-business.

"You can be a star, or you can be just part of the show-business scene. I was lucky when I first went to Hollywood. It may be an unreal kind of life, but I lived with my mother at a very nice moderate kind of place, in a nice sort of family area. It was really an upper-middleclass

Big business or not: David is still human

area, though I guess the class system is a bit different in Britain."

He regrets that it's so difficult to keep up with the friends he used to have, but he's grateful for the comradeship he gets all the time from Sam Hyman, and from Steve "Cookie" Ross, a young guitarist who works very well indeed with David.

But back to the Partridge scene. That series virtually guaranteed a measure of success to all who appeared in it, but surely nobody could have envisaged just how big David would be. He gets into a reflective sort of mood: "Recording with the Partridge family is one-dimensional. With the group records it's all rather restricted and we all had to be directed to where people wanted us to go. My own feeling is that music should always be allowed to go where it wants to, and sometimes the tight, play-it-this-way policies rather upset me. I suppose people were afraid of letting me stretch out on my own. But I've got to keep changing. I have to outgrow my fans and then let them grow with me again. I think it took a long time for them to believe that this was so ... but I feel that my direction now is positive, and that's good. I have to grow and expand."

And the more one thinks about it, the more natural is David's desire to keep making progress: to refuse to stand still

and just let the ole grass grow around his feet.

He says: "I don't forget that I've only been singing professionally for a little over two years. But at least I refuse to compare myself with anybody else. I've never consciously tried to copy any other singers. People in Britain said I sounded a bit like Cliff Richard, and they made it sound like they thought I was just copying him, but the honest truth is that we don't know Cliff Richard in The States.

"Anyway, I'm not complaining about anything. At first, they kinda held the reins on what I sang, and how I sang it, but now I've got a lot more freedom to do it my way. Obviously it would have been stupid to let me go my own way early on, like doing something crazy and blowing the whole Partridge thing wide open.

"As for the fans ... I honestly do love them. Since the Partridge thing exploded, I've found that it sometimes can be a bit hard. When the fans go a little wild over the top, then I try to break it down and make them relax a bit. I have to convince them that I'm not suddenly going to disappear, or suddenly put a crown on my head. They're prepared for anything, and sometimes they can't really believe that I'm going to stop by and talk to them.



Above: relaxing. Below: on set with the Partridges

