



meet David Cassidy for an important interview, that sort of news is pretty serious . . .

Luckily Pan Am realised that, too, and managed to make room for Tony and squeeze him in as an extra passenger.

"But, of course," he smiled ruefully. "Because the plane was fully booked, there wasn't a seat for me. So I had to make the entire trip sitting in the restaurant."

He realised he was lucky to be on board at all. But, when you've spent fifteen hours sitting upright on a none-too-comfortable chair . . . Well, that's when you start running out of lucky stars to count!

ROYAL RULER

So it was a somewhat stiff and weary Royal Ruler who staggered onto the tarmac at L.A. International Airport, about four hours later than originally scheduled.

But there was still another surprise in store for him . . . "Bell had told me that the interview was set up for the day after my arrival," he explained. "So I was looking forward to a shower and some sleep before I met up with David and recorded our interview."

"He soon found out that he'd still be 'looking forward' to it for quite a while to come.

"When I got off the plane, you see, I discovered that David was expecting me up there right away . . . Well, four hours before to be precise!

"He'd sent someone from his Press Office along to meet me. So I hauled my carcass and my baggage into this luxurious long limousine and went straight up to David's house.

"It certainly is a beautiful place," he continued enthusias-

tically. "It's exactly what a guy of his status should have in L.A., starting with those electric gates which must open by some sort of secret code, I guess. Then the big drive, and the house itself and every single thing in it. Everything is just perfect."

David had left the front door open as a sort of welcome and an invitation to walk right in. Tony's first glimpse was of David:

"Just sitting there, strumming an acoustic guitar. But, as soon as I appeared, he threw it on one side and got up to say 'Hi!'"

Tony was immediately impressed by the whole atmosphere of the house: "You know, it had a really nice atmosphere, though it's hard to describe it and pin it down for people who haven't actually felt it for themselves. Inside, the place was very dimly lit, so that everything was kind of soft and subtle instead of being harsh and glaring . . . There was a big log fire burning, too, which was really fantastic."

In short, Tony was knocked out by the whole set up! They just chatted generally for a while, catching up on all the news, before getting down to putting anything on tape. For that they moved into David's bedroom where he has a lot of recording equipment.

"We had a really great session," Tony recalls. "The actual interview must have run to an hour and a half or more. And that's a very long time, especially when you consider that David had already been waiting for four hours!"

In fact, Tony brought back so much material on tape that she simply wasn't enough time to broadcast it all on

Christmas Eve! So there's still plenty left to give a new flavour to any repeats!

And, talking of repeats . . . Tony hopes that there will be one on Valentine's Day this year—just to make sure you don't forget your very special Valentine for 1974!

AT HOME

Anyway, all in all, Tony saw quite a lot of David during his twenty-four hours in Los Angeles. In addition to that first day at home with David, he also went along to the Partridge Family film set as David's guest, and saw how it all happens down there.

By the end of his stay, he felt he'd got to know David fairly well. And one thing struck him particularly:

"I think David could be a very good friend," he told me. "To anyone who was sincere enough to be a real friend to him. I think he is looking for that kind of person all the time. But, of course, in his position, it's sometimes hard for him to know for sure."

On the music scene, Tony is full of admiration for David's work. Especially his latest album:

"If he's managed to do that and continue with the Partridge Family at the same time," he enthused. "Then I'm really rubbing my hands with glee when I think of what he'll be producing in the future, now he'll have so much more time."

"Of course, the signs have been there all along for anyone who cared to look. You only have to listen to his albums—from the very first one he did for the Partridge Family, right through to his latest one . . . And you can actually hear the line of progression—almost with every track."