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NEWSPAPER

**SPECIAL INTEREST
 and MUSIC VIDEO**



Special Edition

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THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSWEEKLY OF MUSIC AND HOME ENTERTAINMENT

November 12, 1988/\$3.95 (U.S.), \$5 (CAN.)

'E.T.' LOOKS EXTRA TERRIFIC TO VID RETAILERS

RIAA Halves Requirements For Singles Certification

NEW YORK In recognition of the decline of singles sales in recent years, the Recording Industry Assn. of America will halve its certification requirements for gold and platinum singles. Starting Jan. 1, singles will become eligible for gold status with sales of 500,000 units and platinum awards will be given to singles selling more than 1 million units.

Additionally, all EP versions of a single configuration—12-inch singles, CD-3s, etc.—will be eligible for gold certification at 250,000

units, a drop from the former 500,000-unit requirement. The A side of such extended singles must stay constant on all available configurations of the recording. All other certification criteria remain the same.

"We just feel this is more representative of the singles sales that are out there," says Trish Heimers, VP of public relations for the RIAA. "You can look at the numbers for singles certifications over the past years, and *(Continued on page 79)*

This story was prepared by Al Stewart and Geoff Mayfield in New York and Jim McCullaugh in L.A.

NEW YORK "E.T.—The Extra-Terrestrial" flew off the shelves at video outlets across the country immediately after—and sometimes before—its official release date, Oct. 27. If a problem existed with the title, it wasn't a matter of mass merchants low-balling the price or stores jumping the street date, but rather a shortage of product that forced dealers to turn away customers.

By all indications, the MCA Home Video release has sparked an unprecedented sales surge that has surpassed all expectations. Some insiders are predicting that unit volume may soar to the 14 million mark—more than double original

projections. Interestingly, the enormous demand for the title has some mass merchants wondering whether there was a need to slash the \$24.95 list price. While "E.T." was widely available for less than \$20 at such retailers as Sears, K mart, and Target, video specialty stores that held the line on pricing say they were able to build store traffic and

realize a healthy profit.

"It feels pretty good to be making all this money off of 'E.T.' while I watch my mass merchant competitors lose money on it," says David Earle, owner of the Video Station in Decatur, Ala. "I thought all along that it would be ridiculous to discount this product. People have *(Continued on page 78)*

Roulette Head Sentenced For Extortion Levy Gets 10-Year Jail Term

BY BRUCE HARING

CAMDEN, N.J. Roulette Records president Morris Levy, a well-known presence on the music industry scene for more than 30 years, was sentenced Oct. 28 in U.S. Dis-

trict Court here to two concurrent 10-year prison terms and a \$200,000 fine, punishment for his conviction on two federal counts of conspiracy to extort.

Amid government allegations of *(Continued on page 79)*

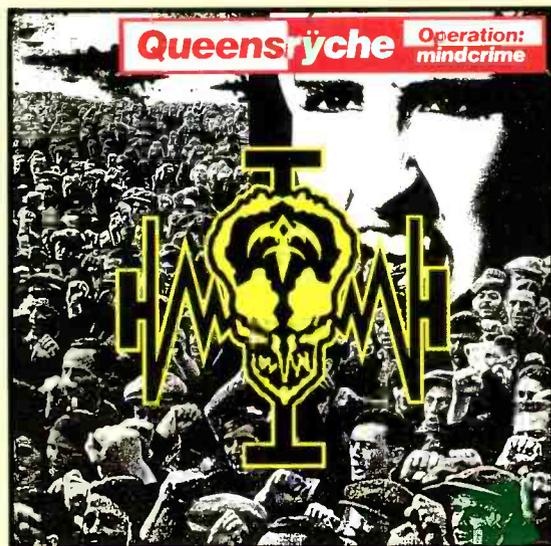
NARM Launches Petition Drive For Song IDs

BY KEN TERRY

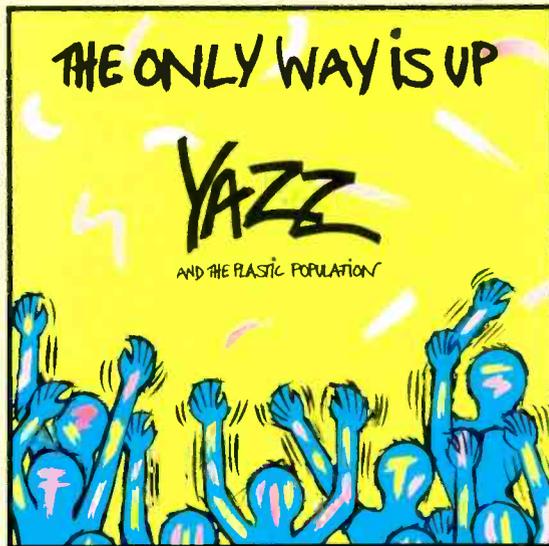
NEW YORK Following words with action, the Retailers' Advisory Committee of the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers has decided to try a consumer petition drive to convince radio stations that listeners want them to back- and front-announce the records they air.

The initial petition campaign will involve 90-100 record stores in Chicago, according to Carl Rosenbaum, president of the 15-unit Flipside Records chain. Rosenbaum, who forcefully advocated the petition idea at September's *(Continued on page 78)*

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WW1 Buys KIQQ For \$56 Million In 3-City Thrust

BY PETER LUDWIG

NEW YORK Westwood One Inc., the nation's biggest radio-program syndicator and parent of the second largest radio network, has agreed to purchase KIQQ-FM Los Angeles for \$56 million in cash from Outlet Communications Inc. WW1 already owns *(Continued on page 75)*



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