

New York, N. Y.

By IRA MAYER and ROBERTA SKOPP

■ **FEATS DON'T FAIL ME NOW:** Reports filtering back from Washington, D.C. indicate that the **Little Feat** fete was nothing less than terrific. Radio and press folk from New York attended along with several Warner Brothers luminaries from way out west. The show at the Capitol Center went real well, highlighted by print under the video screens, during the climax of their set, reading "How's That **Frank Barcelona**" (with those in the know reporting that the Premier man's name was purposely misspelled). A party followed at the Watergate, complete with a mound of pulsating jello as depicted on the new disc's cover. **Earl Scruggs'** party was just a hop, skip and jump away, with some celebs spilling over from one party to the other. Among faces recognized feting the Feat were **David Blue**, **Tracy Nelson**, **Bonnie Raitt** (who had also been performing in the area), **Tom Waits** (who was seen holding a sparkler in hand for most of the evening) and the sons and daughters of various congresspersons. Sez a Warners staffer, "All that was missing was Gerald Ford and Henry the K but they wouldn't have gotten in anyway."

HOT TOWN: Long talked about **Led Zeppelin** film (which contains footage shot when they appeared at Madison Square Garden in the summer of '73) might be ready for release sometime in '76 . . . **Dory Previn** recording here with **Joel Dorn** producing . . . **Peter Frampton** at Electric Lady finishing mixing his live double set, titled "Frampton Comes Alive" . . . Rumors circulating about **Art Garfunkel** signing a contract to appear with **Paul Simon** for one of his Thanksgiving weekend appearances at Avery Fisher . . . Seems several labels are dickering over the performing/songwriting abilities of **Rob Stoner**, concertmaster on **Dylan's** current tour. By the way, we hear Mr. Dylan's scheduling the Other End, Carnegie and MSG for mid-Dec. . . . **Jackson Browne's** producing his first album for someone other than himself. The artist's **Warren Zevon** and as soon as Jackson finishes this project he'll be heading for the studio to work on one of his own . . . **Terry Garthwaite's** back-up vocalist, **Willow Wray**, is the great niece of the famous **Fay**. Seems she saw the Empire State Building for the first time while in town with Terry and let's just say she was moved . . . **Felix Cavaliere** is out of his Bearsville contract and in the studio producing **Maggie Bell**. The idea to get the two together came from **Stevie Weiss**, Swan Song attorney . . . There's a new band that's playing in upstate New York and looking for a label deal. **Eric Kaz** is on keyboards, **Steve Katz** on guitar, **Velvet Underground-er Doug Yule** on bass and the vocalist's **Craig Fuller** from **Pure Prairie League** . . . Rumor has it that there was difficulty in deciding what would be the 'B' side of the forthcoming **Bruce Springsteen** single so he's taped something from his recent English tour and is reportedly bringing it back with him on the plane . . . Well, the **Hudson Brothers** and road manager **Dick Salerno** certainly razzle dazzled 'em while in the Big Apple this week. Seems they tried to get together with film mogul **Joseph E. Levine** and instead set up a meeting with pop songwriter/producer **Joey Levine**. Close enough?



WHERE'S THE CIGAR? This picture doesn't have a whole lot to do with New York other than the fact that it was taken at the Warwick Hotel. The question is, which of these two people looks like the real rock 'n' roll star? (Answer next week.)

YOU WERE ON MY MIND: Taste being the better part of valor, we did not greet **Sylvia Tyson** doing our imitation of the **We Five**. but then neither did we discuss much of her recent signing to Chappell or her solo album. Instead there was talk of the still touring (half with husband **Ian**, half with herself) **Great Speckled Bird**—**David Rey** having rejoined for some recent concerts; of the trend toward "home-

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The Philly Sound Abounds



Philadelphia International Records, distributed by Epic/CBS Custom Labels, has just released new albums by seven of their most popular artists. The lps by the O'Jays, Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes, MFSB, the Three Degrees, Billy Paul, Archie Bell and the Drells and DeeDee Sharp were previewed for the press at a listening party given by Epic. Shown at the presentation are, from left: Harry Coombs, executive vice president, internal operations and promotion, Philadelphia International; Jimmy Bishop, executive vice president and general manager, PIR; Kenneth Gamble, chairman of the board, PIR; Ida Epps, managing editor, Twilight Magazine; Leon Huff, vice chairman of the board, PIR.

Distribution with a Personal Touch

■ NEW YORK — Merit Distributors in Detroit is the oldest "pure" distributor in the marketplace. "By pure I mean that we don't have any affiliations with rack jobbers or retailers," Dick Valente, Merit's manager explained recently in a **Record World** interview. The independent distributorship, which covers all of Michigan, has been in business for about fourteen years, carrying lines that include Motown product, Private Stock, Mainstream, Delite, Raintree and Groove Merchant among others. The John Schlee-owned firm is in competition with three other distributors that service the Michigan area.

Representing the Manufacturer

In discussing the advantages of record companies using the indie over a branch, Valente explained, "We try to give the manufacturer as much representation in the marketplace as possible. I think we can deal on a much more personal level and not have to get involved with as much red tape as a branch would." He feels that being an indie enables the firm to better

implement plans and promotions because they're working from a local level rather than a national one, and therefore have a better feel for the particular marketplace. It's that freedom coupled with the familiarity that Valente believes gives the indie additional force.

"Also," Valente continued, "new artists get a better shot at making it when you're dealing with an independent distributor because a large firm with a branch has so many established artists that they feel obligated to run with, it seems like a lot of newer artists get lost in the shuffle. Stevie Wonder is our biggest act but we've got a lot of room to deal with other artists after that, whereas a company that has lots of superstars sees their newer acts suffering and not developing in the market."

Catalogue Sales

Valente also feels that another advantage of the indie versus the branch is that as an indie he stresses the sale of entire catalogues rather than what happens to be hot at the moment. He also feels that it is important for the indie to remain pure. "Affiliation can help the independent during a cold period but if the indie is to survive, that affiliation takes too much time away from the matters at hand," Valente concluded.

Eric Mainland Pacts with ATV

■ NEW YORK—Carmen LaRosa, vice president/marketing for ATV/Pye Records, Inc., has announced the appointment of Eric Mainland Distribution as exclusive distributors of Pye Records product in the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas.

Initial Pye product being handled by Eric Mainland includes "For A Dancer," the latest single from Prelude, along with their new lp, "Owl Creek Incident," and albums by Phil Everly, Jimmy James and the Vagabonds, Monty Python and the "Pye History of British Rock" series.

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