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VOLUME 101 NO. 50 THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSWEEKLY OF MUSIC AND HOME ENTERTAINMENT December 16, 1989/\$4.50 (U.S.), \$5.50 (CAN.), £3.50 (U.K.)

P'mount, RCA/Columbia Get More Titles Via Indie Deals

BY PAUL SWEETING

NEW YORK In what many in the video business are interpreting as further signs of industrywide consolidation, at least two major studios, Paramount and RCA/Columbia, are positioning themselves to significantly increase the number of new titles they distribute to the rental market in 1990.

The additional product will come largely from independent producers or from distribution deals with independent home video suppliers, as well as from the studios' own libraries.

While the strategies of the two studios are different, their motives are similar, according to executives at the companies as well as outside observers: to leverage their increasing-

ly proprietary access to two-step distribution in an effort to boost their market shares. Most rental product is distributed via the two-step method through a network of independent wholesalers.

Last week, Paramount announced it will distribute Prism Entertainment. (Continued on page 80)

Indictments Of Isgro, Anderson Draw Labels In Payola Back On The Front Burner

This story was prepared by Chris Morris in Los Angeles and Bruce Haring in New York.

LOS ANGELES The federal indictments here Nov. 30 of independent record promoter Joe Isgro, a central figure in a three-year grand jury investigation into alleged payola prac-

actices, and former Columbia promotion VP Ray Anderson, the first label executive to be charged with payola-related offenses, have fueled industry speculation that future indictments could penetrate further into record company executive suites.

However, while some in the music business believe elements of corrup-

tion continue to exist in the indie promotion sphere and that further indictments are forthcoming, others maintain that the indictment of Isgro, Anderson, and Isgro associate Jeffrey S. Monka will have little impact on the industry's use of independent promoters.

In the wake of a February 1986 NBC News report alleging links between Isgro and the mob, as well as payola practices by the promoter, the major labels dropped many indie promoters; the most successful of them had netted millions of dollars a year for their services in the mid-'80s. Isgro subsequently filed a federal suit against most of the majors for antitrust violations; the majority of the labels ultimately settled the suit out. (Continued on page 81)

Many Doors Still Closed To Rap Tours

BY BRUCE HARING

NEW YORK Rap acts are finding it tougher than ever to tour in certain markets because of venue concerns about concert violence and insurance coverage.

One prominent rap package pro-

moter notes that venue availability is down 33% because buildings are limiting rap shows.

"There are just automatics where you know that the venue or community will make it impossible for the group to play," says Carol Kirkendall, a partner in G Street Express, a

promoter of rap shows. "All rap shows and all youth shows are affected. Most of the California- or Florida-based rap groups, who are dealing with a heavier message and using profanity, are already experiencing tremendous problems getting the (Continued on page 80)

Social Issues Go Pop As Collins, Joel Top Chart

BY SEAN ROSS and THOM DUFFY

NEW YORK In their current top five hit, Linda Ronstadt & Aaron Neville declare that love may be all one needs to know. But elsewhere on the Billboard Hot 100, there are plenty of artists who differ with them.

Among them: Phil Collins, whose plight-of-the-homeless lament, "Another Day In Paradise," is no. 2 this week behind Billy Joel's time capsule, "We Didn't Start The Fire"; Aerosmith, which bemoans incest and child abuse on "Janie's Got A Gun"; and the Rolling Stones and Janet Jackson, who take on a whole catalog of societal ills on "Rock And A Hard (Continued on page 10)

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QUEEN LATIFAH rules the rap kingdom. Her slammin' debut album *All Hail The Queen* (TB 1022) is over 200,000 units and a brand new single and video, "Ladies First," (TB 942) are just the start for this major new talent. New York Times: "Ample melody and worldly observations." Rolling Stone: "A strong new offering." Arsenio Hall: "I am Queen Latifah." Catch the queen on the upcoming *Yo! MTV Raps* Funky Reggae special. On *Tommy Boy*.



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B'buster Growth Makes Landlords Wary Of Future

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK As the Blockbuster Entertainment Corp. juggernaut catapults past the 1,000-store mark, landlords in some markets are beginning to exhibit nervousness about entering into deals with the firm.

The company's meteoric growth, past instances of bad publicity, and what some have described as poor real estate judgment have fueled a reluctance on the part of some landlords with strong properties to lease sites to the Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based company.

Nevertheless, the giant video specialty chain, which has more than doubled its size within the past year, (Continued on page 79)



Celebrating a great '89 Chameleon Records ...to be continued in '90!

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