

& OUT THE OTHER

Allman in No Man's Land

"Right now, I'm very much into Sea Level, and I don't wanna have anything to do with it." Such was the emphatic reply from ex-Allman Brothers keyboardist Chuck Leavell, now leader and mouthpiece of Sea Level, when questioned by writer Stephen Peeples about the latest Allman reunion rumors. Dickie Betts wasn't available for comment, but his manager Steve Massarsky spoke for him: "Dickie hasn't closed any doors, but the timing just isn't right," Massarsky said.

According to Leavell, the wounds left by Gregg's damaging testimony at former Allman Brother road manager Scooter Herring's drug trial a couple years ago have pretty much healed. Herring, in fact, has been Sea Level's road manager for the last several months, out on bond pending an appeal for a new trial.

So Gregg's ice-testing seems to be nothing more than poor timing. It'd probably be great timing for him, though — his checkerboard relationship with Cher has apparently died the last of many deaths, and that duo album they did recently was met with critical catcalls and no sales. Gregg's latest efforts to find somebody to play with centered on a D.C. bar band called the Night Hawks; when they played Rosie's Cantina in Atlanta, Georgia recently, they arrived one night to find a Hammond organ on stage. They don't use an organ. It was Gregg's subtle way of asking to jam, and they let him.

What Price Integrity

ROCK MANAGER IRV AZOFF is by his own account so dismayed with the film *FM* that he's asked that his credit as executive producer be pulled from the picture. According to Azoff, the film doesn't represent what really happens at a typical FM station. For example, during one scene a d.j., played by Cleavon Little, shows up for a 6 a.m. shift dressed in a snappy 3-piece suit. Azoff is apparently of the opinion that deejays don't dress that well, especially at six in the morning — though what the Eagles' manager is doing checking out radio stations at that hour is beyond our ken. Anyway, many of Azoff's clients remain in the film, and will be heard on the two-disc soundtrack album. And, according to a source at his office, Azoff doesn't plan to relinquish any financial participation in the flick — he may have principles, but he isn't stupid! . . . From the same office comes a report that Aerosmith's managers, Steve Leber and David Krebs (the money behind *Beatlemania*), may be producing a film based, loosely, on the Eagles' *Desperado*. If any Eagles are seen on screen, the source cautions, it'll be in minor roles . . . And, speaking of *Beatlemania*, Ringo Starr is telling reporters that the late lamented Fab Four aren't getting any money as a result of the production other than what relatively little they receive (Ringo, of course, next to none) from songwriting royalties.

Television Discovers Radio

IF YOU HAVEN'T LEARNED MORE than you really wanted to know about radio after seeing the aforementioned film *FM*, stay home

with your tube. Two TV production companies are pitching radio-oriented pilots at the networks; one is from the Mary Tyler Moore folks, starring no one you've heard of, based on a mythical Cincinnati station and titled *WKRP*. The second pilot, yet untitled, follows a female disc jockey through life at a "major metropolitan station." If either of these shows gets on the air and shows any semblance of reality, radio may receive the same sort of revised attitude that the Mary Tyler Moore show brought to local TV news. Serve 'em right, too! (Meanwhile, we're waiting for someone to make a successful film about life at a magazine, so that we can see our zany selves spun off on television . . .)

Woosome Twosomes

ARETHA FRANKLIN MARRIED ACTOR GLYN TURMAN (*Cooley High*) in her father's Detroit church on April 11. They've both been married before — he has two children, she has four . . . Anjelica Huston and Jack Nicholson are back together again . . . Warren Beatty and Diane Keaton are still an item . . . and Cher is serious about Kiss' blood-drooling bassist Gene Simmons. Honest. Cher just signed with Casablanca, Kiss' label, which may explain everything. She was married to Sonny Bono when they both recorded for Atlantic, and to Gregg Allman when they were both on Warner Bros. Records. Maybe her next move will be to Takoma Records so she can date John Fahey.

Bilbo the Dildo?

ANY MINUTE NOW YOU'LL BE ABLE TO BUY cute little dolls that look like Bilbo, Gandalf and Frodo, but if dolls are a bit jejune for you, there will be posters, t-shirts, games, jewelry, maybe even marital aids, all based on J. R. Tolkien's characters. The dolls are patterned after the characters in Ralph Bakshi's animated film *Lord of the Rings*, due in November.

La-De-Da

LOOKS LIKE OL' BOB DYLAN MAY HAVE A CRUSH on Diane Keaton . . . even though they haven't met. He's written a song for her, which she might include on her first album if she ever gets around to signing a recording contract (Caribou via Columbia looks closest). Bobby has also talked about writing a part for Diane in his next movie, which will start shooting this September and which will not be four hours long, like *Renaldo and Clara*. Of course, just because he writes her in doesn't mean she'll be in, especially now that she's a big-time Academy Award winner.

Is Anyone Else Tired of This Stuff?

IN THE WAKE OF *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters* come two big-budget sci-fi projects. Best known, of course, is the return of *Star Trek*, at last as a film. All of the original series characters have been signed to appear in the project, with Leonard Nimoy holding out longest — and probably getting the most. A large chunk of the \$15 million budget is assigned to special effects, natch; the bulk of live-action filming will in fact take place over a few weeks' period and the remaining

months will be spent with models, animation, etc. *Star Trek* is slated to hit the first-run houses next summer. In the meantime, it's entirely possible that all of the sets and effects could be used in a new, updated television series. Sooner still — next season, to be specific — are seven television movies, an hour each, under the "series" title, *Galactica*. Lorne Greene will star as the space ship commander; each episode carries a \$1 million budget, twice the industry average for TV movies.

Orbison Still in the Saddle

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF "The Big O": A fifteen-year-old English schoolgirl, in a coma for nearly two weeks, opened her eyes for the first time when she heard a taped get-well message from singer Roy Orbison. The singer's records had been played at her bedside in the London hospital's intensive care ward as well. Orbison's last hit was "Cry Softly, Lonely One," in 1967; the girl is a big fan nonetheless. He still records, of course, and is enjoying considerable royalties from Linda Ronstadt's version of "Blue Bayou," which he wrote in 1963.

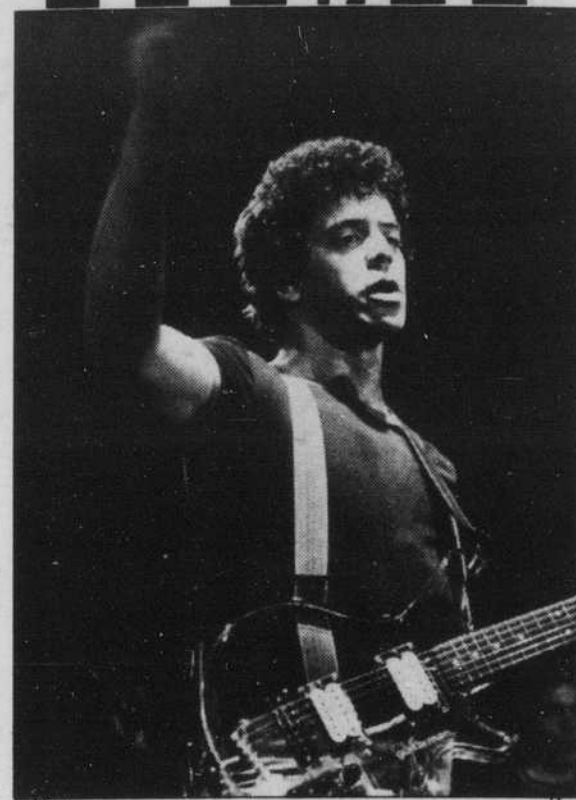
Maverick & Monty Ride Again

UPCOMING FROM ABC IS A TWO-HOUR TV MOVIE, *The New Maverick*, with a possible spin-off series. The original comedy western, which played first-run from 1957-1962 and can still be seen in syndication, introduced James Garner, Jack Kelly, and Roger Moore to TV audiences as brothers Bret and Bart Maverick, and their English cousin, Beau; Garner also played Bret and Bart's father, "Pappy." Efram Zimbalist, Jr. appeared fairly regularly as con-man Dandy Jim Buckley. Kelly and Garner will appear in the two-hour version, which stars Charles Frank as Ben Maverick (Beau's son) and his real-life wife, Susan Blanchard, as the love interest. Trivia to amaze your friends with: there was yet another Maverick in the original series, brother Brent. He was played by Robert Colbert, and lasted but 2 of the series' 124 episodes.

The one, the only, the original Monty Python's Flying Circus has regrouped for a movie. Called *Brian of Nazareth*, it's about a saint who was born one manger over from Jesus and subsequently had a rough time of it.

Shorts

UNCONFIRMED RUMOR: former Cream drummer Ginger Baker may be starting his own polo school in England. Or maybe it's a soccer team . . . Our First Annual Award for Gushy Teen Journalism goes to *Time* Magazine's John Travolta cover story (April 3) . . . Neil Young's proposed title for his next album, *Gone with the Wind*, has been changed to *Give to the Wind*. Maybe he found out about the movie. The record is due in May, but don't hold your breath . . . *Every Day, Every Night*, the new album from Flora Purim (*Down Beat*'s top female jazz singer for five years straight), is produced by Rufus' helmsman, Bob Monaco. Purim, by the way, will no longer tour with husband Airtio. Separate careers make happier marriages, or so they say . . .



LOU REED'S APPEARANCE ON TV'S *Midnight Special* on Friday, April 28, will be strictly a speaking role, thanks to program censorship, Reed's adamant attitude, and an unusual compromise.

The problem began when the show's producers asked Reed to host *Special*. When somebody got a look at the lyrics of what Reed expected to sing — "Heroin," from the Velvet Underground days; "Walk on the Wild Side," a top-20 record in 1973; and "I Wanna Be Black" and "Street Hassle" from his current album — all hell broke loose. The producers, apparently ignorant of what Reed's been up to for the last decade, asked him to rewrite (shades of "Let's Spend the Night Together"!). Reed refused, but said that the "offensive" words could be bleeped. The producers evidently felt that would make Reed's performance largely pantomime.

What will happen is a discussion on censorship, with Reed interviewed by rock's token intelligentsia, Howard Kaylan and Mark Volman (Flo and Eddie.) The interview, lasting 40 minutes, was held on April 5, and will be edited for broadcast. The set consisted of three chairs, one of them slightly tacky Naugahyde, a small table, semi-Oriental lamp, and a huge *Midnight Special* sign hanging in back. Reed, dressed in black leather and minus his dark glasses for most of the time, was coherent and deadly earnest, much like a Scientologist making his pitch.

Among the rather less than startling revelations: the FCC is prohibited by law from censoring anything, and Reed plays his records for his mother, who likes them.

The show's producers, who made all of the decisions, are looking for viewer feedback. If you have any opinion of all of this, particularly if you see the program, feel free to write to Burt Sugarman Productions, 9000 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90069.