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nephew, to compete in a silly race to see who wins the estate. Producer George Englund is one of the men behind this. He's also involved in *The Life of Walter Lippman*, starring Paul Newman as the influential American political pundit (that'll be an ABC TV movie). Englund says he's also purchased rights to the Ron Settles story—Settles, a Long Beach State University star halfback, was recently arrested, and later found hanged in his jail cell. Not a suicide.

### Gainfully Employed

**A**IRPLANE'S ROBERT HAYS joins up with *Superman's* Margot Kidder in *Trenchcoat*, a comedy mystery from Disney filming in Malta and San Francisco... Bee Gee Barry Gibb will star in *Byron*, about the romantic English poet and his role in Greece's struggle for independence from Turkey... Gene Hackman stars in *Eureka*, a murder mystery locationing in British Columbia and Jamaica, directed by Nicholas Roeg (*Don't Look Now*, *Performance*)... William Hurt won't be making any movies for awhile; he's playing *Richard II* on stage in New York... Richard Pryor will star in *Color Man*, turned down by Bill Murray; it's about a "color" sportscaster (a TV term for the jock interviewer/commentator)... Dustin Hoffman stars in *Tootsie* as a transvestite soap opera actor in New York, which may or may not interfere with the rumor that Hoffman is first choice to star in *Gorky Park*... Carly Simon will make her acting debut in a CBS cable movie; she'll play a dual role, one a Forties torch singer, the other a modern thrush... There will be more *Pink Panthers*, even without Peter Sellers. Ted Wass (formerly Danny of *Soap*) will be the new Clouseau... Kenny Rogers stars in *Six Pack*, to be directed by Daniel Petrie (*Resurrection: Fort Apache, the Bronx*) in Atlanta... *The Billy Crystal Show* (he was Jody on *Soap*), a one hour comedy variety show, will emerge on NBC soon, if not already... Michael McKean, Lenny of *Laverne and Shirley*, is starring in *Young Doctors in Love*, (another ABC feature film) which marks the directorial debut of producer Garry Marshall (same show, among others), for which no one has been waiting with bated breath... Mary Steenburgen will play Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (author of *The Yearling*, one of the most affecting books youthful Americans are encouraged to read) in *Cross Creek*, to film in Florida... Two best sellers of a few years ago are finally headed into film: Dee Brown's Amerindian Saga *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* will be a five part TV miniseries; *The Ninth Wave*, Eugene Burdicks' novel of American politics, will be a feature.

### We Heard It Through the Grapevine, Too

**C**HERIE RECORDS out of Detroit recently started showcasing some of its acts in that city's Hotel Pontchartrain in order to lure major labels into distribution deals. Atlantic had already snapped up Jerry Carr ("This Must Be Heaven"), but so far no deal for their ace artist, Barrett Strong, one of the first artists ever signed to Motown, co-writer of "Money" and "I Heard It Through the Grapevine." His new album is all finished, waiting for a distribution deal; titled *Love Is You*, it features all new Strong songs.

### What's Bruce Springsteen Up To?

**B**ACKSTREETS, devoted to news of Bruce Springsteen and band, tells us that Big

Bruce will be producing an EP for Dick Dale, once known as King of the Surf Guitar back in the dawn of the Sixties. Dale, who once harbored dozens of wild animals in his suburban Costa Mesa, California yard, was, according to *backstreets*, "the first rock 'n' roller to appear on the Ed Sullivan Show." Anyone interested in subscribing to *backstreets* should send inquiries to Stephen Ryan, 1500 Coachwood Street, La Habra, CA 90631.

### Still Busy

**T**HINGS ARE TOUGH ALL OVER is the next Cheech & Chong film, and here's the big scoop: no dope. Just one small reference to the devil weed. Their wives (Rikki Marin and Shelby Chong by name) also appear in the film, as French women, while C&C portray themselves and... Arabs. All directed by Tom Avildsen, cousin to director John, and filmed in Las Vegas and Chicago.

**S**TEVE TESICH, who wrote *Breaking Away*, *Eyewitness* and *Four Friends*, is now finishing *Weatherman*, about a Chicago TV weatherman who becomes politically influential. Robert Redford will supposedly star, but don't hold your breath; Redford's last film, *The Verdict*, is proceeding without him. Tesich has also completed his first novel, *Summer Crossing*, which occurs in the same time and place as *Four Friends* (Tesich admits to a strong autobiographical bent).

### New Wave Old Enuff for Comebacks

**S**HANDI SINNAMON is going public again. For those who missed the first go-round, Ms. Sinnamon was a rising star on L.A.'s New Wave scene two years ago. Capacity crowds at her Troubadour appearances. Tough girl charisma. Producer Mike Chapman, then cresting on successes with the Knack ("My Sharona") and Blondie ("Heart of Glass"), but currently unable to get himself arrested, tagged Shandi as his next disc-overly. But the record flopped.

### An Hour Later, They Wanted to Hear Again

**O**N A RECENT TRIP TO CHINA, director John Landis screened *The Blues Brothers Movie* for curious film industry people. They were impressed by the intricate work with miniatures required for the movie's several dozen car crashes. Then they were dumbfounded to learn that those were all real life-sizers, crunching at the rate of several thousands of dollars per second.

They dug Aretha Franklin, those Chinese hipsters, but couldn't connect any significance to the various blues, country and rock music scenes. "They said it all sounded alike to them," reports Landis.

### Where Are They Now & Who Cares? Dept.

**D**R JOHN, the infamous Night Tripper, has laid down a soundtrack of barrelhouse boogie-woogie piano for *Cannery Row* that's probably the best thing about the flick. Root Boy Slim, whose bid for stardom entitled *Boogie Till You Puke* did not become an FM radio staple, is recording for Moonlight Records. Arthur Brown, as in *The Crazy World of*, is waxing tracks for Lone Star Records.