



## Behind The Scenes

### When They Say Rate the Records, They're Not Talking American Bandstand

**C**an you imagine having records rated like movies? The idea would be laughable if a lot of influential people weren't intent on making it happen.

In June, 45 record labels received a letter from the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) asking that lyric sheets be included on all new releases sent to radio stations. Over 800 TV and radio stations received a similar NAB letter requesting they censor sexually suggestive lyrics.

Another organization, the Parents Musical Resource Center (PMRC), is currently lobbying Congress to force a ratings system similar to the one used by the movie industry. Among the members of the PMRC are Susan Baker, wife of Treasury Secretary James Baker, and Tipper Gore, wife of Tennessee Senator Albert Gore.

**F**or years, politically and religiously conservative have tried to censor music for being sexually explicit or satanic, but other than banning a Kiss concert here or there, they haven't had much clout. With political heavyweights involved in the new censorship movement, the tide appears to be turning.

MCA Records recently pulled a single called "Let's Talk" ("Let's Talk About Sex") by One Way off the air. More substantial was the announcement by the Recording Industry Association of America that 19 major record labels had agreed to put a disclaimer on the jackets of all records deemed "offensive."

**T**he censorship movement may also be gaining because it has allies in the recording industry itself. Smokey Robinson, for one, declared "Something has to be done about sexually explicit lyrics."

Dave Marsh said in *Rock & Roll Confidential*, "The PMRC, the PTA and television evangelists are the descendants of the forces that tried to 'protect' us from Elvis, Little Richard, the Beatles and the Stones."

In late September, the PMRC, Frank Zappa, Twisted Sister's Dee Snider and RIAA President Stanley Gortikov testified against ratings before a Congressional committee. The ratings battle is heating up.



Tina Turner says she is negotiating with several producers for a "movie of my life." Turner will not act in the movie, but will choose the actress to portray her and retain creative control. The movie will presumably be based on her recent autobiography, "I Tina."



## Inside Track

### Quick Takes . . .

**R**od Stewart will finally launch his long-talked-about acting career with a starring role in a British soap opera. Stewart would not disclose many details, but by the way he describes it, the show is from the same laboratory that produced *Dallas/Dynasty*: "There'll be plenty of cutting throats, lies and deceit and passionate romance" . . . Two songs on ex-Go-Go Jane Weidlin's solo album were written by her high school sweetheart—Kevin Hunter of Wire Train . . . Jimmy Cliff says that Keith Richards and Ron Wood of the Stones are talking about doing a record project that would also feature Policeman Stewart Copeland on drums . . . Boy George reportedly will be organizing a charity concert over the Christmas season to help fight AIDS in the U.K. He has already contributed some \$20,000 to a British AIDS charity . . . Mandy Meir, formerly of Krokus, has replaced Steve Howe in Asia's line-up. Howe is said to be working with ear-

# MUSICAL NOTES

BY GREG PTACEK



## Rock Rap

### Scritti Politti

**G**reen—just Green—the leader of Scritti Politti, is known for his musings on pop music and Western Civilization and is widely quoted in the British press.

In addition, Green and his band Scritti Politti (Italian for "political writing") produce some of the most original music on the market today.

About the photo of a piece of wrapped meat on the back of Scritti's latest album, "Cupid & Psyche," he says: "Artist Marcel Duchamp was asked to do a Vogue cover in the 1920's. He did a piece of meat, wrapped in cloth with paper stars, a portrait of George Washington.

"They said, 'This doesn't look like George Washington', but it did! It looked a lot like George Washington. They decided not to use it, but I thought it was a very beautiful thing.

"See, a lot of people think that Scritti's music is very sweet, vaporous. I think there's an element of that, but at the center there's something more substantial, like meat at the center. And the butterfly represents the sweetness. Of course, it has a pin in its head, which means it's dead. Symbolic. Yeah."

ly Genesis member Steve Hackett in a new group called GTR . . . Master re-mixer Jellybean Benitez has produced a demo tape featuring Madonna, and Ashford and Simpson writing tunes for a proposed contemporary musical based on the novel "Oliver Twist."



## Record Watch

### Coming Soon To a Record Store Near You

**B**arbra Streisand (a duet project with Run D.M.C., "Babs Raps"—just kidding!) Flock of Seagulls, Krokus, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Dance Society, Steel Pulse, Linda Ronstadt (first country album in years), The Eagles (yes, dummy, they have broken up; this is an anthology), Metalloid, The Triplets (they are what their name implies), Lindsay Buckingham (will we ever see another Fleetwood Mac LP?), Dokken, Peter Gabriel, Ric Ocasek, Steve Winwood, Quincy Jones, James Ingram, The Ramones (compilation), Phil Alvin (of the Blasters), Harold Faltermeyer, Van Halen, INXS, John Parr, Genesis (if they stick together, that is), The Fixx, Guiffria, Oingo Boingo, Joan Jett, Boston (but, then again they've been saying this for 10 years), The Damned, Tom Waits, Thomas Dolby, Steve Miller, Julian Lennon, Twisted Sister, Sister Sledge, Graham Nash and Bad Company.

(Since recording artists are creatures not known for meeting schedules, consider this list advisory.)

Martha Davis, the sultry singer/songwriter of The Motels (currently on tour), at 34 has two teenaged daughters. No doubt, managing a career and a family was trying at times, but she wouldn't have had it any other way.

"When I got married at 15, I became an Air Force wife, went to Florida, and lived in a little shack in a little white ghetto at the end of a runway. No phone, no radio, no television. All I had to do was hold my baby.

"When I decided to do music, one girl was old enough to watch the other. I would take them to rehearsal, bring along a little black-and-white TV, and they'd curl up in front of it. They were never without me for a very long time . . . and they still aren't."

