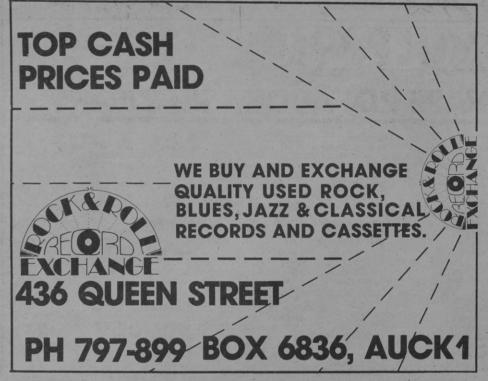
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### THE CHINA SYNDROME

Director — James Bridges

A character in the film explains the title: "If the nuclear reactor vessel — the core — is exposed ... the fuel heats beyond tolerance in a matter of minutes, nothing can stop it, and it melts through the bottom of the plant, theoretically to China. But of course, when it hits ground water, it would blast into the at-mosphere and send out clouds of radioactivity. The number of people killed would depend on which way the wind is blowing and it could render an area the size of Pennsylvania permanently uninhabitable — not to mention the cancer that would show up later."

China Syndrome is an extraordinarily effective movie painting the horrors which nuclear power possibly has in store for us. A TV reporter and cameraman (Jane Fonda and Michael Douglas) accidentally uncover a 'hushed-up' accident at a Southern Californian puellar power plant but the TV station refuses nuclear power plant but the TV station refuses to air their controversial material. The one character who realises the enormity of the incident (Jack Lemmon) eventually tries to help them but the trio find themselves fighting a little more than they counted on. This almost classic tale of corruption in high places has obvious origins in the Karen Silkwood case of a few years ago, where a conscientious lab technician at an Oklahoma Plutonium plant had a rather nasty (and fatal) car accident on her way to deliver information to the New York Times

This film works so magnificently because it remains a no-nonsense workman-like produc-tion. Working from an extremely tightly knit script, nothing is allowed to interfere with the suspense generated by the 'nuclear event' and its subsequent effects on the characters. There is a good deal of satire around the edges of the film — whether it be in the unredeeming vacuousness of the television world or in Fonda's trendy pad, pet turtle and all. However all this does not stop it from being a first-rate suspense thriller with socio-political overtones. As far as acting performances go, Jack Lemmon is superb as the pivotal character of the film and Fonda and Douglas are fine as agents provocateurs.

This is James Bridges' second film after *The Paper Chase* of a few years ago. Let's hope *China Syndrome* doesn't also suffer a similar fate of being stretched out into a interminable

### OUTRAGEOUS

Director — Richard Benner

A Canadian film with its heart in the right place, telling the tale of an erstwhile hair-

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dresser winning fame and acclaim as a drag ar tist whilst his young lady soulmate sinks into schizophrenic depression. Some snappy drag acts from the direness of a tacky Canadian club to Craig Russell's smooth impersonations of Peggy, Barbra, Bette, Ethel and all the rest The lady does go on a bit though ...

### **BUTCH & SUNDANCE - EARLY DAYS** Director — Richard Lester

Not only is this film far less strained in its directorial style than Lester's late sixties efforts (A Hard Day's Night, Help, The Knack), but it is also a good deal smoother than the original George Roy Hill film of ten years ago. Lester's vision of the West is a rather elegiac one at times although not without its little one at times, although not without its little quirks ... Can you imagine a skiing sequence, or robbing a casino whilst covered with skunk spray? Stylish fun.

### THE CHAMP

Director — Franco Zeffirelli

Horrible, horrible film. Romeo and Juliet may have been dripping with the sentimental excesses of the late sixties, but at least Zeffirelli had a basic Shakespearian concept to build his treacle tower on. A 1931 Jackie Cooper weepie is, alas, no substitute and I suspect they auditioned Ricky Schroder whilst peeling onions for a burger bar

THE WARRIORS
Director — Walter Hill

The gang problems of New York interpreted as a parallel to the retreat of Xenophon's ten thousand Greeks from Mesopotamia to the Black Sea. A heavy number this one, not without its rewards if you like bare torsos framed by leather waistcoats, but to be avoided if you have anything approximating to taste. Fit-tingly, it is being brought back as a double feature with *Up in Smoke*.



The Who's movie, The Kids are Alright opens throughout NZ, late October

The Who's film The Kids are Alright opens throughout NZ late in October. A fave with the British music press, The Kids are Alright is a celluloid history of The Who with lots of mods, with the statement of the Who with lots of mods, and the statement and the statement and the statement and the statement of the Who with lots of mods, and the statement and the statement and the statement and the statement of the whole with the statement of the st British music press, The Kids are Alright is a celluloid history of The Who with lots of mods, guitar smashing, old interviews and more recent concert footage ... Peter Weir, director of Aussie's Picnic at Hanging Rock fame is slated to direct a film based on the best selling novel The Thorn Birds... Ken Russell is reportedly having strong differences of opinion with screenwriter Paddy Chayevsky on his new film Altered Stages ... You can't keep a good director down — Allan Dwan, who directed his first movie in 1909 has just written an original screenplay to star Telly Savalas ... Midnight Express has just celebrated its first anniversary of non-stop showing in London's West End ... Frederico Fellini's new film City of Women has suspended shooting for at least a month because of the death of leading actor Ettore Manni ... Two contrasted films at the head of the top grossers list in Variety — The Amityville Horror edging The Muppet Movie out of top place by a million and a half dollars takings ... Al Pacino's new film Cruising which is about a series of homosexual murders is being disrupted in New York by the actions of gay demonstrators ... Halas and Batchelor's new short film Autobahn is based on the song by Kraftwerk popular way back in the midseventies sometime.

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