



GrayZone Digest January 1997

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Worldwide Update

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China

Beijing

Chinese authorities have shut down a pirate video disc manufacturer, seizing an estimated \$2 million disc-making machine and 60,000 pirated discs, the China Daily said. The illicit operation was established in April in a farmer's house in Panyu, Guangdong, the southern Chinese province where many pirate disc makers are suspected of operating, according to the official newspaper. Authorities have closed down 12 illegal compact disc production lines in just two weeks, but Beijing officials have much work ahead in order to conquer the nation's army of copyright pirates, according to officials and analysts.

(Deja News, Reuters@Clari.net, December 26, 1996)

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Denmark

In a major victory against back-catalog piracy, the High Court of Justice has ruled in favor of the recording industry against the Patricia Companies, who were producing unauthorized recordings belonging to BMG, EMI, MCA, PolyGram, Sony and Warner. The defendants--Britta Kraul, Leif Kraul, Patricia Records ApS, and Patricia Im-und Export GmbH & Co KG--were ordered to pay US \$1.9 million in a settlement. The defendants were also ordered to hand over all unauthorized recordings produced or imported into Denmark, and they are forbidden to manufacture, distribute or import recordings for which the plaintiffs have exclusive rights. The piratical recordings were exported from Denmark into other territories in Europe, and to other parts of the world under various labels such as Carnaby, Duchesse, BRS and World Music.

(IFPI Network, Issue 4, November 1996)

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Luxembourg

IFPI has filed a complaint under EU single market rules against Luxembourg, whose failure to implement international copyright laws, makes it the backdoor access route into the European Union for big commercial bootleggers. A flourishing bootleg import business has flocked to Luxembourg only because its operations would be

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illegal anywhere else in the Union. Luxembourg has the worst record in the EU for implementing intellectual property legislation and IFPI estimates that, directly as a result of loopholes in Luxembourg copyright law, between one and two million pirate CDs enter the European Union through the Duchy annually. Most of the CDs are manufactured in Israel, the Czech Republic or in Far East countries.
(IFPI Network, Issue 4, November 1996)

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Dallas

More than 70,000 alleged counterfeit cassettes were seized at two separate locations by the Dallas Police Department, assisted by the anti-piracy unit of the RIAA. The first raid resulted in the arrest of Salam Mustafa, owner of an alleged illegal counterfeit cassette manufacturing site, along with workers Juan Lopez and Mohammad Sharif. Approximately 600,000 insert cards and manufacturing equipment were seized in addition to 37,750 cassettes. The other site was an alleged counterfeit cassette distribution plant where Reginald Muhammad was arrested and an estimated 32,750 cassettes were confiscated. All charges were in violation of Texas' True Name and Address Statute.
(RIAA FAST Tracks, November 25, 1996)

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Internet

Kiss The Stone (KTS), allegedly one of the largest European bootleg labels, is currently surveying public reaction to the music industry's clampdown on its product. KTS features a questionnaire at its web site that concerns its rather skewed perceptions of quality, copyright and royalty payments. Retail prices are also addressed.
(Goldmine #428, December 20, 1996)

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