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R.E.M. UPDATE: IN STUDIO TO CUT ALBUM #5

I.R.S. RELEASES MID-YEAR B-SIDES COMPILATION

ATHENS, GA -- A lot's happened since our first-of-the-year announcement that R.E.M.'s Lifes Rich Pageant certified gold. The band has entered the studio to work on their fifth album for I.R.S. And to keep the growing number of rabid R.E.M. fans occupied during the wait, I.R.S. plans a B-side/outtake compilation LP.

R.E.M. is recording their next album in Nashville under the joint production auspices of themselves and Scott Litt. (Litt is best-known as producer and engineer for Patti Smith, the dB's, Katrina & the Waves, Beat Rodeo and Robert Gordon). At press time, there are no details on song or album titles, and release is set for autumn. Details will be forthcoming shortly.

In the meantime, I.R.S. plans an album compilation of B-sides and outtakes from R.E.M., heretofore available only to owners of singles and imports by the group. Dead Letter Office is a collection of 14 songs from the vaults, none of which have seen the light of day in the album format. Liner notes by R.E.M. guitarist Peter Buck reveal the band's fondness for 45's and especially their B-sides. "Nobody will listen to (a B-side) anyway, so why not have some fun; you can clean the closet of failed experiments, badly-written songs, drunken jokes and occasionally, a worthwhile song that doesn't fit the feel of the album." Annotating each song, Buck says of one Dead Letter Office nugget (that for now shall remain nameless): "I suppose if we had any shame, we would have never allowed this little gem to see the light of day." This album captures R.E.M. in all their fabled extemporaneousness, whimsy and love for rock'n'roll above and beyond the call of duty.

Dead Letter Office will appear on I.R.S. Records, in a special one-time only distribution arrangement with A&M Records, due to the fact that the vast majority of songs emanate from a time frame during which I.R.S. was distributing by A&M. (Other new I.R.S. releases of course, are distributed by MCA Records.)

The CD version of Dead Letter Office will include R.E.M.'s entire critically-hailed debut EP, Chronic Town, which has never previously been available on the CD format.

