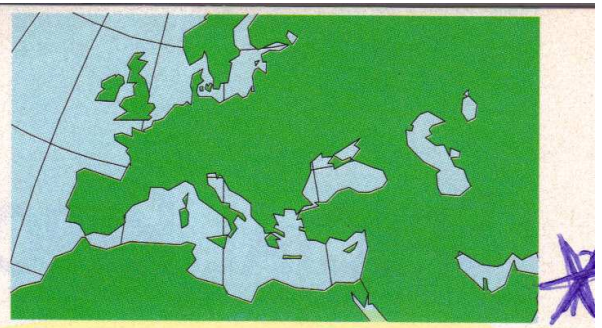
SPECIAL REPORT: GERMANY



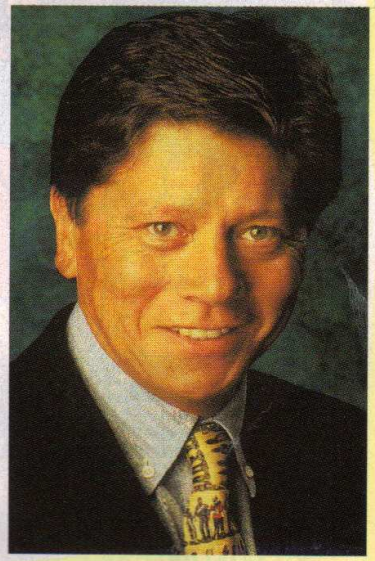
a 1997 article from *LTW*. "The allocation of licensing rights as a source of finance was not on the agenda for the time being."

Today, all of Germany's national, privately owned broadcasters utilize merchandising as a marketing tool for their programming.

"The licensing industry in the German-speaking territories continues to grow stronger every day, creating an even stronger demand for merchandising product," says Alwin Jeck, head of merchandising at Ravensburger Film + TV. "One of the strengths of this market, is that media, such as television and publishing, plays a vital role in jump-starting a character's popularity among target groups." For the remainder of the year, Ravensburger will be highlighting Rolf Kauka's Fix & Foxi, as the two characters, created more than 40 years ago, prepare to make their television debut in a series of 26 half-hour episodes in 1999. The company is also concentrating on Little Bear and Kapt'n Blaubar (Captain Bluebear).

A jumpsuit featuring Janosch, a character licensed by Bavaria Sonor.

Unlike licensing in the United States, which is traditionally characterized by event films, brands, and a number of more recent developments in the areas of "niche" licensing, such as art, food, and museum-based concepts, the focus in the German-speaking territories continues to remain on character-based licenses and well-established properties, billed by some as "classics." Often hesitant to take risks, industry players appear to prefer tried and true classics over newer,



V.I.P.'s Sir Michael Lou.