**TOP OF THE NEWS**

**The Ska Is Coming**

Traffic between New York and Kingston, Jamaica, has notably increased recently as the Jamaican government has extended several invitations to members of the U.S. music-record business. Purpose is to evaluate the commercial possibilities in the American market for the Ska, or West End (Kingston) blue beat. The results of the trips are beginning to show up in singles releases.

Ertégun took his chief engineer, Tommy Dowd, with him to Jamaica, where in eight days they recorded over 40 sides by the Hitmakers. (In the U.S. Columbia label is looking for some Ska that can beat standards, calypsos, or even gospel-types, with plenty of emotional leeway.

Ertégun's first release was an imported master (which is a hit down there now) Ertégun feels that to reach a commercial audience the first release must be a good bit of recording know-how. The basic elements are a 4/4 shuffle-type rhythm with a strong accent on the downbeat. With the addition of horns, organ, guitar, and as many horns as are available) so that the ear actually only hears the horns as are available) so that the ear actually only hears the horns.

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KC and the Ska Busters, who booked the Beatles first Carnegie Hall booking. In addition, Bernstein was convinced of the long-standing potential of the British movement, that he'll soon go after personal management deals with several of the following promising acts for their American activities.

Bernstein, who booked the Beatles first Carnegie concerts last February, now has the Dec. 22 Clarke Five for two Decoration Day weekend concerts there-first to be emceed by Murray Kaufman, the second by WMC Good Guys.

Next, Bernstein has bought the Rolling Stones for Carnegie. They'll appear there at the tail end of their upcoming American tour. Bernstein has also bought Jerry Vale for Carnegie, return Sunday (31) and will bring in the Serendipity Singers next fall. Another date is being set for Harry James and Tina Simone.

Within three weeks, he'll go to Britain to "study the scene there" with the express purpose of 1. Singing various acts for their U.S. management, and 2.lining up a group of three or four for what he calls a "British Are Coming" package to play Carnegie and "perhaps three or four other key dates later in the summer."

Bernstein also is now negotiating to stage the New York Paramount Theater Labor Day show for which he hopes to add some strong international flavor. "I'd like to get Rita Moreno, Johnny Mathis one or two of the British groups for the show this time," he said.

**King's 'Royal Family'**

Hal Neely, general manager of King Records winged into New York from Cincinnati last week all fired up over a new album being issued by the King Records. Neely is a satirical takeoff on the Richard Burton-Elizabeth Taylor-Edie Fisher triangle, the first LP attempt to capture that headline-making romance on wax. According to Neely, King Records is going on the biggest promotion on this LP that it has launched in years on any pop hits. Neely says he has a big hit, and he is not loath to say so. On Wednesday, May 13, he had the album issued to a flock of top jocks all over the country, and claims that the plays were substantial.

The firm has pressed up 50,000 of the records and has them ready in their company owned distributorships in case the demand builds quickly. Mail- ing pieces are going out to dealers, one-stops, and any other place that sells records, and jockeys in major markets are being covered with samples.

Is there any chance of a lawsuit from either Mr. & Mrs. Burton or Eddie Fisher? Not according to Neely who said he and Schafer and their lawyers checked every possible aspect of this before issuing the album.

There was another album with the word family in it issued about a year ago, that did pretty well. King is hoping that the same lightning will strike again.

**Joan Baez vs. Fantasy**

Nothing wildly exciting usually happens at Fantasy Records. The firm, headed by the Weiss Brothers, Sol & Max, and run on the sales front by Sol Zantz, is well respected for doing a steady, nice, and almost hitless business (except for the recent Vince Guaraldi smash of "Cast Your Fate To The Wind"). But after last week it could be that Fantasy is becoming a bit wilder.

For in just a few days Fantasy brought out a Joan Baez album, got slapped with a suit about the Joan Baez album and then had a temporary restraining order issued against it so it couldn't press any of the Joan Baez albums.

The album that Fantasy released of the top femme folk artist was her first ever recorded. It was cut by Dick Tognazzini, who had his own label back in 1958 named Storm. He held the tapes for years and then worked out a deal a few months ago for Fantasy to release it. Fantasy did and got hit with the suit. Miss Baez, through her lawyers, says the album is not up to her present standard. She also says she was under 18 at the time she made the LP so she was a minor and any contract (which she denies them) is void. Neely says he has a hit, and he is not loath to say so. On Wednesday, May 13, he had the album issued to a flock of top jocks all over the country, and claims that the plays were substantial.

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**CBC-Oriole Deal?**

Britain's leading indie label, Oriole, may form a joint British recording company with CBS. Oriole managing director Maurice Levy and fellow-director G. Shestopal recently completed top-level talks with CBS execs in America.

Asked by Music Business if it was true that an Oriole-CBS tie-up had been agreed, Levy refused to either deny or confirm the story, but said an announcement would be made later. (In the U.S. Columbia Records president Goddard Lieberson had no comment on the Oriole-U.S. Columbia story.)

It is felt here that Oriole and CBS might be partners in a new firm, but an outright CBS take-over of Oriole is also possible.

Probably Oriole's biggest money-makers is its cut-price Embassy subsid label, sold exclusively by Woolworth's giant chain of stores. Oriole label hitmakers have included the Carefree, Russ Hamilton, Maureen Evans and Sweden's Spasm, who are beginning to show up in singles releases.

The label is issued by Philip in Britain, under a deal which expires May 1965. Epic and Okeh are put out

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