The R&B. Scene

Syd Nathan, King Records chief, urges that trade papers give more space to rhythm and blues. He also urges that an association he formed to advance the cause of r.b. be given more coverage by trade and press.

With regard to the first point—more space—it is to be noted that many trade papers are devoting varying amounts of space to r.b. Some have dropped their r.b. charts. We can only speak for The Billboard, in which we point out the comparatively meager treatment of r.b., chart, graph and general columns. The Billboard is constantly aware of r.b.'s continuing importance, and is increasingly trying to give it its proper and pop-oriented forms. (See page 1 story, July 4.)

However, it is necessary that the r.b. field clarify its own aims.

In relatively recent times, many r.b. diskers and artists resorted to masked names. This just isn't r.b. There is a need for a real mental revolution. We only say that because we have news for you...it is all pop.

To some degree, this reversal reflects another condition: vice, that over-all single business is not too good; that the majors are again in a great threat in the singles field; that the wise for indie to rethink some steps and cultivate the old hard core of buyers in the specialty field.

On the part of indies, some soul-searching is necessary, particularly in view of the fact that careless generalizations of the situation raise sociological implications.

The Billboard, meanwhile, will continue to cover all facets of the record business; and, as in the past, will continue to be mindful of the importance of one of the great sources of American culture: rhythm and blues.

Col. Meet to Intro New Line, New Look

NEW YORK—Columbia Records will introduce both a new record label and a new look at the firm's forthcoming international sales conference, only a few days away July 19. The new line will be the firm's Latin-American product, the EX series, and the new look will include the firm's all-Latin theme in advertising, promotion and design. In addition, the company will also introduce new fast moving rock boxes: the Story of Mitch Miller, Johnny Mathis, Ray Conniff, et al.

The firm's EX series will consist of LPs, to by Latin artists from Mexico, Latin America and the Latin countries in American countries. These will include Trio Los Panchos and Los Cazadores, who will be made available to all Columbia distributors at the convention and the first group of releases will be shown. Actually, the EX series is not new; it has been available to certain Columbia distributors since early this year. The main Miami, Columbia Miami, distributor, for example, has been selling records of this series. Line was originally made for CBS International for export.

The new look, or the smart look of Columbia will be unveiled when the firm's fall album line is shown. The new line will show off the firm's Latin-American product, with special de luxe packaging of key albums. In addition, the new look will include the firm's all-Latin theme in advertising, promotion and design. In addition, the company will also introduce new fast moving rock boxes: the Story of Mitch Miller, Johnny Mathis, Ray Conniff, et al.

Kapp Distributors In Miami Conclave

MIAMI BEACH, Fla.—Kapp Records distributors from across the country were gathered here at week's end for special meetings Saturday (9) and Sunday (10), to hear details of the Kapp fall program of both albums and singles. In addition to the LP products, firm will play new singles at the conclave along with names at the convention as well.

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UA Revamps Sales Set-Up

NEW YORK—United Artists has set up regional sales offices in the East and has announced three regional sales managers.

Jerry Ranker heads up the Eastern region office, Norman Nelson, formerly of Decca, has joined UA as Midwest chief, and Henry Berson, formerly of Capitol, has been put in charge of West Coast sales, is Western regional sales head. All three report to Joe Silski, UA's national sales manager.

UA's new Vesey-General Management has been in operation since February, who was working time between here and Chicago, with a Tennessee office in the latter city, and Nelson will headquarter there. Miss Kite Ornstein, who formerly worked with Tallmadge at Mercury, will also headquarter there. Jim King, currently as the newly named Midwest office manager.

INDIE MFR.-DISTRIB OUTLOOK

New Factors Spark Less Dependence on Middlen

By BOB ROLONTZ

NEW YORK—Many, and often severe, changes are currently taking place in business relationships between label and wholesale distributors. These changes are happening both under the new discipline imposed on manufacturers as a result of the payola problem and tighter profit margins, as well as by design. In the male, they add up to a policy of less dependence on the distributor by the independent manufacturer.

Many manufacturers, unhappy about distributors who won't pay bills or won't order a record until it is a hit, have started to curtail their regular distributor list from the 30 odd that most have to 10 or 15. They are trying to give the independent manufacturer a reason to get the impetus to happen nationally, and that once that happens it's to 20 key markets handled by 80 percent of the business.

There are always been two kinds of distributors, those who pay and those who don't. There are those who order and those who don't, according to these manufacturers. They claim that the healthy distributors, those who both pay and order, are located in markets large enough in size to enable a distributor to make a profit. These manufacturers claim that the distributors that make the least contribution to starting records, often pay off checks and don't pay in anyway after a record is a hit. And they say that the freebie records that use up a manufacturer's capital...

Distributors Get Payola Charge

WASHINGTON—Payola conspiracy was indicted by the Columbia Record Sales Corporation, and Columbia Record Distributors, Inc., by the Federal Trade Commission last week (5). FTC said the Columbia had gotten made to pay off to radio and TV stations without the agency's personnel, in addition to deejays. Also called was Triumph Records, and Wally C. Abrahams, Jr., New York City, co-partners in the Columbia, co-partners in trading at B & H Distributing Company, and Betty Alexander, general manager, Detroit; ABC Distributing Company, and its officers Henry Ford and...

Home-Grown Talent Tops British Charts

British Artists Take Win, Place & Show; Johnny Preston in 4th Slot

By DON WEDGE

LONDON—British artists, usually with locally written songs, continued to rule the British charts during the first half of the year, with three No. 1 records by New Musical Express. Tommy Steele, who had sold 12 million dollars worth of records, was next in line, with the new single "It's a Small World." Other British artists included Cliff Richard, (EMI-Columbia), and second with 609 points was Anthony Newley, who had 100 points on the British charts. First single "Why!" and second single "I'm Gonna Be a Country Music Star," first single "The Ballad of the Bluebird," and second single "My Way."

Top U.S. artist was Johnny Preston, thanks to his two big releases, "Running Bear" and "Candle of Love." He was placed fourth, while Fifth was another British talent...

Mr. Lee's Tune Keys Lawsuit

WASHINGTON—An unusual situation—involving legal action—has developed within the two versions of the same time by the same record label have been released on two different labels. "I Shot Mr. Lee," by the Bobbettes on the Triple X label is already on The Billboard Hot 100 at No. 14. Atlantic Records released its version of "I Shot Mr. Lee," by the Bobbettes a couple of years ago.

To further complicate the situation, a new group, called the Progressive Music on the Atlantic label, has announced that it will release an album with "I Shot Mr. Lee," by the Bobbettes and the Atlantic album. The Bobbettes have been accused of infringing on the original performance rights of the song.

Nathan stated the special summer was going to be a jazz-oriented performance with the aim of encouraging dealers to stock King in depth as preparation for the fall season.

Goody Opens New Outlet

NEW YORK—Sam Goody, who still has the contract to offer the former Arlen's, across the street from the main Goody emporium, has moved back in the former Arlen's space called Westside Record House. Goody frankly admitted that the new outlet will house one of the most complete selections of "chuck and loud" merchandise in this area.

Goody has been running a successful operation for the past year and a half, but will at the same time be in a better competitive position with the many other shop owners...

Harris Bill Hearings Set

WASHINGTON—Hearing dates for the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee on the Harris house-passed broadcast reform bill have been announced by the respective chairmen, Sen. John O. Pastore, chairman of the Senate Commerce...

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