

# Miami Moves Up As Soul Center

## Henry Stone's T.K. Productions The Major Thrust

By ART KAPPER

MIAMI—George McCrae, KC and the Sunshine Band, Little Beaver, Latimore, Betty Wright, Clarence Reid . . . they're all hot and they're all from Miami, the city that's challenging Philly as the soul center of the 70s.

Henry Stone, Miami's "soul merchant," who arrived here from California in 1946 to open Tone Distributors, heads T.K. Productions, which releases these artists.

T.K. Productions is an independent group of record labels, distributed through its own nationwide network of independent distributors and one-stops in the United States. The company, which was founded in 1970, now includes such affiliate labels as Glades, Cat, Blue Candle, Stone Dogg, Bold, Chain, International Brothers, Weird World,

Dig, Dash, Drive, Suncut, Now Sound, Gold Plate and Shane.

Soul charts records are Benny Latimore's "Let's Straighten It Out," Little Beaver's "Party Down," George McCrae's new one (following his chart busting "Rock Your Baby"), "I Can't Leave You Alone," Betty Wright's "Shoorah! Shoorah!," Timmy Thomas' "I'd Like to See You Tonight," and Miami's "Party Freaks."

"Not bad for a new company," says Stone. "We're truly an independent company. We can't go to the corporate well for more funds. We have to keep moving. We promote and get the product into the markets. We get the airplay. All our distributors have to do is concentrate on selling our product. If they really hustle for us, we swing with them. If it doesn't sell, we take it back. In

many markets, our distribution situation is weak, so we bolster it by selling to one-stops and major retail accounts direct. We know where to go with the merchandise."

T.K.'s sound is the undulating push of George McCrae; the raw girl-in-a woman's body soul of Betty Wright, the acknowledged Queen of Miami, whose advice to the ladies and warnings to the men has been her lyrical trademark; the moody passion of Latimore; the red-neck swagger of KC; the party funk of Clarence Reid; and Beaver's high emotional voice and racy-riff guitar work.

Betty Wright says the Miami Soul sound is "sort of Afro-American-Cuban-Calypso-Funk, with a little bit of sunshine to make your heart feel glad."

# Sultan Transforms Bistros Into Discos

By DAVE DEXTER JR.

LOS ANGELES—Another transplanted Londoner, John Sultan, has entered the mobile discotheque field here. But Sultan not only drives around in his lavishly equipped Dodge van putting on dance-light shows at private parties, he contracts with cocktail lounges and small clubs to install his equipment on a share basis.

"With the dual turntable, the maze of lights, the records and the amps, I furnish a beautiful girl to operate it all," Sultan says.

His big competition is another former Britisher, Jane Brinton, whose Aristocrat firm (Nov. 2 Billboard) is believed to have been the first trav-

eling disco in the Southern California area.

Sultan works out of suburban Inglewood, where for several years he has designed and manufactured speakers and amps for many rock groups.

Because of his dual business interests, he is in a position to plug in as many as eight column speakers and "four or five" amps, if necessary, to entertain audiences as large as 10,000.

"Last month at a gala rock concert at the Hollywood Palladium," he says, "I handled an immense crowd with a roaring sound and spectacular lights, perhaps the largest au-

dience ever to enjoy a mobile disco on the West Coast."

Sultan also features special slides. Last Thursday (19) he presented his show to a holiday-celebrating crowd of youngsters at the Lycee Francais High School which had never seen anything like it.

"I carry about 500 singles and maybe 200 LPs in my van," Sultan says. "But my special gimmick is a collection of rare oldies which I personally collected in England."

"A few record labels have given me disks but most of them ignore my requests," he says, "even though my operation constitutes a first class plug for new product."

In his deals with cocktail lounges and clubs which are seeking a proven business booster, Sultan hires attractive young women who are bright enough to operate the sound-light console and splits the fee 50-50 with each. He claims each console, which he constructs himself, would retail at "about \$5,000 if marketed."

Sultan intends to concentrate on the cocktail lounge operation. "There must be hundreds of places which would double their gross if they tried my disco setup," he says.

# House Passes Two Bills

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on copyright—but less vehemently.

The antipiracy segment of the bill removes the expiration date on the present legislation, making permanent the right of recordings made on

or after Feb. 15, 1972 to copyright protection from piracy under federal copyright law.

The extension preserves the expiring copyrights for two years, in anticipation that the House will pass a revision bill in the next Congress.

The antipiracy penalties accepted by both Houses set maximum prison sentences of one year and/or \$25,000 fine for the first offense, and up to two years with a \$50,000 maximum for willful repeaters. The prison sentence penalty for repeated piracy of copyrighted recordings is double that in the present temporary antipiracy law, but is less than the three and seven years offered in the original McClellan copyright passage.

The attack on the copyright extension in the House was spearheaded by Rep. John Dingell (D., Mich.), who has blasted these renewals since their start in 1962, as favoring big music publishers in ASCAP and BMI.

He said that keeping these copyrights out of public domain is a rip-off on the public. Representative Dingell took the opportunity to accuse the Library of Congress and Copyright Office of favoring the big music publishers.

Rep. Robert W. Kastenmeier (D., Wis.) who heads the House subcommittee dealing with copyrights, and its guide and mentor for copyright legislation in the House, told fellow Congressmen he reluctantly accepted the extension in order to get the bill passed in the short time left before adjournment.

But he promised another look at proposed longer copyright terms during hearings on the overall copyright revision in the next Congress.

# Members Nominating NARM Act Awards

NEW YORK—In a procedural switch, NARM is soliciting nominations from its entire membership for candidates eligible for the association's best-selling artist awards. In past years, nominations were limited to committees of approximately 20 members.

The best-selling awards, in 18 separate categories, will be announced March 6, as the climax of NARM's 17th annual convention in Los Angeles.

# Premier Suing Over Royalties

LOS ANGELES—Premier Record Corp., now the name of the firm which was MGM Records before it was sold to Polygram U.S., is seeking \$368,896.37 from Stax Records in a superior court suit here.

Premier claims that under terms of a soundtrack deal it made with Stax in May 1971, the defendants, including president Al Bell and chief financial officer Ed Pollack, still owe that amount for royalties as of March 31, 1974.

In addition, the suit seeks \$200,000 for alleged fraudulent activity on the part of the defendants and a full accounting.

# Executive Turntable



ILBERMAN



ROTH



EICHNER



FRANKS

Mel Ilberman named to the new post of division president, RCA Records commercial operations, with general counsel Myron Roth succeeding him as division vice president, business and talent affairs. With marketing, business and talent affairs, Nashville operations and publishing reporting to him, Ilberman will have responsibility for day-to-day commercial operations, freeing president Ken Glancy to devote more personal attention to building the artist roster and expanding foreign markets. Jack Kiernan, division vice president, marketing, takes on added responsibility for special products including TV packages, premium disks. Mike Berniker, who joined this summer as a pop executive producer, named director, pop a&r, another new post. Jon Walton promoted from staff counsel to senior counsel.

BASF Systems, Inc., has named Guenther Grochla as president, succeeding reassigned Dr. Werner Balz. He was formerly head of BASF computer products marketing in Germany. Robert Blank, former Procter & Gamble brand manager, fills Tom Dempsey's slot as vice president, audio products marketing. Marsdin VanOrder, manager of manufacturing, named vice president, operations, Jan. 1, and Dr. Uwe Bong, currently with a BASF group company in Spain, takes over as vice president, finance and administration, March 1. Remaining in their posts are Gerry Berberian, national sales manager, audio products, and Woody Howard, manager of BASF Records.

Columbia Records promoted Mickey Eichner to vice president, East Coast a&r, from director independent products, and Jonathan Coffino to newly created post of director, new artist development, from associate director, product development. John M. Franks, 10-year veteran with the label, named to newly created position of general sales manager, Columbia special products. Freddy Pillot has joined as local promotion manager, Columbia/Epic/Custom Labels, New Orleans region.

Donald L. Scott new national accounts coordinator, Rockwell International Corp. Admiral Group. . . Larry Winn named vice president, sales, for Wald Sound division of Verit Industries. . . Bert Mazzacca, upped from production manager to operations manager for Glenburn Corp. . . William Lanier to assistant national sales manager for Nikko Electric Corp. of America. . . Tom Tinkerton boosted to western regional manager, audio products, at Akai America, Ltd. . . Bernard A. Grae moves from RCA audio division to manager of industrial design at Tandy Electronics manufacturing adjunct of Radio Shack.

Warren D. Schaub elected vice president and controller, ABC, Inc. . . Tony Martinez new manager of technical systems at Reeves Audio Visual Systems division of Reeves Teletape. . . Irwin Pincus in as manager of Frank Music West, new Hollywood office of Frank Music Corp., New York.

Peter Burke, who was assistant director of West Coast ASCAP until the recent death of Herb Gottlieb, when he became acting director, has left the society. He was replaced by Tad Maloney, formerly western membership representative. . . Scintrex Inc. has appointed Roland von Sacken vice president. Thomas R. D'Angelo is the new manager, sales and administration, for the headphone and audio equipment manufacturer. . . Donald L. Scott set as national accounts coordinator for Admiral-Rockwell. He was recently sales manager of the A-R Chicago branch.

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# Billboard Names 11 Trendsetters

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sina, Richie Havens and John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra.

• George Hamilton IV, Tennessee Ernie Ford and Sandi Burnett, who expanded country music by taking shows to Russia for the first time.

• KOKE-FM, Austin, Texas, for pioneering a new format with its progressive programming under the direction of station president Ron Rogers and general manager Ken Moyer.

• The Rev. James Cleveland, who started as a pianist with the Caravans and now heads Gospel Music Workshop of America, the prime black gospel creative force, which is expanding the impact of black gospel.

• 3M for developing a new coating that raises the high frequency response 50 percent over previous surfaces.

• Scepter Records and president Florence Greenberg, who was momentarily stymied because of short radio playlists but found radio support after she got "Do It ('Til You're

Satisfied)," by B. T. Express into discotheques and then became the first label to effect specialized discotheque mixes.

• CBS Records International for arranging reciprocal licensing of masters for Soviet marketing of LPs by American artists—a first—and for continuing the distribution of Russian Melodiya albums in the U.S.

# ASF Unveiling A Tape Library

LOS ANGELES—The American Song Festival has opened a tape library here designed to accommodate a&r executives and music publishers.

Malcolm C. Klein, president, says the library is stocked with 700 songs in a variety of categories from entries received in the 1974 fest, songs which received the highest ratings by the screening committee but which did not qualify for the festival finals.

The library, at 425 South Fairfax, is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily, Klein says.