

On the Air

'King of the Moondogs' Quits WJW to Sign
With New York Station

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THE spectacular career of Disk Jockey Alan Freed, who has reigned on Station WJW here as "King of the Moondogs" for three years, will begin a new phase next month, when he shifts from the Cleveland station to Station WINS in New York.

Billboard, theatrical publica-
tion reported Freed would be

guaranteed \$75,000 a year by WINS, plus Percentage rights which would increase that total considerably, and speculated that the Cleveland disk jockey's move "may involve the biggest sum of money ever paid to a



rhythm and blues jockey by an independent radio station."

Freed last night confirmed news of his impending departure and the amount of the contract. His WINS program will be patterned on the WJW "Moondog Show," and it will be syndicated, either live or transcribed, to other stations in the major markets of the country. Freed said the contract with WINS would be signed within the next two weeks. His program on WJW will be concluded on Aug. 15.

Show to Continue

William Lemmon, general manager of WJW, said the "Moondog Show" would continue "as usual" on the Cleveland station with another disk jockey in the main role, although, he added, it was "possible" the station would buy Freed's program out of New York.

Lemmon said WJW had a trade mark on the name "Moondog Show" and that it could not



DEPARTING. The "King of the Moondogs," Alan Freed, WJW disk jockey, has announced he will leave the Cleveland radio station Aug. 15 to begin a new series of radio programs over Station WINS, New York.

be used elsewhere without the station's permission.

If station WJW does not buy Freed's New York program, is probably another Cleveland station will air it here.

Freed has enjoyed a short but meteoric career in Cleveland radio and television. He came to this city from WAKR, Akron in April, 1950, to perform at Station WXEL-TV and he still has an afternoon program (1: to 2:45) on that station. In July 1951, he began the late-hour "Moondog" program over WJW and the show, featuring blues and rhythm recordings, quickly found a big audience among radio listeners of northeastern Ohio. Best indication of that was when the disk jockey staged a "Moondog Ball" in Cleveland Arena in March, 1952, and a near-riot ensued. A crowd estimated at 25,000 persons showed up for the dance and the Arena's capacity for such an affair is about 10,000. The crowd was in no mood for official figures and everybody pressed into the Arena by knocking down the doors. It took a section of the Cleveland Police Department to restore order.

In recent months, Freed's program has been rebroadcast over station WNJR, Newark, N.J., and when a "Moondog Ball" was held in that city by the disc jockey on May 1 of this year, 18,000 paid their way in to the dance and another 6,000 persons were turned away according to Freed.

The disc jockey's career here nearly ended in tragedy in April 1953. He fell asleep at the wheel of his car in the early morning hours, after work, and the car crashed into a tree in Shaker Heights. Freed was in critical condition for many days and the doctors sewed him together with 225 stitches, plus plastic surgery, which still continues.

In addition to his new program on WINS, New York, Freed said he expects to perform in 52 half-hour filmed TV programs featuring blues artists and to have his own "live" TV show on a New York station.

The disc jockey and his wife, Jackie, have a two-month-old girl, Sieglinde.