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Rock 'n' Roll Gets Ready for TV

By KAY GARDELLA

Nail down the furniture and fasten your seat belts!
Worse than a prospective nuclear blast is the announce-
ment that rock 'n' roll is going to invade television, May
4 and 11, 7:30 P. M., via ABC.

In command of the operation will be Alan Freed, the deejay strategist who maneuvered rock 'n' roll to the No. 1 spot in Tin Pan Alley. Cashbox, the pop music magazine, reports 40 out of the top 60 best sellers are r 'n' r tunes. On the May 4 "Rock 'n' Roll Revue," Freed will be flanked by some of the vocalists who recorded these hits—Guy Mitchell, June Valli, Sal Mineo, Martha Carson, The Dell Vikings, The Clovers and Screamin' Jay Hawkins. The audience, according to Freed, will be all teen-agers and ABC is building special bleacher seats to accommodate them.

The home audience is another thing. Freed's hoping it'll consist of parents as well as youngsters, particularly those who've built up a strong prejudice against r 'n' r. "A parent doesn't have to like what his kid likes," comments the 35-year-old deejay, "but the least he could do is try to understand it." Alan's speaking from experience. He has

four youngsters of his own—"all rock 'n' roll fans."

Speaking with Freed backstage at the Brooklyn Paramount, he was reminded of the days when the parents of today stormed the Paramount to hear Tommy Dorsey swing it or to swoon over a Frank Sinatra ballad. "We were criticized then, just as the dungaree brigade is today," he said. "I can recall insisting on doing my homework with A Benny Goodman record going. Invariably, my mother would open the door of my room and command, 'Will you please turn that noise off!'"

Rock 'n' roll, according to its chief ambassador, had to happen. "Jazz got so far out, it lost its beat and the bands became conscious of new sounds, forgetting people still liked simple melodies. For 10 years the kids were starved for music they could dance to."

The explosion came about three years ago in Cleveland when Freed, foreseeing the possible im-



Alan Freed
Leads the way

pact this music would have, launched his Rock 'n' Roll Party. The music swept the country and before Alan had time to flip platters, station WINS was after him to head his current disk show. He now receives a six-figure annual income.