

you guys got me thrown out of there!" We both laughed. "I've been using the Academy of Music. It's larger than Carnegie by 400 seats and it's a wonderful theatre."

"Okay, Sid. If you say it's a good place, let's do it. When do you have in mind?"

"May 1st, Andrew. Ten thousand dollars for two shows; how's that?"

"Great, Sid. You got a deal. We'll see you on May 1st, and I'll talk to you or Billy Fields before that."

When I hung up, I thought, Not bad, Sid. Not bad. The Stones in May and the Beatles in August!

During the next few months, I prepared for both the Stones and the Beatles. We did some ads and billboards for the Stones and, as projected, they sold out both shows.

On the day of the concerts, I got to the theatre early and visited with the Rolling Stones. It was amazing to me that the calm and gentlemanly men in the dressing room turned into something completely different for their stage personas. When I left them and Andrew a few minutes before show time, I said, "Listen, guys, take it easy out there. We don't want to get thrown out of this place, too!" They all just waved at me and laughed.

Of course, they didn't take it easy. They did their Rolling Stones thing, which meant Mick Jagger strutting, jumping and dancing around with boundless energy. And, of course, the audience got into it.

The Academy of Music was an old vaudeville theatre which had an orchestra pit separating the audience from the stage. Theatres like that are still found on Broadway and are utilized for musicals like *Les Miserables* and *Phantom of the Opera*. At any rate, the kids at this Stones concert got so excited that they began to rush the stage, trying to leap over the chasm created by the pit. There were so many of them that they overwhelmed the security men, and Billy and I found ourselves flat on our fannies. There were bodies flying all over the place, and a number of the kids fell on top of each other in the pit. Tiny, our 6'6" lead security man, jumped into the pit and started throwing the kids back out. There were bodies flying everywhere. Through some miracle, no one got hurt, but it was scary. Fortunately for the Stones, they had their own security men, who blocked the kids who attacked the stage from the sides. It was really something to behold that day in May of 1965 when the Rolling Stones played the Academy of Music.

We were building up to the Beatles. The workload was fantastic. The hype and demand for tickets was beyond belief, and right in the middle of this extremely hectic time, I got a call from Walter Hyman.

"Sid, I'm out here in the Hamptons vacationing with my family. Some guys took an old French barge and turned it into a discotheque. You have to walk across a gangplank to get onto the barge and into the disco. They have a band playing there called The Rascals and they're fabulous and drawing big crowds. I want you to come up here and see them."

"Walter, are you kidding me? I'm getting ready to do the biggest concert in the history of rock and roll! My wife is pregnant; my mother is sick! I don't know where to go first and you want me to drop everything and come out to the Hamptons (a two-hour drive from Manhattan without summer traffic)? Walter, give me a break!"

"Sid, I'm telling you...these kids are great! And all the rich and beautiful people out here are standing on line to see them play. I saw Senator [Jacob] Javits here last night. Bette Davis is a frequent attendee and Ahmet Ertegun from Atlantic Records comes here all the time and wants to sign them."

"Great, Walter, but I don't have the time. Maybe after the Beatles, but not now. Sorry. Call me after Shea."

The next day, Walter called again.

"Sid, you *have* to come up here. I'll send Mike and my car and you'll be here in no time at all. I told the kids that you're a friend of mine and that I'm going to bring you to see them, and they're all excited. You *have* to come, Sid! Please don't make a liar out of me!"

I begged off again.

The next day, a Monday, as I exited my office, two very strong arms wrapped themselves around me in a vise-like grip and a voice said, "You're coming with me." I was startled for a moment, but as I was maneuvered towards a car, I saw that it was Walter Hyman's Checker limousine. Walter was in the back seat, laughing hysterically. Walter's chauffeur, Mike, shoved me gently into the car.

"You're coming with me to the Hamptons. Don't worry, I cleared it with Gerry, and I promised that I'd get you home at a reasonable hour."

We drove right to The Barge, as the disco was called, and Mike stopped the limo immediately in front of the gangplank. When we got inside, the four members of The Rascals were waiting. There were perhaps six or seven other people in the place. It was the band's night off; the band members, Felix Cavaliere, Eddie Brigati, Dino Danelli and Gene Cornish, were dressed in knickers, shirts with Lord Fauntleroy collars and pilgrim shoes. I thought they looked ridiculous and I thought that Walter was nuts. But then they started to play and sing and I knew immediately why they had become the darlings of the Hamptons summer scene. They were great! They covered songs that other artists had written and previously recorded. But they

played and sang in their own style with high energy and great showmanship. I knew that if they could get some original material with hit potential, they could become a major band. They had the intangible "it."

When they finished playing, I talked to the boys for a while, and then Walter drove me back to New York.

Once we were in the car, he began to sell me. "I want to be your partner on this deal. I am crazy about this group. The reaction of the people who come to see them, not just the kids, but the adults, is fantastic!"

He took out his checkbook.

"Here, I'm going to write out a check for \$10,000 right now, and if you need more, let me know. I want you to take them into the studio immediately and record them. Make a record."

"Wait a minute, Walter," I said. "Yes, we can be partners. After all, you found the group. But we can get a record company to pay for their recordings, so put away your checkbook. What we really need is a lawyer. I'll tell you what. Get a lawyer and on August 16, the day after the Beatles appear at Shea, we'll meet The Rascals at your apartment with the lawyers, and we'll sign them right then and there. In the meantime, we'll invite them to the Beatles concert."

"Okay, Sid. Consider it done. August the 16th it is. And I have the lawyer. His name is Steve Weiss."

About a month after my meeting with Brian, I got a call from Barry Gotterer of New York City Mayor John Lindsay's office.

"Sid, are you aware the Mayor has stuck his chin out for you on this Beatles concert?"

"Why is that, Barry?"

"Well, Shea Stadium is owned by the city. We had to approve the stadium use for the concert. The Mayor and all of us here on his staff are concerned about security. A group of 55,000 wild-eyed screaming kids represents some challenges in crowd control, and the Mayor wants to make sure it comes off without any hitches and in complete safety."

"I appreciate that, Barry, and I'm grateful to the Mayor for letting the concert go forward. I've built a reputation as someone who is ultra-concerned about security, and the Mayor should have no cause for concern."

"Sid, it would make us more comfortable if during the numerous meetings that you are going to have over the next few months with police, traffic and security people, we could have a representative or two from the Mayor's office along."

"Believe me, it's not necessary, but if you want to tag along, it's fine with me."

I had many meetings about security over the next several months and the Mayor's office always sent a representative. Dick Aurelio was the deputy mayor who attended the most meetings. Dick is a brilliant guy and gave valuable input. He later became a vice president at Time Warner Cable operations.

Our first concern was how we were going to get the Beatles in and out of Shea Stadium quickly and safely. I had numerous conversations with Brian and his staff about that, and slowly a plan began to emerge.

Initially, we thought that we would take the Beatles in limousines under police escort from the Warwick Hotel, where they would be staying, to a Wall Street heliport and fly them directly into Shea Stadium. When we presented that plan to the police, the Mayor's office nixed it immediately. They thought that taking the helicopter into Shea would be too dangerous, particularly if there was a rush of kids to get to the Beatles.

The plan we finally agreed on was that we would use the helicopter with the only difference being that we would land the helicopter in the old World's Fairgrounds, across the way from Shea Stadium. The Beatles and Brian would exit the helicopter and get into a waiting Wells Fargo armored car that would then proceed through the Shea Stadium outfield gates. Once under the stands, the Beatles would run to the umpires' dressing room and prepare for their appearance. The exit plan was that the armored car would wait outside the stadium until the Beatles had completed their last song. As they were taking their bows, the outfield gates would be opened and the armored car would speed right to the stage. The boys would then hop in and the armored car would speed out of the stadium to the waiting helicopter for the short flight back to Manhattan. The security people, the Mayor's office and I felt that once we got them through those outfield gates, we would be home free.

It took several months but finally the plan to get the Beatles in and out of Shea Stadium had everyone's approval, including the most important approval of all: Brian Epstein's. When he gave me his final okay, he asked me again, "Sid, are you absolutely sure the boys will be safe under this plan?"

"Absolutely, Brian. The security plans for this concert are as extensive and well-thought-out as if we were protecting the President of the United States."

"Okay, I trust you. We will be arriving at the Warwick on the 13th. Why don't you come by then and we can say hello?"

"That's fine. I'll see you then."

My overriding concern through all those months leading up to the August 15th date was for security.

Chip Munk kept coming back to me and telling me that the \$10,000 es-

just the safety of his boys.

"Come in. I'm sure you'll want to say hello to the boys. They're just next door."

He took me into the adjoining suite and the Beatles were there, just hanging out, joking and having a good time.

"Sid!" they all greeted me effusively.

Paul shook my hand and said, "It's nice to be with you, again."

John said, "Good to be back again, Sid! I love New York! It's still a crazy place!"

Ringo joked and remarked about how there were girls trying to get at them in the hotel and that he had heard that some had even secured rooms weeks in advance as guests of the hotel in the hope that they could get to see the Beatles.

I remember telling them that New York loved the Beatles and that there was great anticipation for Shea.

"It's never been done before, gentlemen," I said. "A soldout stadium the size of Shea! It's going to be spectacular!" They all grinned at that.

"We'll be making history again," I continued. "I'll see you on Sunday. I'm really looking forward to it."

John laughed and, with a gleeful look on his face, replied, "So are we, Sid!"

On Saturday, August 14th, Chip Munk began to erect the stage at Shea. By then, the cost had escalated to \$25,000. I was in no mood to complain about the \$15,000 overrun; I just wanted to see it done.

On Sunday, the day of the concert, I got to Shea Stadium very early. Chip was putting the finishing touches on the stage, and I must say it was a first-rate stage.

The Shea grounds-keepers and the security people were erecting the barricades. Billy and I circulated around the huge ballpark, checking and rechecking arrangements.

The Mayor's office assigned a young intern to spend the day with me. He observed everything very carefully, and he was a super bright kid, not only well-mannered but extremely well-dressed. That young man was Jeffrey Katzenberg, who today is partners with David Geffen and Steven Spielberg at Dreamworks.

In mid-afternoon, we assembled all the security people for final instructions. I explained ardently that no matter how provoked they might get, no matter what the young fans might do, the concertgoers were to be handled with kid gloves.

"If anyone tries to rush the stage, just lift them off their feet, let them dangle and put them back over the gates as gently as possible. If they don't

go, carry them out of the ballpark. Under no circumstance are you to use clubs, hit them or use any force at all."

Billy then told them where they would each be stationed.

Naturally, the crowd came early. I think we opened the gates to Shea at about six o'clock and there were many people waiting to get in. The anticipation was electric and I knew we were in for something extraordinary.

The Rascals, invited by me, came to the Shea concert early. I had issued them passes and they had no trouble getting in. I put them in the third-base dugout so they could be as close to the action as possible. The kids on the other side of the stadium, the first-base side, saw them and thought they were the Beatles. It was very early yet, around 6:30 or so, and kids began to filter down from across the stadium for autographs from people they thought were the Beatles. When they realized that this was another group, they were undaunted and clamored for autographs. Since it still was early enough and the kids were well-behaved, I allowed them in small groups to come into the third-base dugout and get The Rascals' autographs. In addition, Billy Smith, a friend of The Rascals, had made up buttons that said, I'm a Rascals Fan, and he gave them out to the congregating kids. Before long, there were 2,000 kids roaming the stands wearing Rascals buttons.

While I was in the dugout with what later became "my four boys," Bill Tooley from the Shea Stadium staff came to me and said, "Sid, the stadium is yours for the night and that includes the message board. What's your next event, and we'll advertise it on the board."

"Thanks, Bill," I said. "With this and the recent Rolling Stones concert, I haven't really had time to plan another event, so I have nothing to promote at this time."

"But, Sid, you paid for it! You might as well use it."

"Okay, if that's the case, here is what I'd like said: Please, for your safety and your neighbor's safety, stay in your seats throughout the concert. Failure to do so could result in the cancellation of this event."

"Sid, you can get another message up there."

I thought for a second and then said, "Okay. Tell them to flash The Rascals are coming...The Rascals are coming!"

"You got it, Sid," he said, and left to make the arrangements. The flashing, The Rascals are coming...The Rascals are coming! turned out to be a fortuitous and important message indeed.

As planned, the Beatles were taken by police escort in limos to the heliport in Manhattan and flown to the Fairgrounds in Queens. The helicopter did a turn around the stadium to let the boys see the crowd, which was almost filled to capacity by 7:30. When the helicopter flew over Shea, I knew who the occupants were, but I'm not sure if the crowd did. The copter land-

"Okay, Phil," I laughed. "We're not going to do anything before tomorrow."

The next day, Phil picked me up in his limo, complete with his bodyguard, and took me with him to see The Rascals at The Barge. Naturally, Phil was taken with them, and The Rascals were awed that the great Phil Spector had come all the way from Los Angeles to see them and wanted to sign them!

During one of their breaks, I explained to the group that Phil was not going to leave Los Angeles. He would be based on the West Coast, and they would be on the East Coast.

"You need a producer with close proximity to you, especially at the early stages of your recording career," I said. "With Phil, you can never know where he's going to be. Let's find someone who's based closer to home."

The fact that Phil worked out of L.A. and the fact that The Rascals really wanted to produce their own records caused us to turn down the great Phil Spector. He got angry, stormed out and kicked either a stone or a fire hydrant and broke his foot. An ambulance came to The Barge and carted him off to the hospital.

I continued to negotiate with the top record executives, who were all interested in signing The Rascals. The world of record people had been to Shea and that flashing sign, The Rascals are coming...The Rascals are coming! got into their psyches and they all wanted to sign them.

While in the middle of the record negotiations, the summer ended and I booked The Rascals into a small New York City club called Harlow's. For the three weeks the group was there, Harlow's was sold-out every night. Limos were lined up outside of the club waiting for their owners to exit after having seen the Next Big Thing in American music. Every night was like July 4th or New Year's Eve.

From Harlow's, I booked The Rascals into an even smaller club, the Phone Booth. As the name suggests, the Phone Booth was tiny. I was determined that my group would play only in the smallest, most intimate clubs until they had a hit record. Every night The Rascals played, the crowds at the Phone Booth, like Harlow's, were lined up to see them. Night after night the place was jammed, and quite a few stars, such as Bob Dylan and Bill Wyman of the Rolling Stones, came frequently to see the group. Brian Epstein also came a few times, always looking like he had stepped out of the pages of *Gentleman's Quarterly*.

One night, I went to check out the scene at the Phone Booth and spotted Burt Bacharach and Angie Dickenson, two friends of mine, standing on line, waiting to get in. I knew how modest and unpretentious Burt was and that he would not use his fame to gain access into the club, so I just walked

over and took them both by the hand and took them in to see The Rascals. After The Rascals had finished their set, Angie and Bert came over and told me that they thought The Rascals were going to be a "huge" group.

On another night, I was sitting in the packed Phone Booth and Tom Jones, the great Welsh singer and showman, came into the club. He had not called ahead to tell anyone that he was coming. When the people at the front door saw him, they brought him to my table. I had never met Tom Jones before. Tom introduced himself and explained that he was in New York for business and had inquired about what he should do with his free evening. Several people had suggested to him that he go check out a new group that was playing at the Phone Booth. The group was The Rascals.

We sat and watched the boys perform. The club was packed and, as usual, there was high energy and excitement in the air. When The Rascals finished their set, Tom Jones told me that he thought they were "awesome" and he was delighted that he had stopped in to see them. We wished each other good luck and he left. The Rascals were thrilled to hear that a star of the magnitude of Tom Jones thought that they were awesome, but they were starting to get used to that kind of response to their act.

Finally, we made a decision about a record label. The deciding factor for me was when Ahmet Ertegun said, "Look, Sid. We don't have any white acts. We need this group. If you sign them to Atlantic, you'll get every possible promotion and production advantage you can get. We will stay with this group and see them through until they make it. No matter how long it takes. I know some of the major record labels are offering you more money, but they don't need you like we do, and I think that's an advantage you should not give up."

I agreed, and I told the boys that I was recommending that they sign with Atlantic. They knew Ahmet and Jerry from the Hamptons so they agreed, and The Rascals became Atlantic recording artists. When we finally announced the decision, there were many unhappy record executives at the companies we had rejected. Atlantic assigned Arif Mardin and Tom Dowd to assist The Rascals in the studio and agreed to allow them to produce their own records. They also granted us free studio time, which was unheard of then. Arif was then, and is now, a magnificent arranger and producer and has produced some of the great recording acts of all time. Tom Dowd was one of the finest recording engineers in the business.

The Rascals were getting press even before their record came out. There was a buzz about them that had started in the Hamptons at The Barge and carried over to Harlow's and then the Phone Booth in New York City. I got a phone call from the manager of the Harmonica Rascals, who were a fa-

mous group that had been in movies and on television. Basically he said that the Harmonica Rascals owned the name "Rascals" and that we should stop using it. I took this information to Atlantic and they did legal research and learned that if we put another word in front of "Rascals," we could continue to employ the name. The executives at Atlantic thought that the "Young Rascals" sounded pretty good, so they changed the group's name to the "Young Rascals" and that stopped the harassment over the name.

The boys had not really started to write their own songs yet, and the most pressing order of business during late 1965 was to find a piece of material that everybody thought was a hit. The search was on. Arif Mardin, Tom Dowd, and Atlantic were looking. The boys were contacting friends and anybody they knew who could write, and I put the word out to music publishers that I knew that we were looking for a hit song. We got hundreds of submissions and listened to them all.

Pam Sawyer and Laurie Burton, two songwriters, submitted a tune called *I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore*. The consensus was that the song would be a hit. There was great enthusiasm and expectation for the record once it was recorded, and we did everything we could to make it a hit.

The most important market for record play and sales has always been New York, with its large, diverse population and its reputation as the media capital of the world. New York is most definitely the place to have your record heard. However, New York is also the most difficult city in which to get a new record played. Invariably, a record has to be on the Top 100 charts and have demonstrated its ability to get airplay and sales in other markets before it will even be considered for play in the New York market.

However, I had some advantages in the New York market. My association with the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Tony Bennett and many other acts had afforded me the opportunity to get to know the music programmers and disc jockeys at most of the local New York radio stations. Often, when I ran concerts or shows, I would call on local DJs to be the MC. Over the years, I had developed many friendships.

One of the DJs with whom I had developed a close friendship was Bruce Morrow, who was more widely known as Cousin Bruce. For years, Bruce was the top jock at the leading station in New York, WABC. With its 50,000-watt clear-channel signal, WABC could be heard all the way to Florida and even reached parts of the Midwest. Additionally, WABC was the flagship radio station of the ABC Network. The station had a huge audience. Also, the station's music program director, Rick Sklar, was highly respected and copied. If Rick chose to air a record, soon other program directors around the country would start playing that record, too.

It was important to me that Bruce see and hear the Rascals. I thought Bruce could be the first one who played the boys' record.

The boys and I had developed a plan. I arranged for the Rascals to meet Cousin Bruce at the WABC offices. It was winter and they were all wearing muskrat overcoats. When I contacted Bruce about the meeting between him and the Rascals, I asked him to play along with them. I gave the Rascals an extra muskrat coat to take with them to WABC. They threw the extra coat over Bruce, spirited him out of the station and took him to the Phone Booth, where they were appearing. It was reminiscent of Walter Hyman's "kidnapping" of me to hear the Rascals for the first time.

This was the first time that Bruce saw the Rascals perform live. He had heard about them through the buzz they had created in the clubs around New York. Bruce had been onstage at the Beatles' concert at Shea and had seen the message board flashing *The Rascals Are Coming... The Rascals Are Coming! As Bruce always says, "It was love at first bite."* He thought that the Rascals were terrific.

Rick and Bruce agreed to air *I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore* as a favor to me. They wanted to help me, so they played the record. They even encouraged the other ABC radio stations around the country to play *I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore*.

Through Bruce Morrow and Rick Sklar and WABC, we had been successful in getting airplay for *I Ain't Gonna Eat My Heart Out Anymore*. However, I knew that in order to get on Bill Gavin's all-important tip sheet, which music program directors depended on to learn about hot new records, I had to get at least one more credible radio station to play it. We really needed the record to be mentioned in Gavin's sheet.

For years I had been reading in the industry trade papers about a great young DJ who worked for the largest radio station in the Buffalo area. His name was Joey Reynolds and he was so outstanding that he became well-known in national DJ and radio circles. I had met people who had promoted records in the Buffalo area and they had only positive things to say about Joey. Joey Reynolds had a great reputation.

I called the station where Joey worked and I asked the secretary who answered the phone if I could come and visit. I explained that I had a hot new group in New York called the Young Rascals and that they had a record out on Atlantic Records and I wanted to talk to Joey about playing it for the Buffalo radio audience. She told me that if I came during Joey's radio show, he would see me. I flew to Buffalo the very next day and went to the station. While I was waiting to see Joey Reynolds, I watched him work through the studio glass and heard his work over the speakers in the waiting room. I could tell right away that he knew what he was doing and was creating a lot

of energy and excitement in Buffalo. At the news break, Joey stood up and waved me into the studio. He greeted me with a big smile and was warm and hospitable.

"Sid, it's a pleasure to meet you," he said. "As you can see, I'm on the air, but I should be finished in about 30 minutes. Would you mind waiting? I can spend some time with you when I'm done with the program."

I had time to wait, since my plane home was not leaving for a few more hours. I spent the time watching and listening to Joey work, and I was really impressed with the heart he put into his broadcast. He was a terrific radio personality.

When he finished doing his show, Joey and I sat and talked for about a half-hour. I told him about the Young Rascals and a little about myself. I did not tell him that I was the promoter responsible for bringing the Beatles to America. I only spoke about the Rascals. Joey listened intently, but made no commitment to air *I Ain't Gonna Eat My Heart Out Anymore*.

On the plane home, I thought about my meeting with Joey and felt that I had made a good impression and that there was a 50-50 chance that he would play the record. I later found out that Joey put the record on the very next day and continued playing it until it peaked in the 30s on the radio station record chart. He had bought the record on the merits.

The fact that Joey was playing the record enabled us to get listed in the Gavin Report and helped us gain momentum for the record. It went as high as 52 on the national charts, but that's as far as it got. It was a good beginning, but the Rascals still needed a top 10 record.

Even though we didn't have a hit record, I was able to keep escalating the live performance price for the Rascals. They were such dynamic performers that before long, we were getting \$2,000 for one show, which was a high price for a group without a hit record. We played high school and college gyms, social halls and auditoriums. The word was getting out that these four boys could put on some "hell of a show."

Walter Hyman, my partner on the Rascals, came to see me one day.

"Sid, I have become very friendly with Dore Schary. He's no longer head of MGM and he's moved back to New York. As you know, he's constantly getting projects that people want him to do and he's asked me to come in on one of them, and I want to do it."

"What's the project, Walter?"

"He has a play called *The Impossible Years* that he wants to produce on Broadway and he's thinking we can take it to Hollywood after that and make it into a movie."

"That's good, Walter," I said. "What's the problem? Do it!"

"Yes, Sid," he said, "but I'm involved with you and this Rascals thing. Look, Sid, it's not my kind of music. I'm not crazy about the scene. I'd like you to buy me out."

"What would you like, Walter?"

"Well, give me \$25,000, and I'm a happy man."

"Okay, let me see what I can do."

I went to Jerry Wexler at Atlantic and told him that Walter Hyman wanted me to buy out his interest in the Rascals. I told Jerry that I was inclined to do it, but I didn't have the \$25,000.

Jerry immediately said, "Sid, we'll lend it to you."

The owners of Atlantic couldn't wait to get Walter out of there. They figured it would be easier to deal with me than with a tough-minded, rich businessman like Walter. They were right. They were delighted to see Walter go.

I gave Walter the \$25,000. He got involved with Dore Schary's project, and it became a hit on Broadway. It was later produced as a Hollywood film starring Alan King. Everyone was happy.

The pressure was on to find another song for the Rascals to record and release. Songs were coming from everywhere. One day, Felix Cavaliere of the Rascals came to me and said, "Sid, I have very strong feelings about *Good Lovin'*. People are always telling me that we should release it as a single, and I agree. I think it's a hit."

Good Lovin', a song written by Rudy Clark and Artie Resnick and recorded by the Olympics, had been a hit several years previously. The Rascals did it in their act, and it was always a favorite of the audience.

"Felix, if you believe in it so much, let's take it up with Arif, Ahmet and Jerry Wexler."

Felix did a good sales job because the big *machers* (a Yiddish word meaning big shots) at Atlantic decided to release *Good Lovin'* as a single.

Good Lovin' was an overnight sensation that began to fly up the charts, getting into the Top 10 in just five weeks. I raised the Rascals' price to \$5,000 per engagement. We could not accommodate all the promoters that were more than willing to pay the \$5,000 price.

I had read an item in one of the trade papers about an interview with Brian Epstein in which he had said that he was planning to bring the Beatles to America during the coming summer. I immediately called Brian in London. I got right down to business.

"Brian, I read that you are going to take the boys on a tour of many of the major cities and stadiums in the U.S. this coming summer. I hope you

Morrow to interview the boys.

"He's one of New York's top DJ's, Brian. Right up there with Murray the K. He's really a nice guy, and his program director, Rick Sklar, is the number one program director in America."

"We know all about Cousin Bruce and WABC. Let me ask the boys."

I stepped out of the suite, and Brian came back to me almost immediately. "The boys say okay. How soon can you have the WABC people here?"

"Well, WABC is right across the street from the hotel. They could be here in a few minutes. I can go and get them."

"Go get them, Sid."

I took the elevator down. Rick and Bruce were on the move as soon as they saw the smile on my face. We waited a few minutes, and then I took Bruce and Rick up to the suite. I introduced them to everyone. They proceeded to set up their equipment and taped the interview in ten minutes. I thanked Brian and the boys and left with Rick and Bruce. That night, Bruce Morrow went on air with an exclusive interview with the Beatles that was heard coast-to-coast on all the ABC stations. I had repaid my debt to Rick and Bruce for helping me with the Rascals.

I also realized once again that Brian Epstein and the Beatles were extremely decent people. After all, Murray the K was the DJ closest to them, and yet, because I had asked them to see Bruce and Rick as a personal favor to me, they had agreed to do it. In Yiddish, they call that being a *mensch*—a real person. They were real people.

On Tuesday, August 23, 1966, the Beatles played Shea Stadium for the second and last time. A group called the Cyrle, who had a hit record, *Red Rubber Ball* opened the show. Jeffrey Katzenberg, the same sharp, smartly dressed kid, was with me again in the dugout, representing the mayor's office. We had used the same game plan as the previous year, except for the new improved sound system. However, the extraordinary excitement and frenzy of the fans didn't seem to be there. There was still plenty of screaming and some kids tried to rush the stage, but what had happened the previous August was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It could not be duplicated.

I think Brian and the Beatles understood this, too. As we were standing in the walkway at the entrance to the dugout, Ringo said to me, "Sid, we hear that your wife Gerry is pregnant again. We haven't met her and we hear that she's a very beautiful young lady. This is the third time we're here in New York with you, Sid, and we still haven't met her!"

"The screaming and the frenzy are a bit too much for her," I said.

With that, John piped up, "Ah, Sid is trying to raise a baseball team, Ringo! He's going to go for nine!"

Everybody had a good laugh, and it signaled to me that the empty seats were not an issue.

As usual, Brian and I stood together on the field during the concert. We made small talk, but I remember him saying that he was glad that the tour was almost over.

"Two more dates on the West Coast, and we can go home," he said. "The boys have played almost every day since we got to Chicago 11 days ago. We even had to play two cities in one day on Sunday because of a rain postponement! Everybody is running out of energy, but New York seems to turn the boys on. I'm glad it's almost over."

I could see how tired he was, and I could detect in his voice that all the pressure was getting to him. Brian really never got any peace. People were always tugging at him from all directions. The boys sang and played while Brian did everything else. He had carried enormous responsibilities. It was really too much for one man, in my opinion.

"I don't see how you do it all, Brian."

He just smiled at me.

When the concert ended and just before the Beatles took off, I shook Brian's hand and said good-bye to him. I think we both knew that the Beatles' touring days were coming to an end.

Rock historians say that there were about 10,000 empty seats that night. However, I know that there were only 2,500 unsold tickets. It's like the mistake that has become part of the Beatles myth that I paid the Beatles \$6,000 for the two performances at Carnegie Hall, when the reality was that Brian and I agreed on a price of \$6,500, and that's what I paid. It's important to me that the record be set straight.

Good Lovin' reached number one. The Rascals were awarded their first gold record and, as their manager, I was entitled to receive a gold record, too. In all the years that I had been in the music business, I had never achieved a gold record.

We had a small ceremony at Atlantic Records. The Atlantic executives handed the Rascals and me our gold records. Pictures were taken that appeared about a week later in *Cashbox*, *Record World* and *Billboard*, the leading record industry publications. I took my gold record and hung it in a prominent spot in my office. I was very proud of this milestone we'd achieved. *Good Lovin'* was the first of ten Rascals gold records I have received.

I took the Rascals to Hawaii. Tom Moffat, the top promoter and top DJ in Hawaii, called me and offered us a super deal. The Rascals were booked

into a mid-size arena for five nights. They were underpaid from a cash point of view but compensated in many other ways. We took everyone with us on this trip. My entire family and all of the Rascals' families enjoyed a fully paid working vacation. Tom paid all of our expenses, from airfare to sightseeing. When we got to Hawaii, two Rascals' records were in the top 10, so we were treated like royalty. Tom Moffat and I became good friends and we are still good friends to this day.

During these years, the Bitter End on Bleecker Street in Greenwich Village became a favorite hangout of mine. My friend Freddie Weintraub owned it and Billy Fields managed it. Billy had traded in his career as a vocalist and sometime promoter with me for something a little more predictable and secure. The Bitter End specialized in showcasing young comedians, and a number of very big stars like Woody Allen, Richard Pryor and Dick Cavett got their start there and in other clubs in the Village.

The Bitter End was also a hangout for show business professionals and managers. Albert Grossman, who managed Bob Dylan, Peter Paul & Mary and later Janis Joplin and The Band, would come to the Bitter End to relax and see what was new and upcoming.

Albert and I had become friendly, and I considered him to be the best personal manager when it came to dealing with several acts simultaneously. Albert could maintain his equilibrium and his relationship with his acts, even though they were megastars and subject to jealousies and needs that they thought only he could fill. I marveled at his ability to juggle it all.

Across the street from the Bitter End was the Café Au Go Go, where all the underground music groups performed. Alice Cooper, Richie Havens and the Blues Project eventually emerged from the Au Go Go. What the Bitter End was to comedy, the Café Au Go Go was to music on Bleecker Street.

The Blues Project, five guys from the Village, became a "big buzz" act out of the Café and I got to know them quite well. Al Kooper, Steve Katz, Danny Kalb, Roy Blumenfeld and Andy Kulberg were extremely bright and highly educated young men. They were liberal, left-thinking young guys with a lot of ideas and passion. I responded to that and we became friends. I made it a point to follow their careers and monitor their progress.

I was amazed to learn that the Blues Project, who I considered to be somewhat of an underground group, had managed to secure a booking at the Phone Booth, which was a more mainstream club. I went to check them out, and after their set, they came to sit with me. I congratulated them because I thought that they were great musicians. We talked for a while and then one of them, I think it was Danny Kalb, said "Sid, we need a manager. Would you consider taking us on?"

It was a request out of the blue (no pun intended). I understood that, at that particular moment in time, I was a pretty hot commodity. I was promoting groups like the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and the rest of the British Invasion. I still had my hand in some of the pop music promotions at Carnegie Hall, and my hand, the Rascals, had a number one record.

Although the Rascals' future looked very bright on the surface, I had my doubts. It is a strange axiom of life that sometimes success is intolerable for the successful. As soon as the Rascals achieved a number one hit, they began to fight with each other. Nothing major, mind you, just petty annoyances which had them cursing and berating each other. I was very disturbed by this. As a person who disdains the use of foul language and who avoids confrontation and arguments like the plague, the Rascals' bickering caused me great consternation and had me wondering if, in fact, they would self-destruct.

When Danny Kalb asked me to consider managing the Blues Project, I told him that I would think about it. That night at home I called my friend Albert Grossman. He had proven that you could manage several hit acts at the same time. I also thought about Brian Epstein, who was managing several acts besides the Beatles. I figured that it was just a matter of building an organization. I thought that I might be able to do it.

The Blues Project, I thought, were bright guys and fine musicians. They had paid their dues by playing in small clubs, and I knew that with the right kind of management and a record contract, they could be commercially successful.

A few days later, I called Danny and set up a meeting with the Blues Project members. We sat down, had a heart-to-heart talk and made a deal.

Walter Hyman and Jackie Green, a VP at Associated Booking Company (ABC), headed by Joe Glaser, socialized often. When Walter was still actively involved with the Rascals, he strongly suggested that I give the booking responsibilities for the Rascals to ABC. Sol Saffian became the responsible agent and reported to Jackie. I had wanted to give the Rascals to Frank Barsalona, who had worked with me at GAC and had recently opened his own agency, Premier Talent. William Morris and, of course, GAC expressed some interest, too. But in deference to Walter and his relationship with Jackie, we went with ABC.

So many people knew me from my past activities within the music business that they called me to book the Rascals more often than they called Sol Saffian or Jackie Green. I fielded most of the calls, so I was able to convince the promoters who wanted to book the frequently unavailable Rascals to take the Blues Project instead. I wondered why promoters who had

sought to book a number one record act, the Rascals, would agree to take a relatively unknown act instead. Maybe because after all those years as a manager, agent and promoter, they knew and trusted me. The Blues Project did not let them down.

The boys in the Blues Project had become accustomed to getting \$150 a night. I immediately got their price to \$500, and, in short order, I worked them up to \$750 and then to \$1,250. They stayed at that price for a short time, and then I got them a record deal on Verve Records, and their price went to \$2,000 a night. They were relishing every moment as they watched their careers advance. The Blues Project was on the verge, and a hit record would put them over the top, when Danny Kalb took an overdose of LSD and got arrested in San Francisco. It took a plea from Tom Moffat in Hawaii to Tom Runds, the top DJ in San Francisco, to get Danny out of jail, but that incident destroyed the Blues Project. They broke up and went their separate ways. Later, Al Kooper and Steve Katz would go on to be founding members of the supergroup Blood, Sweat & Tears.

Chapter 14: REGRETS



ONE DAY, I GOT A CALL FROM NAT WEISS, a very successful show business attorney and a close personal friend of Brian Epstein's. Nat was also the manager of the group that opened for the Beatles at the second Shea Stadium concert,

the Cyrle.

"Sid," said Nat, "as you are well aware, you have a very special relationship with Brian Epstein. Robert Stigwood, who you no doubt have heard about, manages the Bee Gees, Eric Clapton and Cream. I think that you, Brian and Robert should meet to discuss a partnership arrangement. The three of you together would make a formidable combination. You have the Rascals and the Blues Project (no one knew yet that the Blues Project had self-destructed). Brian has the Beatles and some other acts that he's wanted to talk to you about. I think the three of you should sit down and talk."

It sounded like an interesting idea.

"Nat, when is Brian going to be in New York again?"

"He's going to be at the Waldorf Towers in a couple of weeks," he said. "I'll arrange a meeting and let you know the date."

Several weeks later, I went to the Waldorf Towers. Brian told me that his boys were off on holiday: John was making a movie, George had gone to India and Paul and Ringo were hanging out back home. Robert Stigwood, an Australian, was at the meeting, too. Nat Weiss introduced Stigwood to me. I found him to be a very nice young man, modest and bright. Nat repeated what he had said to me on the phone. Stigwood had the Bee Gees, Clapton and Cream and was working on some other exciting projects. I had the Rascals and, at that point, the Blues Project. Nat didn't have to repeat who Brian was managing. If we pooled our acts and started a new management company, Stigwood would cover Australia. Australia was considered to be a spawning ground for new talent. I would cover America, specifically New York, the home of most of the record companies and Brian would contribute his great reputation and stature in Great Britain and the rest of the world.

"You three together would be unbeatable," Nat continued. "If you pool your acts and resources, there's no telling what you could accomplish!"

Brian spoke first. "I'm all for this, and I think it could be very exciting, but I cannot put the Beatles into the partnership. Any other acts I manage will certainly be pooled and put into the new management company, but I cannot include the Beatles."

There wasn't much argument. Everybody understood that, for personal and business reasons, Brian couldn't include the Beatles in our partner-

ship.

We spent about two hours discussing who would do what and where we would maintain offices. It was very exciting.

I told Stigwood, Brian and Nat Weiss that I wanted to discuss the plan with my wife and some of my advisors and that I would get back to them in a few days.

"In principle, gentlemen, this sounds very good to me," I said.

Stigwood was all for it and Brian had only the one caveat. No Beatles in the deal.

When I got home, I told Gerry about the meeting. "I think it's a great idea, Sid, and I think you should give it a try."

"I do too. Gerry. I'm going to pursue it."

The very next day, I went to discuss the proposal with my accountants. They listened very carefully and then one of them said, "Wait a minute, Sid. What are you doing? You're going to put the Rascals in the deal and they are as hot as a pistol! Blues Project is starting to make a name for itself and you've really gotten their price up. (They didn't know about the Blues Project's imminent breakup.) You're making money with them. Also, if you do this deal, the major part of the workload is going to fall on you. You're in America, by far the largest market, and almost all of the record companies are here in New York. You are going to be doing most of the work. The only way we see this working is for Brian Epstein to include the Beatles; otherwise we think it's not a fair deal."

"Listen," said, "I'm really not too concerned about the work part of it. I like the action, so I'm happy to do the work. But if you're telling me that this is going to cost me money and it's not financially sound, I'll back out. I can assure you that Brian will not put the Beatles into the partnership. I can also tell you that Robert Stigwood is very bright and ambitious and the Bee Gees are going to be a gigantic act."

"All well and good, but right now it's not a good deal for you."

I thought about what the accountants said and decided to take their advice. I had been so cavalier about money in the past, and had had so many ups and downs, that I just thought it would be best to listen to them and not take a chance.

I called Brian in London. "Brian, I would really like to do this. I like Robert and nothing would please me more than to be partners with you. You know how much I respect and admire you, but my accountants think that without the Beatles, this is a bad deal for me. And Brian, I know you can't include the Beatles."

"Sid, it's okay. I understand that you don't want to argue with your accountants. I certainly don't want to precipitate anything between you and

them. Let's leave it for another time. Maybe things will change."

"Thank you for understanding, Brian. And please tell Nat about my decision. And thank him for trying. It's a great idea."

"Yes, I'll tell him and he'll tell Stigwood."

"I'll talk to you soon, Sid."

"Be well, Brian, and don't work too hard."

He laughed and hung up.

As the years have passed, I have often wondered what might have been if Brian Epstein, Robert Stigwood and Sid Bernstein had become partners. The idea certainly was pregnant with possibilities. Nat Weiss was right on the money. We would have been a powerful and formidable troika, one of the most potent forces in the history of the music business. I am certain of that.

My accountants rejected the deal because they felt there was a chance that they would be replaced. I wasn't sophisticated enough to understand the ramifications. It's one of the few regrets I have in my life.

After *Good Lovin'* became a number one hit in the U.S., Atlantic Records decided to release the record worldwide, which is a common practice in the record industry. You get a hit in the biggest market, the U.S. and then try to get it to be a hit worldwide. To support Atlantic's release of *Good Lovin'* in Great Britain, I decided to book the Rascals into several small clubs in London and across England. Jackie Green set it up for us through some friends of his in London. At our first engagement, Blazers, in London, I sat at a table in the middle of the room. My boys took to the stage and began to play. At a table to the right of the stage were Paul McCartney, Brian Jones and Bill Wyman of the Rolling Stones and Keith Moon, the drummer of The Who. A few minutes after the Rascals began playing, Brian Epstein came in and sat down next to me. I had extended an invitation to everyone weeks earlier when I knew that the Rascals and I would be in London. I had completely forgotten about the invitation, but was pleased and appreciative that Brian, Paul and the others had come to show their support. Everyone in the club was excited. Paul and Brian stayed till the set ended and then accepted my invitation to visit with the Rascals. Brian and Paul spent about a half-hour with the Rascals. They both were very complimentary and encouraging. Gene Cornish, the Rascals' guitarist, was always in awe of Brian and could never get over what a sharp dresser he was.

Brian came to another Rascals performance with John Lennon. Whenever big rock stars came to a performance, there was always additional excitement in the club. The Rascals were doing more than holding their own in the presence of so many great musicians and performers. Someone told

me that the Rascals were Bill Wyman's favorite group.

During one of the dates on the Rascals' first trip to Britain, Dino's tom-tom drum was sliding off the stage, so Keith Moon propped himself against the drum to make sure it would remain on stage. Someone told me that in exchange for that great courtesy, Dino taught Keith how to twirl drumsticks while playing. No one in the entire world of drummers could twirl his sticks like Dino! It was a show unto itself!

Throughout our stay in England, members of groups who were becoming famous in the U.S. visited us. It was a very new and exciting time for all of us. We were all trying to navigate through the uncharted waters of fame and fortune together. We were like an extended family of explorers and pioneers.

I wanted to help Atlantic with their continued efforts on behalf of *Good Lovin'* worldwide. Our trip to London had gotten the record started in England and there was the beginnings of airplay in Germany, too. I thought it would be a good idea to make a quick trip to Paris and play the Olympic Theatre, the same venue the Beatles had played at immediately before coming to Carnegie Hall. I also wanted to meet Eddie Barclay, Mr. Music in Europe. Barclay's Records was the label that released the British and European version of *Good Lovin'*. Sol Saffian, who was the responsible agent for the Rascals at ABC, arranged the date at the Olympia, which would feature the Rascals and a great Spanish band, Los Bravos, who had the hit, *Black Is Black*.

Felix Cavaliere of the Rascals shipped his Hammond B-3 organ to Paris. The sound of the Hammond organ differentiated the Rascals from almost all other groups playing at that time. The Hammond is a very large and unwieldy instrument that comes in two parts, a very heavy keyboard and an equally heavy speaker cabinet. When Felix plugged the B-3 into the available power source at the Olympia, it blew up. A mini mushroom cloud, like something after a nuclear explosion, appeared. American and European electric currents are incompatible and that caused the circuit to blow. Everyone searched frantically for a substitute organ, but we could not locate a suitable replacement in Paris. The substitute organ that we eventually found was beat-up and broken-down. It was like a toy; it was not a B-3. Felix was beside himself. He thought the substitute organ was a joke.

As I was sitting in the front row in the Olympia Theatre trying to figure out what to do and seeing Felix so disconsolate, I felt a hand tap me on the shoulder. I turned around to see Brian Epstein, as elegant as ever, with a friend.

"How nice to see you," I said incredulously. "What brings you here?"
"I heard you were here, Sid, and just came over to say hello."

I was really touched. Brian had flown over to Paris just to say hello and wish us good luck. I told him about our B-3 problem and asked if he had any ideas.

"If we had a little more time, we could bring one across the Channel, but we'll never get it here in time for tonight's performance. Have you checked with any other groups?"

"Everybody is out looking for us, Brian. Eddie Barclay's people, the theatre staff, but no luck yet."

By then, the Rascals had congregated and said hello to Brian, with whom they felt a kinship.

Brian turned to Felix and said, "Felix, I have been listening to the rehearsal with the substitute organ and I can assure you that no one here tonight will know the difference. Don't even give it a second thought."

Brian's comments seemed to calm Felix. Brian wished the Rascals good luck on the evening performance and listened to the rest of the rehearsal, clearly enjoying the music.

After a while, he leaned over to me and said, "Sid, I have to catch a flight back to London." I escorted him out of the theatre and thanked him again for making the trip.

"Think nothing of it," he said.

When I took my boys to dinner before their performance that night, all they talked about was how Brian Epstein had flown in for an hour just to show his support and lend encouragement.

When I returned to the States, I had the opportunity to promote a Ray Charles concert in Central Park. I jumped at the chance because I loved Ray Charles. He is one of the most important and beloved artists in the music business. Dino Danelli, the Rascals' drummer, had always been a big fan of Ray Charles. Right before the concert, I introduced Dino to Ray. Ray Charles had a 40-foot trailer with absolutely no furniture other than a chair that was placed in the middle of the trailer. There was no furniture in the trailer to make sure that Ray, who is blind, would not bump into anything and hurt himself. After making the introduction, I left the two artists alone so that they could talk.

Dino spent about a half-hour with Ray Charles. When he emerged from the trailer, his face was glowing. I was happy to have made a dream come true for Dino.

Pearl Bailey had always been a favorite performer of mine. I had met her during my Lou Walters days when we were managing Diahann Carroll and Diahann appeared in the Broadway show *House of Flowers* starring

Pearl Bailey. Pearl's singing, acting and comedic talents were outstanding. I had always wanted to present Pearl in concert. I approached Pearl to see if she would like to do a concert at Carnegie Hall. Her husband, Louis Bellson, who was a widely known jazz drummer, was also her chief advisor. When I outlined the proposal to him and Pearl, they nodded to each other and said in unison, "Let's do it."

I couldn't clear a date at Carnegie Hall, so we took the Pearl Bailey concert to Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, where the New York Philharmonic played. Seats were in such demand that I could have done three shows with her. It was particularly thrilling because she put on a great performance, and many record industry and Hollywood executives and artists from Broadway were in attendance. It was a gala evening in a magnificent hall, and Pearl couldn't have been better. It was a big event in New York. The best thing about Pearl Bailey's concert was that, for me, it was less a quest for money and more an issue of presenting someone who I thought was a very special artist.

I was making money from many sources. The Rascals were hot, and I was making a percentage from their personal appearances, their record royalties and their publishing. The promotions that I did were successful, so the money was flowing from there as well.

I decided to do a big show. The old Madison Square Garden had never had a rock and roll concert. I wanted to be the first to promote music in the Garden. I had tried to put the Beatles in the Garden, but Brian had nixed the idea.

I thought that James Brown was capable of filling the Garden. I believed that he had become a very major artist. I called Ned Irish, the owner of the Garden and the New York Knicks. Irish had made his reputation and fortune by putting college basketball doubleheaders in the Garden and from his ownership of the Knicks, New York's pro basketball team. (The Rangers, New York's hockey team, also played their home games at the Garden.)

"Mr. Irish, this is Sid Bernstein."

"Oh yes, Mr. Bernstein! How can I help you?"

"Well, Mr. Irish, I would like to present an attraction at the Garden."

"Who would you like to present here?"

"There is an artist that I think is perfect for the Garden. I would love to present him, Mr. Irish. Are there any dates available for me to present him?"

"Wait a minute, Mr. Bernstein. Who do you want to put into the Garden?" he asked emphatically.

"James Brown. I want to present James Brown."

"What does Mr. Brown do?"

"He's an artist who sings and performs and has a great following nationwide," I answered.

"I've never heard of him."

I didn't know what to say to that so I quickly said, "Well, he does sell a lot of records and is extremely popular."

"Mr. Bernstein, I am very busy right now and I'm going to be out of town for the next few days. I should be back by the end of the week. I'll call you and if you don't hear from me, give me a call and we'll continue this conversation."

"Fine, Mr. Irish," I said "If you don't call me by Friday, I'll call you."

The very next day, Ned Irish called me at my office.

"Mr. Bernstein, please listen to me carefully."

"I'm listening, Mr. Irish."

"I want you to make me a hero with my grandchildren."

"What do you mean, Mr. Irish?" I was very curious now.

"Well, I mentioned the conversation that you and I had about James Brown to my grandchildren and they were very excited. 'Grandpa,' they said, 'he's the man! They want to see James Brown in the Garden, Mr. Bernstein.'"

"So, let's make a deal," I said.

"Okay, Sid. I'll give you the Garden at a bargain price of \$25,000, and that's only because of my grandkids. You get everything for that: tickets, ushers, lights, stagehands. It's all yours."

"Great, Ned. You've got a deal."

I called Ben Bart, James Brown's agent and manager. The same Ben Bart that I used to collude with several times a day at the Paramount when James Brown headlined for me and would refuse to go on for every conceivable reason.

"Ben, I want to present James Brown in the Garden."

"What? Did you say the Garden, Sid?"

"Yeah, you heard me right, Ben. James Brown in Madison Square Garden. I'm guaranteeing the Garden, Ben."

"Sid, you're kidding! James would love to play the Garden."

"Well, you've got it. The deal with the Garden is set. Is James available?"

"Don't worry. He'll make himself available. How many shows?"

"Only one. There are 17,000 seats in the Garden. I'll offer you guys \$20,000 for the one show. How does that sound?"

"No problem! I have to check with James, of course, but \$20,000 sounds just fine."

I was really happy after I hung up with Ben, because it was going to be

another first. The first rock music concert at the Garden.

A day later, Ben called and confirmed our deal.

"Sid, James is really excited."

"Good, Ben, he should be."

Every seat for James Brown at the Garden was filled. James was stupendous and rocked the Garden. The crowd loved him. My fondest memory of the concert was when James got the entire audience to hold hands and sway to the music. It was a sight to behold. Black and white people holding hands, the chain extending all around the Garden. It was a real show of solidarity, but such is the power of music.

The success of James Brown at the Garden confirmed to me its viability as a venue for concerts.

I decided to promote my own group there. The Rascals were by now becoming a fixture on the charts, first with *I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore*, then *Good Lovin'* followed by *You Better Run*. I thought they were ready.

I called Ned Irish.

"Ned, I'm going to make you a hero again."

"Really, Sid? How's that?" he asked. I could picture the grin on his face.

"Tell your grandchildren that Sid Bernstein is going to bring the Rascals to the Garden."

"Who?"

"The Rascals."

"Listen, Sid, you were right on the last one. I'll take your word for it."

"Same deal, Ned?"

"Same deal, Sid."

When I hung up, I realized that Ned Irish was very happy because the James Brown concert had opened a new revenue stream for him. I had probably become one of his favorite people.

The crowd in the Garden really turned on to the Rascals. There is nothing like 17,000 people screaming, whistling and applauding to get the adrenaline going. It was sheer energy.

After the Rascals concert in the Garden, I knew that I had a major act on my hands, and I escalated their price from, \$5,000 to \$7,500 per show. I couldn't fill even a fraction of the requests for their appearances that were being offered.

After playing the Garden, the Rascals played at the Singer Bowl in New York's old World's Fairgrounds. They performed to an audience of 12,000, and again all the seats were gone and many were turned away. The Rascals owned New York.

It was my habit to call Brian Epstein in London from time to time to chat and find out how he was doing. The Beatles had stopped touring and he had more time and was less harried. He was always very cordial, and we had a running gag. He would ask me about Gerry and the kids and he would always ask, Any new ones? And there always was!

On one such call in the summer of 1967, Brian told me that he was coming to New York in two weeks.

"Sid, I'm going to be at the Waldorf. Why don't you come by and we can talk about some of my new acts and spend some time together?"

"Great, I'll look forward to that."

I called Brian at the Waldorf.

"Do you have any free time today?" he asked me.

"Sure. I have my wife with me. Your boys always kidded me about never seeing or meeting her. Now you can tell them you actually met her."

He laughed, "I'd love to meet her. Come on over."

Gerry and I went over to the Waldorf. Brian looked absolutely worn out to me, but he went out of his way to be courteous and solicitous of Gerry, who was very pregnant at the time with our second son Dylan, who was born on April 8, 1967. We drank tea and he asked her about our children, Denise and Adam, and we made small talk. I inquired about his mother and the Beatles as well, and we spent about an hour talking about plans he had for some of his new acts and ways I could be involved in presenting them in New York. After a while, Brian told us that he had to leave for a meeting with Murray the K and offered to drop us at home.

I accepted the offer, and we all got into his limo. Brian just didn't have the same energy that I had always seen him exhibit.

"Hey, Brian, is anything wrong? You don't look too well to me."

"There's just so much pressure, it has not been an easy time."

"You have to take care of yourself, Brian. I'm concerned about you."

"Thanks, Sid."

He got out of the limo and told the chauffeur to take Gerry and me home and then to come back and wait for him until he was finished with his meeting.

We shook hands. He told Gerry how nice it was to finally meet her, and said he would send my regards to his mother and the boys and call me from London. And then he left. It was the last time I saw Brian Epstein.

On August 27, 1967, as I was sitting at home doing some paperwork, someone called to inform me that Brian Epstein had been found dead in his London townhouse. I had to catch my breath. True, he had not looked well the last time I had seen him, but he was a 32-year-old man in the prime of his life, extraordinarily successful, with no known health problems. We had

passed away. It was unexpected, and I was devastated and lost, but what could I do? My mother had been in pain almost all the days that I knew her. We buried her, *at shiva*, and were visited by family and friends.

A short while after my mother passed away, Soshana Damari, an Israeli singing star, convinced me to do an Israeli all-star show in the Garden. It was the last event I promoted in the old Madison Square Garden on 52nd Street and Eighth Avenue. I did this show in my mother's memory.

Peter Nero had been the piano player at Jilly's restaurant. Frank Sinatra had made Jilly's hangout so the restaurant became quite famous and very successful. I would go to Jilly's from time to time, and Peter and I became friendly. He was making records and they were selling. I thought he was ready for a concert career, so I approached him about performing in Carnegie Hall. He agreed and we scheduled the concert. We did the posters and the handbills, but what assured the concert's success was the fact that Peter's wife was a member of the Jewish women's charitable organization Hadassah. Pete's wife galvanized the Hadassah ladies to get behind the concert, and they sold a lot of tickets. The Hadassah ladies assured me that the concert was going to be successful. I wish that I had them selling tickets for me for every event I ever promoted or produced. I would never have had anything but sellouts.

The winds of change wrought by the Beatles were blowing across the world. Clothing and hairstyles had changed. Sexual mores and language had changed. The world that I grew up in was gone.

Nowhere was that more obvious than at Woodstock. Artie Kornfeld, John Roberts, Joel Rosenman and Michael Lang decided to stage a rock festival in an upstate New York town called Woodstock. When the town fathers of Woodstock cancelled the permits to stage the festival, the producers took it to Bethel, which was 50 miles away. The Rascals were invited to perform, but they had a previously booked engagement and I didn't want to disappoint the promoters of the event. And Gerry was once again pregnant and I couldn't leave her and the kids for four days.

I watched the news reports and saw the traffic jams and the vast crowds. I knew that the Beatles' appearances at Shea had given birth to the idea that enormous crowds could and would show up for the right kind of event. Later in the year, at Altamont in California, there was another huge event featuring the Rolling Stones. I hated that event because there was needless violence and loss of life and I knew that the security arrangements had been inadequate. The event was run very carelessly.

What was coming across loud and clear to me was that the gamble I

had taken by putting the Beatles in Shea had set a precedent. Rock and roll was capable of drawing huge crowds in very large venues.

The new Madison Square Garden was being built on top of Penn Station, bordered by 33rd and 32nd Streets and Seventh and Eighth Avenues. It was to be a beautiful arena with almost 20,000 seats and state-of-the-art sound and lighting. Besides the basketball Knicks, the hockey Rangers, college basketball, and the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus that were already in place, music and concerts were contemplated as events for the new Garden. James Brown and the Rascals' earlier appearances at the old Garden had cemented that.

Several months before construction on the new Garden was completed, Alvin Cooperman, the head booker at the new Madison Square Garden, called me.

"Sid, you introduced Ned Irish to the revenue possibilities from music concerts at the old Madison Square Garden. How would you like to produce the first show in the new Madison Square Garden? We're going to have a lot of concerts in this place!"

"Sure, Alvin!" I jumped at the chance. It was a chance to be first again, and I appreciated being given the opportunity.

"Tell me, Alvin, what are you going to charge for the use of the new Garden?"

"Forty thousand a night."

"Okay, Alvin, I'll get back to you." Forty thousand was a lot of money, but, after all, the Garden was a brand-new facility.

I wanted the first concert to be a success. I wanted to do something a little different, and I also wanted to make sure that the audience would be well-behaved.

I called Manny Greenfield, the manager for Joan Baez. Manny lived in Boston and Joan lived in San Francisco. Joan was a hot artist at the time.

"Manny," I said. "They've built a magnificent new Madison Square Garden here in New York, and I have been awarded the inaugural concert. I'd love to present Joan."

"Hey, Sid, you know we're getting a lot of money for Joan these days."

"I'm sure you are. But I don't care about the money. I'll give you even more than you're getting! I really want Joan Baez to open the new Garden."

"Well, what's your offer, Sid?"

"How about \$20,000, Manny?"

"That's good. That's good! Let me take it up with Joan, and I'll call you back."

A few days later, he called back. "Sid, I have a problem."

business was saddened. They had given so much to the music industry. Their great music and talent was no longer going to be packaged in the same way again. They would each go it alone. It was like a comet whose light and power had burned out. It is, unfortunately, a common occurrence in rock and roll that groups come together, make their contribution, then disband. Sometimes they can be put back together. Most often, though, they cannot.

America was embroiled in the Vietnam war. Many changes were happening with drugs, clothing, hair and respect for authority. Society was in turmoil. I hated the war; I did not feel that America belonged in Southeast Asia. I had seen war firsthand as a soldier and the thought of American boys dying in the jungles of Vietnam was repugnant to me.

Peter Yarrow: of Peter, Paul & Mary, called me one day. I knew Peter from the Bitter End and had been a fan of Peter, Paul & Mary.

"Sid, I'd like to do a concert for peace, to protest the Vietnam war and I'd like to ask you to organize it."

Since I was against the war, I thought this was a chance to get involved and make a difference. I accepted Peter's offer immediately.

"I'm in, Peter. And I'll ask the Rascals."

"Great, Sid!"

In addition to the Rascals, we got Judy Collins and Harry Belafonte. We also got Jimi Hendrix, which was a coup (or so I thought).

Jimi Hendrix was a huge star. It was hard to find anybody bigger at that time.

We had proscenium seating for the concert. Some seats were behind the stage and we blocked them off, because it would have been impossible for anyone in those seats to see the stage because of all the equipment and set-up activities going on behind the scenes.

In this particular concert, we had built something akin to a wall to serve as a backdrop for the performers and also help magnify the sound. Hendrix was the second act to go on. He started to play and, after about a minute, he put his back up against the temporary backdrop and slid down the wall until he was eventually sitting on the stage. It was obvious to me that Jimi's weird behavior was drug-induced. I got to the stagehands and told them to take Jimi off the stage. No one, least of all the audience, was too happy about it, but I wasn't going to allow Jimi Hendrix to make a fool of himself. Jimi was an incorrigible druggie and this was only one of many occasions when he couldn't fulfill a professional commitment because of his drug use. How sad it was that a great talent lost his life at such a young age. The combination of fame, money and power is sometimes too much for these young performers and the pressure is unbearable for them. It's the other side of success.

The Peace Concert had a tremendous amount of support from the public and we were all proud to participate. For me, organizing the concert was a labor of love, and I believed very strongly in the cause.

It was a popular time to stage benefit concerts. Jerry Wexler of Atlantic asked me to organize a benefit for the Martin Luther King Foundation.

"Atlantic will provide all the acts, Sid. You just run the concert," he said.

I really enjoyed organizing concerts that supported worthy causes. When Jerry Wexler asked me to do the King benefit, it was a natural fit for me and I declined to have my name on the posters, handbills and radio ads. I did not want anyone to think that the concert was a commercial venture.

As promised, Atlantic involved most of their acts in the benefit. On the bill at the Garden, we had Sam & Dave, Sonny & Cher, Aretha Franklin, the Voices of East Harlem and the Rascals. The Garden was jammed and, at the end of the evening, I proudly announced from the stage that we had been able to raise \$73,000 for the Martin Luther King Foundation.

Blood, Sweat & Tears was hot and I wanted to present them in concert, so I called Bennett Glazer, who managed them. I thought that they were a super group with a sensational lead singer, David Clayton Thomas. I told Bennett that I wanted to present Blood, Sweat & Tears at the Garden and he was very enthusiastic.

Bennett and I negotiated a \$40,000 price for the band, and the Garden wanted their usual \$40,000. I also allocated \$15,000 for advertising and promotion. In addition, I decided that I wanted Miles Davis on the bill. Blood, Sweat & Tears was a horn band and I thought, who better to pair them with than Miles Davis, the king of the horn. Miles agreed to make the appearance for \$5,000. I thought that this would be a dream show. Before anyone had bought a single ticket, I had put out \$100,000. However, I was so sure that the concert was going to sell out that I even had the Garden tentatively reserve the following night so that I could accommodate the expected overflow audience.

During the spring months leading up to the concert, Blood, Sweat & Tears went out on a tour sponsored by the U.S. State Department. There was a backlash against the group because many of their fans felt that the group had sold out by associating with the Nixon White House. I don't know if they sold out politically, but I do know that they did not sell out for me at the Garden. Because of the negative publicity surrounding the State Department tour, I had to cancel the second day that I had reserved at the Garden and hoped that I wouldn't lose a bundle. There was a lot of money at stake and all of it was mine.

On top of all that, we began to get threatening phone calls and letters

stating that people were going to throw bags of horse manure on the stage to protest Blood, Sweat & Tears having gone on the State Department tour. I immediately increased the number of ushers and security for the concert, which naturally increased the expenses.

We sold somewhere between 60 and 65 percent of the tickets. As I sat in the audience and listened to the great music of Miles Davis and Blood, Sweat & Tears, I knew that I was going to lose approximately \$20,000.

Blood, Sweat & Tears finished their set, and I left my seat to congratulate them on their great performance as they came off the stage. As David Clayton Thomas exited, he stopped for a moment, shook my hand, and said, "Sid, don't worry. You're not going to lose any money."

I returned to my seat and Blood, Sweat & Tears came back for an encore. After the show ended, I went to the dressing room to say good-night and pay the band. All the members of the band were there and so was Bennett Glazer.

"Why the long face? You broke even."

"What do you mean?" I asked. My calculation was that I had lost \$20,000.

"We're reducing our fee by \$20,000. You broke even."

It was a wonderful gesture that I will never forget. These were young guys with great sensitivity and a manager with a lot of heart.

In April 1971, *Billboard* magazine invited me to speak at their annual convention. That year the conference was being held in Mallorca, off the coast of Spain. Gerry was quite pregnant with our fourth child, but she was given medical permission to travel, so we decided to go. We had a wonderful time. Mallorca is very beautiful place and Gerry enjoyed herself immensely.

I spoke on a program with Bill Graham, the legendary manager and West Coast impresario who was involved with Jefferson Airplane, Santana, the Grateful Dead and others. Also on the panel was Paul Marshall, a top show business attorney, and Lee Eastman, a leading labor lawyer whose daughter Linda, was a big Rascals fan and Paul McCartney's new wife. A huge number of people attended our panel. Bill Graham, who I had never had the chance to meet, was a dynamic speaker. I was the last speaker on the schedule and I chose to speak about music being an international language.

After I finished speaking, a man who was the head of a major German record and publishing conglomerate approached me and said, "Mr. Bernstein, if we had more gatherings like this and more speakers like you, we wouldn't have to worry about the brotherhood of man and peace in the world. I will not forget what you have said here."

Nor will I forget that moment!

On June 13, 1970, our third son, Beau Bernstein, was born. I was working constantly, but all I wanted to do was go home and be with my family. In fact, the Rascals often tell stories of my attending sessions at the recording studios and falling asleep shortly after my arrival. I remember thinking that if I fell asleep often enough, the Rascals would stop asking me to come to the studio. I really wanted to spend as much time as I could at home with my family.

On one of my visits, I was enjoying a nice snooze when I was awakened by a commotion coming from the studio. The four Rascals were in the studio with Arif Mardin and Tom Dowd and they were arguing about Eddie Brigati's procrastination in completing a lyric. Felix Cavaliere was angry and berating Eddie, as usual, for his tardiness in completing the lyric. Gene, Dino, Arif and Tom stood apart from the fray and watched. I watched the scene from the darkened control room as the debate between Felix and Eddie escalated. After a few minutes, I decided that I had to try to do something to diffuse the tension. I stood up and removed my loafers and trousers. I was wearing a pair of underwear that I refused to discard because my mother had darned them for me many times. There were patches in many colors on them. I let my ample belly hang over and proceeded to tip-toe into the small area between the control room and the studio as unobtrusively as I could. I then burst through the door and streaked across the studio floor in my socks and underwear. I was a sight to behold! Everyone started laughing so hard that the animosity and anger was quickly forgotten. Eddie completed the lyric and everyone returned to work.

However, all was not well in Rascal land.

Peter Yarrow wanted to do another peace concert, but now he wanted to do it in an outdoor stadium, to get as large a crowd as possible.

"Sid, we did so well last winter at the Garden! Let's do it again this summer."

The war was on everyone's mind. The protests in the streets were increasing and the college kids were becoming more and more agitated. I felt even more passionately that this war was not ours to fight and we should get out of Vietnam.

"Peter, this time we'll do it at Shea and have 55,000 people."

"Great, Sid! Great! Let's do it!"

We had to organize the concert quickly. In my entire career as a promoter, I never had to organize such a big concert in such a short amount of time. I had to pick a date when the Mets would be on the road. We got tick-

ets and a program book printed quickly. My job was made a little easier because the Rascals recruited some of their peers to appear. We had Richie Havens, Miles Davis, the Staple Singers, Paul Simon, Janis Joplin, Steppenwolf, Creedence Clearwater Revival, the cast of *Hair*, Peter Yarrow and the Rascals on the bill. Murray the K was the MC. We started at noon and the concert ended at 9:30 in the evening. That place was rocking!

I remember that during the Rascals' rendition of *People Got to Be Free*, a worldwide number one record, Murray the K had to stop the boys in mid-song. Shea Stadium management requested that we stop the concert because the 55,000 people in the stadium were jumping up and down so hard that the stadium was actually shaking. The reason was that the lower stands at Shea are built on rails, underpinned by springs so that they can be moved for football games. What a sight it was to actually see the stadium palpitating, and I understood why management was concerned. Peter Yarrow got up and sang *Puff the Magic Dragon* and asked everyone to stop jumping on the seats. That did the trick.

Another thing I remember was Janis Joplin showing up as high as a kite. It was so sad to see. Janis was in the VIP holding area and I was trying to talk her out of going onstage. She kept insisting that she wanted to go on, but that she wanted to wait until it was dark because it would be more dramatic. Finally, I had to inform her that I would not let her perform because I was honestly afraid that she might fall off the stage and get hurt.

My final memory of the peace concert was our aborted attempt to stage a similar concert in Philadelphia. Stewart Mott, a scion of the family that built the General Motors Corporation, was a friend of Peter Yarrow's and came up with the idea to take the summer peace concert to Philadelphia. We had planned to hold the concert at the newly constructed Veterans Stadium, but had booked the stadium even before the Shea concert happened.

However, Frank Rizzo, the Mayor of Philadelphia, refused to approve the concert because he was worried that there might be some demonstrations. The truth was that the Mayor was politically right-wing and supported the U.S. participation in Vietnam. The bottom line was the city of Philadelphia refused to grant us a permit, and we even went to court several times to try and get that permit. Throughout my many appearances in the courthouse in Philadelphia, I became friendly with some of the Mayor's young aides. I was very surprised to see some of those same assistants to Mayor Rizzo at the Shea peace concert, walking around with walkie-talkies, checking out the proceedings. I hoped that these aides would see how well-run the concert was and give the Mayor a favorable report. Unfortunately, we never got a permit to produce a peace concert in Philadelphia.

I had booked Grand Funk Railroad as one of the opening acts for Sly

and the Family Stone at the Garden. Terry Knight very capably managed Grand Funk, and they had made a lot of progress since their earlier appearance at the Garden. They had become a huge act. I considered Terry Knight one of the brightest and best managers I had ever met. One day, he called me.

"Sid, I need your help. I want to put Grand Funk Railroad in Shea Stadium. You don't have to put up a dime; I'll pay for everything. All I want you to do is handle the arrangements with the people at Shea and let me use your name as the concert promoter. If you agree, I'll give you 25 grand."

Grand Funk Railroad was a happening group. I thought it was the easiest \$25,000 I would ever make.

"Why not? You got a deal?"

"Oh, yeah, Sid. One more thing...I want to break the Beatles' revenue record for a single concert, which you set in 1965. Can you please scale the tickets so we could gross a little more than they did?"

"Sure, I'll do it. With my name going on the posters and the publicity, it'll look like I'm breaking my own record. I love it! Let's do it!"

I made three times as much from that promotion than I did from both of the Beatles concerts. And it was easy; I made all the arrangements in three days. We filled up Shea Stadium and the place was jumping. We took in around \$330,000. Everyone thought that I was responsible, but it was really Terry Knight and Grand Funk Railroad.

William Morris is a great and powerful theatrical agency. It is one of the leading talent agencies in the world and has an impressive client list. The tradition at William Morris was to put all the newly hired and aspiring agents in the mailroom and see if they could work their way up. The thinking was that if someone had the drive, creativity and ambition to get out of the mailroom, they would probably turn into a successful agent.

One day, I got a phone call from David Geffen, an agent who had recently emerged from the mailroom. I had seen him at clubs and concerts and we became friendly.

"Sid, we just signed Laura Nyro, a new girl who's a fantastic singer/songwriter. She has an album that's going to be released on Columbia Records soon. She needs a manager and I would like to recommend you to her. I think you would work well together."

"Okay, where can I hear her?"

"She just moved to the city. She has no furniture in her apartment, but she does have a piano and some folding chairs. Why don't you meet me there later today and you can hear her."

He gave me the address and I went over after work. David introduced

me to Laura, who was quite shy. I sat on one of the folding chairs. The young woman sat at the piano with her back to us. When she started to play, I could tell immediately that she was very good. I was very tired after a long day at the office and it didn't help that I couldn't see her face. Before long, I fell asleep. It's not easy running one of the hottest bands in the world and raising four young kids at the same time. I wasn't getting much sleep at all.

David jabbed me in the ribs and whispered to me, "Hey, Sid! You're snoring and she can hear you. She's getting angry. Come on! Stay awake!"

"I'm sorry," I whispered back. "She's really great. Should I apologize?"

"No, don't say a word."

When Laura finished singing, I told her how much I enjoyed listening to her. Then David and I left.

It turned out that Laura and Felix Cavaliere of the Rascals were friendly. She told Felix that I had fallen asleep while she was playing for me and that she never wanted to speak to me again. Felix tried to defend me, but to no avail.

The next time I spoke to David, he told me that he believed in Laura so much that he was planning to leave William Morris to become her manager.

My falling asleep while Laura Nyro was playing gave David Geffen, now of Dreamworks, the opportunity to become her manager and subsequently develop his own fabulous career. David Geffen is extremely talented and I have no doubt that he would have found another way to initiate his success, but I'd like to think that my untimely nap helped him get there just a little faster.

The Rascals' recording contract with Atlantic was up for renewal. I began to negotiate with Jerry Wexler and Ahmet and Nesuhi Ertegun. I explained that I wanted the Rascals to remain with Atlantic, that we had lived up to our end of the original agreement, even though we probably could have renegotiated our contract when the Rascals started to produce one hit after another. I expected that Atlantic would want to make an offer that rewarded our loyalty.

When Jerry Wexler got back to me, he was less than encouraging. He told me that the last Rascals album had done poorly because Felix had become a disciple of the Swami Sat Chadananda and the music had gone off on a tangent. The brass at Atlantic was not sure that the group could recapture its winning ways. Jerry's counter-offer was not really what I had in mind. I told him that I needed to think it over, but what I really wanted to do was test the waters elsewhere. I was annoyed at Atlantic. When they were desperate for a white act to help them become a more mainstream label, the

Rascals had helped put them on the map to such a degree that Atlantic now had many white acts and had become one of the major record companies in the world. I felt that Atlantic should show its appreciation for what we had done for them.

Word spread that the Rascals were looking for a contract with another record company. I got many calls. Rocco Laginestra, the head of RCA, called and asked me about signing the Rascals. I welcomed the opportunity to work with him. RCA wanted the Rascals and offered a million-dollar advance. It was really tempting. Clive Davis from Columbia called. Clive was a former lawyer who had the magic touch when it came to songs, artists and records. He offered me basically the same deal that Rocco and RCA had.

I recommended to my boys that we sign with Columbia because I felt that Clive and Columbia would be a perfect fit for a group like the Rascals who wanted to produce their own records with minimal supervision. I loved Rocco and respected his business acumen. But Clive Davis was a music guy, and the Rascals needed a music guy. The boys agreed with me, and were looking forward to working with Clive.

I called Atlantic and told Jerry Wexler that the Rascals were going to sign with Columbia. He wished us luck. I then called Clive and told him of our decision, and he was quite pleased.

"Sidney," Clive said, "listen, we should try to keep this between us. Next week we're having the Columbia Records International Convention in Freeport, the Bahamas. We bring in Columbia people from all over the world to talk business and have some fun. What I'd like to do is fly the Rascals in secretly and surprise everyone at the convention with the signing. We'll put them behind a curtain while I make my opening remarks. After I finish, I'll introduce the Rascals as our newest artists. It will be very dramatic!"

"Sounds great to me, Clive. And you can be sure we'll keep things quiet."

The Columbia lawyers worked feverishly to get the contract ready for the Rascals to sign. The contract was finally ready three days before we were to leave for Freeport. We had a meeting to review the contract. The attorneys, accountants, members of the Rascals and I sat around a conference table. Steve Weiss opened the meeting.

"Fellas, I'm going to give everyone around this table a copy of the Columbia Records contract. We are going to read through it paragraph by paragraph. You may ask questions at any time. I worked very hard on this with the attorneys from Columbia. Sid has negotiated a terrific deal for you and we need to have this finished before you take off for Freeport."

Steve began to read and we breezed through the contract rather quick-

ly. Some questions were asked, but no one voiced any objections. Everyone seemed happy. The boys liked the idea of signing with Columbia and were enthused about working with Clive Davis. And the million-dollar advance didn't hurt, either.

Steve passed a pen to each of the guys and they were poised to sign.

With his pen poised in mid-air, Felix said, "Listen. I want to know just one thing. Are we going to give value for value received? This is a lot of money we're getting and I just want to know if all of us are going to give value for the money."

I, of course, knew that his remarks were directed at Eddie, and I immediately became nervous.

Felix looked at Gene and asked him if he was okay with the deal. Gene was already envisioning the new car he was going to buy; he looked at Felix and nodded his okay. Felix then asked Dino, and he nodded his agreement.

Eddie gave Felix a searing look. "Felix, what the hell are you talking about?" he said in an accusatory and derisive way. Eddie then stood up, dropped his pen and stormed out of the conference room. Everyone was in shock. I quickly raced out after Eddie. He was waiting for an elevator.

"Eddie, what are you doing? There's a million dollars on the table! Are you nuts? What in heaven's name are you doing? Come on back. We'll work it out."

Eddie was carrying an album with him and put it in front of his face, shielding my view of him. I think he was crying. He was still a kid, just 23 or so at the time. The elevator doors opened and he got in. As the doors closed, he said, "Forget it, Sid. Just forget it."

I did not see Eddie Brigati again for two years.

I went back to the conference room. The remaining Rascals were discussing what to do now. We wanted to sign the contract and show up in Freeport as we had promised Clive.

Gene had friends who had a group based in Rochester, New York called the Brass Buttons. They were a Rascals cover band that played all of the Rascals' songs. Their lead singer Jay Capozzi looked like Eddie. Gene suggested that we call and find the lead singer of the Brass Buttons to replace Eddie. I was pleased to see Gene so on top of things and thinking on his feet.

I felt that I had to call Clive and explain the situation. I told him that I thought we would have a replacement for Eddie and asked Clive if he was still interested in signing the group.

"Sid," Clive said, "get those contracts signed and over to me ASAP! We're prepared to make the announcement at the convention. I want the band there."

"Fine," I said. I was relieved, and I hoped that Eddie would miraculously

have a change of heart.

We arrived in Freeport undetected the day before our scheduled appearance. The boys immediately set to rehearsing with Jay Capozzi who had come down from Rochester to replace Eddie. I found a remote studio where they could rehearse. Jay was a very good singer who was cooperative and anxious to please.

On the opening night of the convention, we sneaked into the hotel. The ballroom was packed. As Clive began making his opening remarks, the boys got into position behind the closed curtain.

"This had been a wonderful year for Columbia," Clive concluded his remarks. "We have reached new heights in sales and revenues. And, ladies and gentlemen, behind this curtain, we have our latest talent acquisition. And they will lead us to even greater heights. It is my pleasure to present them to you. Ladies and gentlemen—the Young Rascals!"

The curtain parted and the audience went wild. The Rascals went into their first song. I was sitting at a table right near the front.

Tony Orlando, who was running Columbia's publishing company at the time, slid over to me and whispered, "Hey, Sid. Is that Eddie Brigati up there?"

Putting my finger over my lips, I motioned to him to be quiet.

"Sid," he whispered again. "Is that Eddie?"

"Tony, would you please be quiet?"

Of course, Tony Orlando was so attuned to everything in the music world that he knew something was amiss.

Jay Capozzi did a great job. Only Tony Orlando said something to me, but others in the room must have known that Eddie was missing from the band.

I could see the handwriting on the wall. The Rascals were in a free-fall. Eddie Brigati was gone for good and Felix could never find another lyricist who could lock into his music. I was the captain of a sinking ship.

My fondest memory of the Rascals' time at Columbia actually has nothing to do with them. One day at the beginning of the contract, I went over to the Columbia recording studios on East 52nd Street to see how things were going. The building housed many recording studios and rehearsal rooms. Even though I had directions to the studio where the Rascals were, I got a little lost. I began opening doors, looking for them. The third or fourth door I opened was in semi-darkness. I saw two adults and two children on the floor, sitting on a blanket, having a picnic. Not wanting to disturb anyone, I quickly turned to leave. I heard a familiar voice say, "Hello, Sid." I turned back to see who was speaking to me. I saw Linda and Paul

McCartney having a picnic with their children, taking a break from recording. We said hello and talked about the Rascals on Columbia. They wished me luck with the Rasca's new deal.

When I left to continue my search for the Rascals' studio, I thought to myself that I had just witnessed a wonderful scene. Linda and Paul might have been the biggest stars in the universe. But to those young children, they were just Mom and Da.1.

Clive was happy and true to his word. He took the Rascals into the studio and they began to record with their new lead singer. But the chemistry was gone without Eddie. Despite the rancor and animosity, he and Felix had been able to turn out hit songs. Without Eddie, there would be no more hit songs. The long, slow decline of the Rascals had begun. The requests for appearances diminished and with that, so did their price. Twenty months later, it was all over.

Although the Rascals did not achieve the longevity in show business that I had envisioned for them, for two-and-a-half years in the late 60s, the Rascals were the number one band in the U.S. and a favorite of other great bands the world over. And I was proud to have been their manager and grateful for all the success that they had enjoyed.

Felix Cavaliere is an extremely intelligent man. During the Rascal years, he was the musical soul of the group. Felix had a strong social conscience and always insisted that the opening acts at all their concerts be black acts. I was especially proud that Felix had such enlightened views. He has a natural aptitude for business and he made some shrewd real estate acquisitions using some of the money that he made with the Rascals. He now lives in Nashville, where he writes and is involved in the music business. Felix is a workaholic.

Eddie Brigati is a good-natured soul with a great sense of humor and an outgoing personality. He always treated his family in the most exemplary way. Eddie went out of his way to take care of and provide the good things for his family. I really identified with him as far as family and relationships were concerned. He has energy to spare and was a wonderful front man for the group when things were going well. He and Felix had great professional chemistry and together wrote many of the Rascals' hits, and some of their songs became rock classics. Eddie currently lives in New Jersey. We have not spoken in years.

Dino Danelli is a great drummer with a unique style and a sense of showmanship. With his erect posture on the drum stand and his ability to twirl the drumsticks, Dino's solid beat added great energy and excitement to the act. Dino was the quiet one who rarely had anything to say. He lives

in New York and is now a record producer. Dino is also a fine artist and painter. We talk from time to time.

Gene Cornish came from Rochester and his ambition and drive resulted in his inclusion in the Rascals. Gene was attracted to the finer things in life and had a penchant for fancy cars. Gene thought quickly on his feet and was great in a crisis. Gene lives in New Jersey, is still involved in the music business, and we have stayed in touch over the years.

In 1999, the Rascals were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio. I was happy and proud to see them receive such a well-deserved honor. I always knew that the Rascals would stand the test of time.

By the time our fifth child and second daughter, Casey Bernstein, was born, on November 25, 1971, the Rascals had broken up. I was beginning to reevaluate many aspects of my business life. My overhead was high, the financial burdens great and the Rascals, a band that was soon to be extinct, had eroded my income and had exacted a tremendous monetary and emotional price that left me drained.

The Rascals' breakup put tremendous pressure on me financially and caused difficulty within my family. I had put all my financial eggs in that one basket and we certainly had had a great run. The Rascals had made many hit records and generated considerable amounts of money. We were all living the great life.

Gerry and I had acquired a large, expensive apartment in Manhattan to accommodate our growing family. We had household help. All the kids were enrolled in private schools. I had a car and driver.

During those great Rascals years, I had pulled back from concert promotion and had turned down all other acts that approached me about management. I was quite content with my life, both personally and professionally. The most important thing to me was spending time with Gerry and the kids. The Rascals success enabled me to be an ever-present father and husband and I was most grateful for that. I relished the time I spent with my family.

However, when the Rascals broke up, the steady cash flow dried up almost immediately and my income was severely impacted. It put a strain on our family; while my income was decreasing, our expenses were increasing.

night by kids wearing Bay City Rollers clothes and singing Bay City Rollers songs. Those kids were out there all night! It's my prediction that if you put the Rollers on your show, you'll have to have police barricades around the theatre and kids will be lined up for days waiting for tickets. It'll get you tremendous press coverage. I'm suggesting that you do a remote from Great Britain featuring the Rollers for your first show. You'll televise, via satellite, a concert in London that I will arrange with the group's manager. You'll show your audience the hysteria, the kids wearing tartans and the whole scene around this good-looking young group. The following week, you'll telecast the Rollers live from The Ed Sullivan Theatre. I guarantee you'll need those barricades and police security. The Rollers will put *The Howard Cosell Show* on the map."

They bought it on the spot. Everyone in the production group was very excited. The deal was made just as I had outlined it. The remote first, then the Rollers live the following week.

On the night of the first *Cosell* show, the Bay City Rollers played a concert to a packed small theatre in London. Tom Paton had set up the show. Tom gave instructions that the kids in the audience be allowed to rush the stage. Security was purposely lax. The result was that the American viewers of *The Howard Cosell Show* saw pandemonium. The Rollers sang *Saturday Night*, which was their song in current release in the U.S., and the kids overran the stage and knocked down the lead singer.

The following week, as promised by Cosell, the Bay City Rollers came to the U.S. to be on his show. There were several busloads of kids and members of the press who were at the airport to greet them.

On the Saturday morning prior to the show, the Rollers went to rehearsal at the Ed Sullivan Theatre.

From rehearsal, I called Gary Smith, with whom I had worked on *Hulabaloo*. Gary was working in England, producing a TV show. I told him that I was at a rehearsal with the Rollers at the Ed Sullivan Theatre in New York.

"What's that screaming I hear, Sid?"

"That's the kids screaming for the Rollers who just got here. They're appearing on *The Howard Cosell Show* live this week. Last week they were on via satellite from England. Gary, they'll be back in Britain next week. Is there any chance you can use them for one of your shows?"

"Sid, you're not going to believe this, but I'm here preparing to do an Ann-Margret special. The Temptations, who were supposed to appear, just cancelled. They can't make our show. Can you get the Rollers here within the next four days?"

"I sure can, Gary."

"You got a deal, Sid."

We had the Rollers on TV so often in those few weeks that their record, *Saturday Night*, soared up the charts and went to Number 1.

I was booking them all over the U.S. and getting \$25,000 a night. Clive Davis was a very happy man. He momentarily forgot that the Bay City Rollers didn't play their own instruments.

Tom Paton worked with me for the year, as contracted. After the year was up, he went with ICM, a large booking agency, because he thought he could save some money in commissions. What he gained in financial terms, he lost in drive, involvement and creative thinking. An agent is not a manager. I was the Bay City Rollers' manager in America. They got management skills, dedication and experience. When they made the change, they got agents who wrote orders. They lost the momentum and dedication that I had brought to their team. Their star dimmed and they were soon gone.

In 1976, the Boat People became a big issue. Many desperate and beleaguered people were braving unknown seas on rickety boats fleeing from tyranny and oppression in Cambodia and Vietnam. Men and women with young children, miserably adrift on the seas. The pictures on television were heart-wrenching. No one wanted to take these people in. It reminded me of the Jews fleeing Hitler's Europe 35 years earlier.

I wondered if I could do something to help alleviate the suffering of the Boat People. To be sure, I could donate some money, which, of course, I did. But, as only one concerned citizen, I knew that whatever I did could not even begin to address the tremendous issues and needs of these refugees.

Taking \$60,000 of my own money, in addition to contributions I got from Felix Cavaliere of the Rascals, Laura Nyro, and my childhood friend Jerry Rosen, I wrote and placed a full-page ad in the Sunday edition of *The New York Times* and the Paris edition of the *International Herald Tribune* imploring the Beatles to reunite and perform at a concert to raise money on behalf of the Boat People. I knew that these ads would be seen by millions of people. I got many calls and letters thanking me for having taking the initiative.

On the Monday after the ad ran in *The New York Times*, Hans Jantchev, the assistant to the Secretary General of the United Nations, called and asked if I would come to his office. As we sat in his sun-drenched office overlooking the gleaming East River, he said, "First of all, understand that everything we say in here is being heard by someone out there. They are always listening." And he pointed out the window. I don't know who "they" were, but I could imagine. It was very cloak-and-dagger.

need help. I know you like Laura Branigan and are committed to her career, but why should that interfere with what I proposed? I'll do my share, but I'd really rather have you as my partner. As I told you, this management stuff is really not my thing."

Bert piped in. "Sid, you're crazy to turn this offer down. You and Rick are good friends; you get along. It'll be great for both of you. C'mon, Sid!"

"I'm sorry. I can't do it to Laura."

"You see, Rick? I told you," said Bert. "The guy is nuts!"

As I walked out of Bert's office, I was somewhat disappointed. I felt a real friendship with Rick and I would have liked to help him with Pat Benatar.

Not long after turning down Rick Newman's offer to manage Pat Benatar, I got a call from a female singer who I had known and whose work I admired. She invited me to lunch at a well-known restaurant, and I could never turn down the opportunity to have a delicious meal with lovely company.

While we sat at the table waiting for our order, she said, "Sid, I need a manager. My husband has been managing me, but we're getting divorced and I don't want him to manage me anymore. My career's doing well, so I feel that I need someone with whom I can feel comfortable and who will take care of me. Would you consider being my manager?"

"I don't have to think about it. I've been working on Laura Branigan's career for quite a while now, and I don't really think it would be fair to take on another female artist. Your career has taken off and you are going to need lots of attention. You deserve to have someone who can devote the time and energy necessary to maintain your career. I'm sorry, but I'm not taking on any new female singers right now."

"I appreciate your loyalty, Sid. It's refreshing to see. I can promise you that it wouldn't make a difference to me. You could manage us both."

"I know, I'm sorry, but I just can't do it to Laura," I said to Melissa Manchester.

I often wonder what would have happened if I had said yes to all those great artists who wanted me to become involved in their careers. I have no doubt that it would have been rewarding, but I have no regrets. For whatever reason, it just wasn't meant to be. That's life.



ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1999, I WAS SHOCKED to learn that a crazed individual who had an irrational obsession with the Beatles had broken into George Harrison's estate outside of London and

attacked George and his wife Olivia.

My first reaction was "Oh, no, not again!" I wondered whether we were going to be confronted with another tragedy like the one we experienced nearly 20 December ago when John Lennon was shot.

My second thought was that it was quite ironic that George, who had always been the Beatle most private and reclusive and concerned with security, had not been immune from an attack that threatened his life.

The television reports began to filter through the various news media and report that George and his wife were expected to make complete recoveries. I breathed a sigh of relief.

And once again the phone calls started coming from all over the world. I started to field telephone calls from media outlets asking for a statement. I told them all basically the same thing—I was thankful that George would be okay and yet terribly sorry that he had to suffer physical pain and considerable mental anguish before he would be able to put this terrifying incident behind him. I explained that my relationship with George, while always cordial, had not been as close and continuous as my relationship with John and Paul. I attributed this to the fact that John had become a New Yorker and we had the opportunity to meet and interact from time to time. Paul married Linda who was a huge fan of the Rascals and also was from a New York suburb. Paul and Linda spent a lot of time in and around New York with their family, so we had the opportunity to see each other on various occasions.

Ringo lived everywhere but New York and consequently we never had many chances to reconnect.

George was another story altogether. He shunned the limelight and stayed pretty much to himself. His homes were always protected and, as I said before, he had always been very concerned with security. I liked George from the moment that I met him in the Plaza Hotel room so many years ago. I found him to be introspective and reserved, yet highly spiritual. He is a gentle man and a gentleman.

George is a man of great sensitivity, which he demonstrated on one of the Rascals' trips to Great Britain. The Rascals were in London for some performances, and George invited them to come to a studio where he was recording. After being in the studio for but a few minutes, George received

a call regarding an emergency at his home and left the studio immediately. Later that day, he called to apologize profusely and made plans to send his limo the next day to pick the Rascals up and bring them to his home for a visit. The next day, as planned, George's limo came to our hotel and picked the Rascals up and drove them to his home, where they spent several hours hanging out and listening to music. Even though it was a tough time for George, he was determined to extend his hospitality and spend the time with the Rascals.

More than 30 years after the Beatles broke up, it is still impossible for them to find the peace and privacy that I am sure they must crave. But the truth is that they will never be free from the unrelenting interest, curiosity and adoration of their fans. And furthermore, all of us who had anything to do with the Beatles will always be expected to provide insights into that unbelievable chapter of entertainment and cultural history. The music and the hysteria have ensured that.