

Reduction Of Entertainment Tax Seen As Break For Clubs

By LENNY LITMAN

Eighty per cent of the amusement tax formerly paid on tabs at night clubs, lounges and restaurants with entertainment will no longer go to the city. It will be kept by the club or returned to the customer in the form of cheaper prices.

For years now, the tax was absorbed by the club owner. Now the city has reduced the tax to 1 per cent of your check, as opposed to the 5 per cent formerly levied.

Mayor Peter Flaherty and city council had been wanting to give the city's 68 places of entertainment a tax break for some time — to keep them competitive with clubs outside city limits.

Since the state has a uniform taxing law, 10 per cent had to be charged and for years it was on 50 per cent of the check because half the cost was considered to be the show and the music.

Now it will be 10 per cent of 10 per cent of the check, or 1 per cent.

With the introduction into the city of the new musical lounge, the music gradually became an extension of the interior design.

Most owners had designed their operation with entertainment in mind and as much a part of the complete club as the bar, the kitchen, the booths, the help and the general decor.

In Market Square or on Liberty Avenue, many clubs open on Monday and on Tuesday nights without entertainment. Without the big tax bite, the owners will probably try with a show to keep the help busy and if the public buys it,



MONTY ALEXANDER
Returning to the Attic.

additional help will be added to take care of the newly found business.

The ordinance again mentions "roof gardens." The city has one of the most lavish in the country on top of the U. S. Steel building, but live entertainment was eliminated a long time ago because it was found that the room and the view

was enough to keep the room well filled at all times.

The 5 per cent charge will remain on at private clubs where a separate charge is made for entertainment. This became part of the ordinance last year and stays in.

Around The Town

The Quo Vadis, one of the rooms in Market Square running six nights a week, now has the Jack Pettit Revue all to itself. For months the QV has been playing Pettit and his group on Monday and Tuesday nights while the Grogshop in the Westinghouse Building had them for the rest of the week.

Walt Harper has Monty Alexander, the very modern and talented pianist, coming back into the Attic for a week starting next Tuesday. Alexander is the one to watch to see if there will be a new giant jazz star in the '70s.

Monty will have the former Dave Brubeck bassist, "Senator" Eugene Wright, and former Duke Ellington drummer Bobby Durham in his trio.

Walt Harper and his group will share sets with Alexander. Harper's brother, Nate, has returned to the group on tenor sax.

Harper's next big attraction will be Mongo Santamaria starting Feb. 19 for a week.

The big name bands will be at the Harmar House this week. Stan Kenton and his orchestra will be there two nights — Thursday and Friday — and

the Glenn Miller Orchestra, led by Buddy DeFranco comes in on Sunday night.

The Critics' Choice, a group that will start a series of attractions in the Harmar House lounge, as well as the main room, started a run there last week.

Jim Trebac is having his troubles again with acts who sign a contract or agree to a contract and then change their minds.

The Vogues, for instance, were set to return to the Harmar House on April 2 for a two-week run. During the Christmas holidays, they were paid \$5,000 a week and a percentage. They went into percentage on both weeks and now want more. Jim said no, so the Vogues will not play the Harmar House this spring.

The situation with the Four Freshmen is almost the same. The Freshmen signed a contract for three nights starting Feb. 2.

When Bert Sokol, managing director of the Holiday House, read about it in this column, he told me about it and said: "I'm no longer to be Mr. Nice Guy. The Freshmen are going to play the Holiday House. They can play somewhere else in the city if they want to, but they will not work here."

Bert registered his complaint the next day and the Freshmen promptly invoked their 30-day cancellation clause and got out of the Harmar House date and will work in Monroeville for nine days in August.

Taking No Chances

You should be very happily surprised



ESTHER LAPIDUSS

Good taste, pinpoint delivery.

at Esther Lapiduss' performance this week at the Holiday House with the Four Lads.

Esther has been a very entertaining act for years and has been quite in demand in revues at Beck's and Ben Gross' and also on the club date and industrial trail circuit. She has watched comedians come and go at the Holiday House for years and she has learned the big lesson of the room — "Take no chances."

All the goodies she has gathered throughout the years are presented in good taste and with pinpoint delivery. On

Saturday night, she had the crowd of 900 in stitches with her songs and stories, and she got a little help from TV man Sam Nover and pitcher Sam McDowell.

Bobby Cardillo, who had worked with Esther many times, accompanied her. Esther will be with the Four Lads through Saturday night. She stays over with Pirate pitcher Nellie Briles who headlines Sunday through next Thursday.

Frankie Avalon and Stewie Stone open for nine days starting Jan. 26.

The Four Lads continue to be the most charming, delightful and entertaining of all the singing teams. The capacity crowd wanted to hear all their hits and the boys oblige.

JOYCE LEVENSON, Richard Locke and Mary Ann Wolfe will be in the new Betty Caplan-Jack Simon show starting Thursday night at Stouffer's Tea Room in Oakland.

Show is called "It's About Time" and is a series of light musical comedy sketches.

SONNY DAYE, the comedian-owner of the Stage Door on the corner of Forbes and Meyran in Oakland, has changed his policy from rock bands to the jazz stylings of Spider Rondinelli and his trio. This group features Eric Kloss, winner of both the Playboy and Downbeat awards.

Sonny is starting with shows every Friday and Saturday, plans on a matinee and will go on other nights if his new policy catches on.