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Black Media Women resolve to widen their roles in America's racially biased communication networks

By SARA SLACK

"If you want to just have fun at this convention, admit it and have fun. If you want to work and bring about changes, let's get to doing that. We are confronted with big problems in the mass media and on these we will work and act."

These were the opening remarks made by Mrs. Rhea Callaway Glenn, last Thursday as the National Association of Media Women's sixth annual convention got underway at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. Mrs. Glenn is National Founder and historian of the organization.

The brilliant Black women who gathered from around the nation did work, with very little fun, and rededicated themselves to eliminating race bias in their potent mass media force.

Throughout the convention sessions, one distinguished speaker after another aimed his or her guns at racial prejudices in the communications media in America and fired point blank.

Discussing the Spoken Media during a How To Do It seminar Thursday were, Eddie O'Jay, WLJB; Leon Lewis, WMCA, Alma John, WWRL; Yvonne Barclay, Voice of America and Joe Bostic, WLJB Radio.

Detailing racial discrimination he has met while pursuing a radio deejay career Bostic, a gospel expert, won sustained applause when he said, in part:

"You ladies here in the mass media must understand the subtly of racism in mass media and continually remain aware of what is happening to us in America. We must own in and buy our own radio and TV stations otherwise we'll forever be on the outside looking in at Chuck (Mr. Charlie) and only fooling ourselves."

Stop it, now!

Examining the seminar's Visual Media division, ABC-TV anchorman Gil Noble won his share of deafening applause. The star newsmen also emphasized that the ultimate power of the TV media is not controlled by Blacks and is one reason Black

America being presented out of context so often.

"Don't let the mass media networks get away with it. We want in. TV shows are written, produced and controlled by the white brothers. Bring existing mass media into a position of fairness where minorities are concerned," he said.

Other fascinating personalities, who delivered spellbinding addresses included, Stanley Scott, assistant to the director of Communications at the White House; Pat Ludorf, past president, New York Chapter, Theta Sigma Phi; Victoria Lucas, director of Victoria Lucas Associates, D. Park Gibson, owner-director of D. Parke Gibson Associates; G. Marshall Wilson, Johnson Publishing Co. photographer; Martha Gillespie, editor of Essence Magazine; Phyl Garland, New York Editor of Ebony and director of Johnson Publication's New York area and Ethel M. Moore, coordinator, merchandising editor, Amalgamated Publishers, Inc. She sat in for her boss Norman W. Powell, general sales manager.

Clarence B. Jones Editor and Publisher of the New York Amsterdam News held his all-women audience spellbound during a fifty-minute-long address.

New day is here

Beginning with the various analyses that make America worthwhile under capitalism, the young publisher of the world's largest weekly newspaper detailed, social power, political power, economic power and military power. In discussing the prime importance of economic power he said, in part:

"We are not yet in the center of controlling the powers of communications. But, there is coming today the recognition of something in being Black and being in communications. The two should be the goal of an effective communication group.

Starting with the Black publishing industry's growth from the need to let Black people know just what is going on, Jones delivered a scholarly lecture on the print

media that left everyone, including the waiters, wishing that he would continue.

Jones detailed, step by step, down to the finest points, the first things the AMNEWS group did upon assuming acquisition of the New York Amsterdam News. He said in part:

"When you want to reach people in the print media do a special analysis and try to reach as large an audience as you can. It is important to take methodical steps in media and therefore be a more powerful voice.

"One of the first things we did was to study all of the moving parts of our paper and learn what is circulation, advertising, relationships between editors, copy and advertising printing costs. We studied relationships of publishing costs to prevent us from making errors. We set up points and studied all moving parts of the print media and sought to examine the product."

Girl Talk

To their delight, Jones told the Media women how after packaging his product he distributes it throughout the market.

High spots of the Media Women's convention came at a pell mell pace, one right after the other. They included Black woman's talk with such outstanding accomplished ladies as Congressman Shirley Chisholm, and brilliant Attorney Florynce Kennedy.

During an intimate address "for just us girls," at the Friday Luncheon in the Waldorf Louis XVI Suite, the beautiful Mrs. Chisholm said to her Black Sisters:

"My sisters, all over this country a real social revolution is upon us. We are concerned over this nation and we must address ourselves to rearranging our priorities. Black people are fighting for total liberation and freedom.

Attorney Florynce Kennedy perked the women up with a list of media demands and reforms topped off with the naming of a Black Federal Communications Commissioner immediately.

And then there was the hour-long address delivered by Harold Sims, Acting Executive Director, National Urban League. He left every woman speechless following his discussion centered on the theme:

"Blacks must not be frozen out of the media. Blacks must get into the mainstream and be given opportunities to be equal."

He called upon the women to create jobs with futures and think and act on the problems of Black media and the kinds of contradictions found in our society.

Job creation

Members of the National Association of Media Women presented coveted awards to a list of distinguished and accomplished persons in communications.

Very few sad moments came in the convention. However, one which stunned Media sisters was the resignation of Mrs. Helene Southern Slater, president of the group's Metropolitan New York Chapter and NAMW National Public Relations Director. Her move came early Sunday morning when she said:

"I herewith resign my office as President of the Metropolitan New York Chapter of the National Association of Media Women, Inc. in protest of the illegal national elections and the flagrant violation of the constitution."

Highlight of the Media Women's convention was the election of new national officers.

They are, National President, Mrs. Lois K. Alexander, New York City; 1st National Vice President, Ella Kay Mays, Los Angeles; 2nd National Vice President, Xermona Clayton, Atlanta; Financial Secretary, Jean Johnson, Chicago; Corresponding Secretary, Miss Vivian Robinson, New York City; Historian, Mrs. Rhea Callaway, New York City; Treasurer, Louise Meadows, Youngstown; National Chaplain, Grace Peebles, Detroit and Publicist, Mrs. Phy Stephens, Detroit.