

Hooks, FCC Commissioner: Keep Black Journal on air

Commissioner Benjamin L. Hooks, the first and only Black on the board of the Federal Communications Commission, said here Wednesday, that he considered Channel 13's "Black Journal" a good program and it should be re-funded and kept going.

Mr. Hooks made the observation during an interview by the Amsterdam News at Studio 55, 9th Ave. and 55th St. He had finished a taping for WNET-TV, during which he was interviewed by Black Journal executive producer Tony Brown; but the issue of the threatened cancellation of Black Journal did not come up then.

Preacher, lawyer, judge

A Baptist preacher, former Memphis court judge and lawyer, 47-year old Hooks was appointed by President Nixon to the \$38,000 post July 5, 1972 for the regular seven-year term. He had had "a good reception" from fellow commissioners and F.C.C. employees and couldn't "point to any unpleasant incident" involving either his associates or the staff.

Asked about the employment position at the F.C.C. in so far as Blacks and other minorities were concerned, Commissioner Hooks said it followed the general pattern in the nation's capital. "There are a lot of Blacks in the lower levels but few in higher positions", he observed.

"You don't see them on GS 16, 17 or GS 18 posts", he said. "This is not peculiar to the F.C.C. but is true of Washington officialdom."

The F.C.C. however "is going to make strides in employment," the com-



Tony Brown
Black Journal producer

missioner stated. He had caused the establishment of an equal employment office to promote job equality within the commission; and the commission had also taken steps to see that groups it regulates live up to equal-opportunity regulations.

"I think the commissioners are compassionate people who basically want to improve the hiring situation," Hooks said. His efforts would have been stymied if his colleagues had been hostile, he added.

Spectrum of America

What was his assessment of television presentation of Blacks. Mr. Hooks was

asked? He first noted that there is "a totality" of Black news that reflects "the whole spectrum of American life."

But "by and large, television does not focus on the totality but primarily on sports. While I think that athletes need to have all the spotlight they are getting and more, to be fair, television ought to present more than athletes, to balance it off."

On the question of Black control of television and radio, Mr. Hooks said he thought there was "definite feeling" among the commissioners that "Blacks should be involved in TV ownership." Actual Black ownership of television is none at this time but two groups, in Washington, D.C. and Detroit, are trying now to obtain, from the F.C.C., rights to television frequencies, Hooks stated.

There is "very little" Black ownership of radio, he said; only 23 stations are so owned. He felt there would be an increase here.

Black ownership

When asked if the F.C.C. was doing anything to encourage TV and radio ownership by minorities, Mr. Hooks said he was "researching" the matter and couldn't answer the question. However he would "do whatever, he can do to encourage Black ownership."

He felt "without question" that the F.C.C. was "one of the most important" centers of power in the federal system. Black ownership of television would increase, he said, "especially CABLE TV; and it is becoming increasingly important



Benjamin Hooks
FCC Commissioner

that Blacks be involved in positions of responsibility and ownership.

And he ended: "if we are to overcome our historic problems, I think we have to do it through better means of communications."

Short management course offered by NYU

The Division of Business and Management of New York University's School of Continuing Education announced this week that it is offering an intensive, one-semester course in Hotel and Motel Management during this Spring semester, beginning Feb. 12 through May 21.

Classes will meet twice weekly for 28 sessions on Mondays and Thursdays, 6 to 8:30 p.m., a spokesman for the University announced.