



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Delegate Magazine 1986

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definitive work which would assist in the struggle for equal opportunity and racial equity. In 1965 he said:

"Harlem has changed. Harlem has changed physically, culturally, and militantly since you were last here. Harlem is concerned about the projection of a new image—an image born not out of frustrations of a depressed area and depressed people, but one of fulfillment of aspirations...shaped by the people themselves...."

Mel's tone changed with the times—and with events. Women were beginning to organize their own movement for equality, and Mel Patrick began to feature more women in his section devoted to personalities. But he never lost sight of his goal—to position the achievements of all Blacks within the context of the continuum. In 1967 he said:

"J. Raymond Jones as Democratic County Leader and Julian Bond elected to the Georgia State Legislature...Edward Brooke the first Negro Senator from Massachusetts...Atty. Yvonne Braithwaite a Black woman from which Ronald Reagan, a former movie star, was elected Governor...Charles Townes, Jr. was appointed Negro advisor to the National Republican Committee...Governor Nelson Rockefeller won a third term as Governor of New York, his brother Winthrop elected Governor of Arkansas..."

In the same editorial he warns Black Americans that:

"Mr. Reagan started out his conservative administration by cutting funds to the University of California, only to bring down the wrath of the whole education department..."

In the same issue, in a later editorial, Mel Patrick applauded President Lyndon B. Johnson who:

"has made more historic, precedent breaking appointments of Negroes in Government than any other President in the United States...Thurgood Marshall...appointed Solicitor General of the United States on August 11, 1965."

In 1967, Mel wrote:

"Marshall will be the first Negro in history appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court."

But later in 1971, Mel applauds CBS for the employment of a large number of Blacks in both the national network offices in New York and the local stations and affiliates across the country.

As the beverage and cigarette industry appointments multiplied, and as the world of business and finance began to appoint Blacks to auspicious positions, Mel included these—including Blacks on Broadway and in Hollywood. Whenever movies and productions featured Blacks in lead roles or fully cast, notices were included in Delegate. It was an issue of optimism, and the struggle of racial justice in all phases of American life seemed substantive and sustaining.

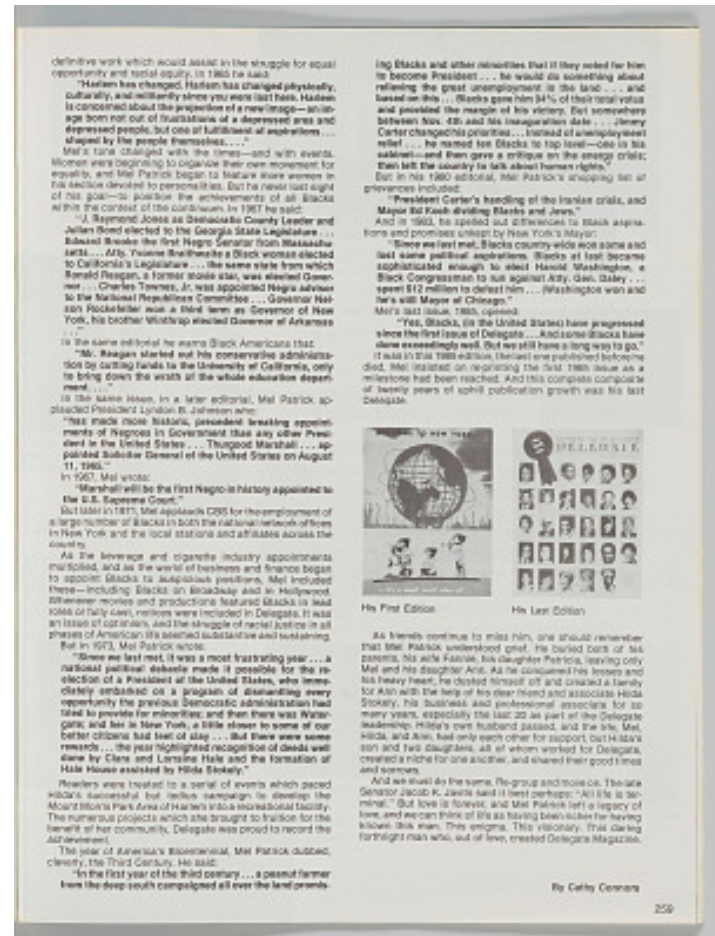
But in 1973, Mel Patrick wrote:

"Since we last met, it was the most frustrating year...a national political debacle made it possible for the re-election of a President of the United States, who immediately embarked on a program of dismantling every opportunity the previous Democratic administration had tried to provide for minorities; and then there was Watergate; and her in New York, a little closer to some of our better citizens had feet of clay...But there were some rewards...the year highlighted recognition of deeds well done by Clara and Lorraine Hale and the formation of Hale House assisted by Hilda Stokely."

Readers were treated to a serial of events which paced Hilda's successful but tedious campaign to develop the Mount Morris Park Area of Harlem into a recreational facility. The numerous projects which she brought to fruition for the benefit of her community, Delegate was proud to record the achievement.

The year of America's Bicentennial, Mel Patrick dubbed, cleverly, the Third Century. He said:

"In the first year of the third century...a peanut farmer from the deep



south campaigned all over the land promising Blacks and other minorities that if they voted for him to become President...he would do something about relieving the great unemployment in the land...and based on this...Blacks gave him 94% of their total votes and provided the margin of his victory. But somewhere between Nov. 4th and his inauguration date...Jimmy Carter changed his priorities...Instead of unemployment relief...he named ten Blacks to top level-one in his cabinet-and then gave a critique on the energy crisis; then left the country to talk about human rights."

But in his 1980 editorial, Mel Patrick's shopping list of grievances included:

"President Carter's handling of the Iranian crisis, and Mayor Ed Koch dividing Blacks and Jews."

And in 1983, he spelled out differences to Black aspirations and promises unkept by New York's Mayor:

"Since we last met, Black country-wide won some and lost some political aspirations. Blacks at last became sophisticated enough to elect Harold Washington, a Black Congressman to run against Atty. Gen. Daley...spent \$12 million to defeat him...(Washington won and he's still Mayor of Chicago."

Mel's last issue, 1985, opened:

"Yes, Blacks (in the United States) have progressed since the first issue of Delegate...And some Blacks have done exceedingly well. But we still have a long way to go."

It was in this 1985 edition, the last one published before he died, Mel insisted on re-printing the first 1965 issue as a milestone had been reached. And this complete composite of twenty years of uphill publication growth was his last Delegate.

[Image of His First Edition][Image of His Last Edition]

As friends continue to miss him, one should remember that Mel Patrick understood grief. He buried both of his parents, his wife Fannie, his daughter Patricia, leaving only Mel and his daughter Ann. As he conquered his losses and his heavy heart, he dusted himself off and created a family for Ann with the help of his dear friend and associate for so many years, especially the last 20 as part of the Delegate leadership. Hilda's own husband passed, and the trio, Mel, Hilda, and Ann, had only each other for support, but Hilda's son and two daughters, all of whom worked for Delegate, created a niche for one another, and shared their good times and sorrows.

And we must do the same. Re-group and move on. The late Senator Jacob K. Javits said it best perhaps: "All life is terminal." But love is forever, and Mel Patrick left a legacy of love, and we can think of life as having been richer for having known this man. This enigma. This visionary. This daring forthright man who, out of love, created Delegate Magazine.

By Cathy Connors

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