

EUGENE PETTIS



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On TV Program

Hooks Criticizes While Pendleton Defends Reagan

Special To The Post
New York - The Reagan Administration was both criticized and defended as Benjamin L. Hooks, Executive Director of the NAACP, clashed with Clarence Pendleton, Designate Chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission on a televised "Face-Off" recently on the WNBC-TV program, Positively Black.

Mr. Hooks charged that Mr. Reagan had wanted to fire three members of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission "because he did not like their policies" and that the running dispute that followed had "severely damaged" the commission.

"I don't sense that at all," Mr. Pendleton said in reply. "Even before I was appointed or nominated, the President said that he wanted to change the makeup of the entire commission."

Moderated by the Positively Black host, Gus Henningburg, the half-hour debate was provocative and often heated as the two participants brought their different points of view to bear on the President's civil rights policies.

Formed in 1957 as a bipartisan, temporary, research organization, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission became the object of a heated, national de-

bate for several weeks, following the President's announcement that he would replace three of the commission's five members.

The previous commission's term expired at the end of November and, following a compromise between the Administration and the Congress, it was agreed that the commission would be reconstituted with eight members, four named by the President and four by the Congress.

Mr. Pendleton had been chairman of the earlier commission and has been designated as the President's choice for chairman of the newly structured body.

Asked by Mr. Henningburg if it was necessary to take the President's views into consideration as a commission member, Mr. Pendleton said, "I have never had any marching orders from the President. I am not one who believes fully like the President - I am independent."

Noting that he had disregarded publicly with the President before, Mr. Pendleton said he and other commission members have "not been compromised." He said there are roles for blacks and others to play and that Mr. Reagan "made good appointments."

Mr. Pendleton was critic-

al of what he said was the refusal by the civil rights community to accept Mr. Reagan's views on civil rights, noting, "If the commission is to be independent, then everybody's views should come to the table."

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