

Major emphasis during the three-day conference was placed on the disc jockey's new status as a "professional man" and upon his interest in more flexible programming.

During many of the panel discussions and forums, verbal salvos were fired at the programming rigidity implicit in top 10 and formula operations.

Mr. Storz, in his message to the convention, outlined the changing role and new responsibilities of the disc jockey. He said: "For some time, independents, though more numerous, did not achieve importance or influence in radio's overall picture. Then came the revolution! Television entered the picture . . . Am stations, as previously conceived and operated, lost ground steadily as tv took over the living room.

New Era

"Enter here the new era of radio," Mr. Storz commented. "The first successful years were rewarding for the d.j. in his new-found glory and for the stations, too. But with more importance came more responsibility, greater competition and an increased obligation on the part of disc jockeys to listeners, advertisers and stations."

Determining how best to fulfill this three-fold responsibility constituted the main purpose of the convention, according to Bill Stewart, national program director for the Storz Stations and coordinator for the convention. "Only by bringing this great array of talent together in a free exchange of ideas and objectives can we grow as an industry."

The commercial point of view was strongly emphasized in the many opinions offered on the improvement of music formats. One of the most outspoken proponents of the need for revamped programming was Mitch Miller, Columbia recording artist.

Mr. Miller objected to "the abdication of your programming to the corner record shop; to the pre-shave crowd that makes up 12 percent of the country's population and

zero percent of its buying power."

He pointed out that 75 percent of the population is over 14 years old and forms the majority of listeners, and that these adults "want variety, musicianship, a little bit of literacy and a bit more sophistication in their music."

Adam Young, president of Adam Young Inc., national representatives, stressed the importance of the older teenager as "tomorrow's customer," and remarked that they represent "in certain fields purchasing power and in others fields influence on their parents." Mr. Young also declared that "the good music-and-news stations have great dominance among the young housewives and are particularly dominant in the 20 to 40 age group, the group in which typical families appear to have the greatest purchasing power."

Reed Farrell, KWK St. Louis, Mo., advocated appealing to this group because "while the teenager can help to hypo ratings, results from sponsors must have equal importance.

"The Storz, McLendon, Bartell, Plough groups and other smart independents have been successful not only by being influential in record

sales to teenagers, but also by being clever and original in production techniques, news coverage, station sounds and personality development. They went to the markets where there was no rock and roll and without competition captured the teenage market. Why not now go where there is nothing but teenage rock and roll programming and offer something different?" Mr. Farrell asked.

In any case, Gordon McLendon, president of the McLendon stations, believes radio will be so successful in the near future that it will cut sharply into newspaper advertising budgets. Agency media people, he told the meeting, are discovering that newspaper circulation does not necessarily mean readership.

Harold Krelstein, president of the Plough stations, urged disc jockeys to "stand up and be counted" in their communities, to be consistent in their principles and not go by a day-to-day policy. Failure to do this results, he feels, in loss of community identification for both the d. j. and the station.

This "personal" quality of radio was also emphasized by John Box Jr., executive vice president of the Balaban stations. "The Balaban approach to formula programming is based upon the modern concept of radio as a personal medium. I firmly believe that the disc jockey or personality is an integral part of the formula radio that will survive when the rock and roll operators find themselves surrounded by operations that sound exactly as they do. . . . I believe it takes a disc jockey or personality to do the best selling job for sponsors. His indispensable attribute is that he is the kind of guy every listener would like to have as a companion."

Mr. Stewart of the Storz Stations will coordinate the second annual d. j. convention, which has been announced for March of next year. The meeting will again be held in Kansas City, and it is hoped, a Storz spokesman said, that agency and advertiser representatives will attend the 1959 session. • • •



"Granddaddy" Martin Block as he appeared at Kansas City, Mo., disc jockey meeting.