

B/N - BENNETT - COVERLEY, LOUISE

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## 'Miss Lou' among 10 being honoured at Black conference

INTERNATIONALLY acclaimed Jamaican poet and folklorist Mrs. Louise Bennett-Coverley has been selected as one of ten outstanding people to be honoured at a special luncheon to pay tribute to "Outstanding Black Cultural Spokespersons".

This honour will be bestowed on "Miss Lou", as she is affectionately known, at the Florida International University Ballroom, Miami on February 26 at the Third Conference on Negritude to be held at the Florida University.

This year will see the resumption of the intellectual caucus after a 27-year break since the conference of Rome, and the first one held in Paris in 1956.

This conference will be the first gathering of its kind to be held at an American university, and will bring together the most authoritative spokesmen on Afro cultures in this hemisphere. The theme of the conference is "Negritude, Ethnicity and Afro-Cultures in the Americas", lending a hemispheric tone to the meeting.

Dubbed the "poet laureate" of Jamaica, "Miss Lou" will be feted along with such literary socio-cultural personalities as Mr. St. Clair Drake, sociologist and author of "The Black Metropolis"; Miss Gwendolyn Brooks, poet, and the first

black Pulitzer Prize winner for her literary work; Mr. Alex Haley, author and writer of the famous and dramatized book "Roots"; Mr. John Henrik Clarke, professor emeritus of African history; Mr. John Hope Franklin, author; Miss Margaret Walker, black author, regarded as the "matron of black writers", with the highly respected award winning "Jubilee" to her credit; all of the United States of America.

Brazilian dramatist and poet, the Hon. Abdias do Nascimento, also an essayist and accepted as the "deacon of black intellect" in his country, will be joined by another Latin American, Mr. Manuel Zapata Olivella from Colombia, medical doctor and psychiatrist. Mr. Olivella is known as a foremost Afro-South American novelist and playwright, who so far has had 15 published novels.

The Hon. Val T. McCombe, Barbadian Ambassador, and Assistant Secretary of the Organisation of American States (OAS), one of the honourees, will be speaking on one of five selected topics for the conference. The Hon. Abdias do Nascimento, and Mr. John Henrik Clarke will also address identified issues at the assemblage.

Much excitement has been generated by the organiser of this year's conference, Dr. Carlos Moore, toward what he regards as "burning issues" that might provide the answers to the underpinning of black inferiority and under-development as a global problem.

The five topics he enumerated are: The African Diaspora in Perspective: Problems and Prospects of New World Afro Cultures; Negritude: Philosophical, Aesthetic, Political and Psycho-Cultural Dimensions; The Persistent Legacy of Black Socio-Economic Poverty in the Americas; Afro Belief Systems: Rituals, Practices and Values; Ethnicity, Race and Colour in the Americas.