

## NEWS/EDITORIAL

# Remembering MLK, cont'd.

The Morehouse College Martin Luther King Jr. Collection includes approximately 1,100 books from King's personal library, many with his handwritten notes throughout.

Some of the titles: "Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi," "Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar," "Deep River: Reflections on the Religious Insight of Certain of the Negro Spirituals" by Howard Thurman, "Invisible Man" by Ralph Ellison, "Kinfolk" by Pearl S. Buck and "Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics" by Reinhold Niebuhr.

Others include "Frederick Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom," "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson, "Prison Notes" by Barbara Deming, "Killers of the Dream" by Lillian Smith and "Here and Beyond the Sunset" by Nannie Helen Burroughs.

A celebrated writer

Following the 381-day Montgomery bus boycott, which started in 1955, King became a national figure whose ideas and opinions were heavily sought out by book publishers, newspapers and magazines.

He became a prolific writer and authored countless letters – arguably the most famous being "Letter from Birmingham Jail" – as well as several books, among the most notable "Why We Can't Wait" and "Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?"

But many Americans may not know that he wrote a regular column in *Ebony* magazine, the leading black national publication at the time. In his "Advice for Living" column, he took questions from readers and addressed a wide range of subjects, including personal questions about marital infidelity, sexual identity, birth control,

race relations, capital punishment and atomic weapons.

A follower of Gandhi

In 1959, King and his wife visited India, where King's commitment to the nonviolent teachings of Gandhi expanded and deepened. King always carried a note with him on a scrap of paper that read "Gandhi Speaks for Us. ..."

A lover of music

Music formed an important part of King's life, beginning with his childhood experiences in Ebenezer Baptist Church, where his mother, Alberta Williams King, was the church organist. Alberta King introduced young M.L., as he was called, to music as a child. He later sang solos and sang with the church choir. While a student at Morehouse College from 1944 to 1948, Martin Luther King Jr. sang in the renowned Morehouse College Glee Club as well as the Atlanta University-Morehouse-Spelman Chorus.

Following his marriage to Coretta Scott in 1953, King expanded his world of music even more. He met Coretta in Boston, where she was studying to become a concert soprano at the New England Conservatory of Music. Coretta introduced King to classical music. He came to appreciate both sacred and secular music and enjoyed jazz and blues as well.

Some of King's favorite hymns and gospel songs included "Take My Hand, Precious Lord," "How I Got Over," "Thank You, Lord" and "Never



TOP: Crown Prince Harald and King Olav of Norway congratulate King after he receives the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo in 1964. (Source: Bettmann). Bottom: Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, center, is flanked by guests Martin Luther King and wife Coretta Scott King during a one-month visit to India in 1959. (Source: Bettmann).

Grow Old."

King was also a friend to Aretha Franklin and her father, the Rev. C.L. Franklin, and gospel singer Mahalia Jackson. King felt that music was a powerful element in activism and non-violent protest.

A Nobel Prize winner

At the age of 35, King was the youngest person, the third African American and the 12th American, to

win the coveted Nobel Peace Prize for his steadfast belief that nonviolence was an integral part of obtaining full citizenship rights for Black people in America.

On Dec. 10, 1964, King announced that he was donating the Nobel Prize money to the civil rights movement. (The CONVERSATION/1-15-2022)

# National Action Network, cont'd.

people are looking for," said treasurer Thomas Hunter.

Georgia's attack on voting rights took the national spotlight ahead of the 2020 election but it's not the only state undertaking measures to stymie voters.

"Our voting rights are not protected," Capehart lamented. While the group will seek to increase voter education, awareness and turnout, redistricting is quickly approaching. "It's hard to imagine that we won't have voting rights but there's a reality that we couldn't," he said.

Additional threats such as gerrymandering have loomed on the horizon for generations, only needing to be nourished by politicians and grifters antagonizing a tempestuous culture war.

As a result, divided within the same country like oil and water, what were once assumed ironclad rights become an explosive point of contention and our shared history has made clear that allowing basic human rights to dissolve in the first place makes efforts to get them back much more difficult.

MTNAN will also focus on police accountability, training and public access to reports when law enforcement uses weapons in arrests.

"It's not always a fair shake on both sides," Capehart added. This tale of two justice systems has been a significant contributor to increased poverty rates in the Black community, keeping those families locked in a perpetual loop of eco-

nomics instability that in turn feeds the criminal justice system.

The broader NAN organization was involved in the Ahmad Arbery murder case before it became a national story, said Huff.

Similarly, MTNAN will work to amplify civil rights cases that aren't getting widespread media coverage.

The group said it already has

cases on its radar, such as one in which a man's rights were violated when he was detained by another falsely portraying themselves as an officer.

Rev. Sharpton will be in attendance in the coming months to officially install the Chapter's officers as soon as the group's agenda is complete, Huff said.

# Maya Angelou, cont'd.

Angelou was the author of more than 30 bestselling titles, including her autobiography, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." A teacher, poet and performer, in addition to her work as a writer and social activist, Angelou became the

first African-American woman to write and present a poem at a Presidential inauguration when she read "On the Pulse of Morning" at then-President Bill Clinton's 1992 inauguration, according to the Mint.

In 2010, Ange-

lou was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by then-President Barack Obama. She passed away in 2014, at the age of 86.

# Redistricting, cont'd.

County and its growing base of racial minorities.

The Select Committee's plan harms the communities of interests of voters in Davidson County, particularly Black voters.

"It undermines the equal protection of Black voters in ways that we have not seen in decades in Tennessee," stated Gloria Sweet-Love, President of the Tennessee NAACP.

The redistricting plans show that the Select Committee was never committed to transparency and community input. The NAACP met with the Chair of the committee. We partnered with other groups to host redistricting hearings and meetings across the state. The dominant position from these meetings—a position that the NAACP expressed to the Chair—was to keep counties together for con-

gressional districts.

The TN NAACP is calling on the authorizing committees in both the House and the Senate, as well as the Governor, to reject the Select Committee's plan. The NAACP stands with African-American voters and opposes the Select Committee's redistricting plans that attempt to deny African Americans from fully maximizing their vote.