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Martin Luther King III: 'We've Got to Roll Up Our Sleeves'

By Hazel Trice Edney
NNPA Editor-in-Chief

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - On the verge of commemorating the Martin Luther King National Holiday Jan. 19, Martin Luther King III, has declared "We've got to roll up our sleeves" during what he

describes as "a very special period in the history of our nation and world."

Speaking last week to the ceremonial swearing in of the Congressional Black Caucus, King says America must remind itself that despite the historic swearing in of

the nation's first Black president Jan. 20, his father's "dream has not been fulfilled even though a significant aspect of that dream has been fulfilled."

Sitting aside a prepared speech, King III, now a human rights leader in his own right, spoke from his

heart as he stood before the Capitol Hill audience of hundreds, thinking of his father, who was assassinated April 4, 1968 and his mother who died of cancer on Jan. 30, 2006.

"I cannot say exactly what my father and mother would say, but I know they're looking down on us smiling," said King, founder and president of Realizing the Dream, a non-profit advocacy organization for the poor. Then he laid out the bare facts:

"But, as long as there are 37 plus million people living in poverty, the dream will not be fulfilled; as long as we live in a nation where 47 plus million people have no health insurance, the dream has not been fulfilled, as long as we live in a nation where the criminal justice system has millions of people

and just about 50-50 percent of those people are people of color, the dream will not be fulfilled," he told the vigorously applauding audience. "We still have work to do, but the wonderful thing is we can make it happen. Where there is great challenge, there is also great opportunity."

Referring to the historic inauguration of President-Elect Barack Obama, King said, "Our nation is getting ready to move in a most powerful direction in the most positive way."

But, he added, "We've got to roll up our sleeves."

Had he lived, Dr. King would be 80 years old on Jan. 15 this year. Listening to King III speak were civil rights icons U. S. Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) and Dr. Dorothy

Height, president emeritus of the National Council of Negro Women, both of whom marched on Washington with Dr. King on Aug. 28, 1963, where he rendered the famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Both Lewis and Height received rousing applause when acknowledged by King III.

But, King pointed out that it was the principles for which they stood that made them great. He encouraged the CBC and the audience to remember those principles as outlined succinctly by Dr. King in several of his speeches. King quoted his father, "The ultimate measure of a person is not where they stand in times of comfort and convenience, but where they stand in times of challenge and controversy."

Livingston Takes His Book To The Streets

Rev. Carl Livingston, pastor of Kingdom Christian Center and professor of political science at Seattle Central Community College, says that he is willing to walk the walk, and not just talk the talk as he will lead a march and rally this Saturday to promote the development of the Black community this Sat., Jan 17th in Seattle.

The rally will begin at 11:00 a.m. at the Garfield Community Center, followed by a march through the community at noon.

"Too many of our children are dying on the streets of Seattle," says Livingston, author of *Shoestrings & Bootstraps: a Development Plan for Black America*, a response to the concerns of the Black community in Seattle and across the nation.

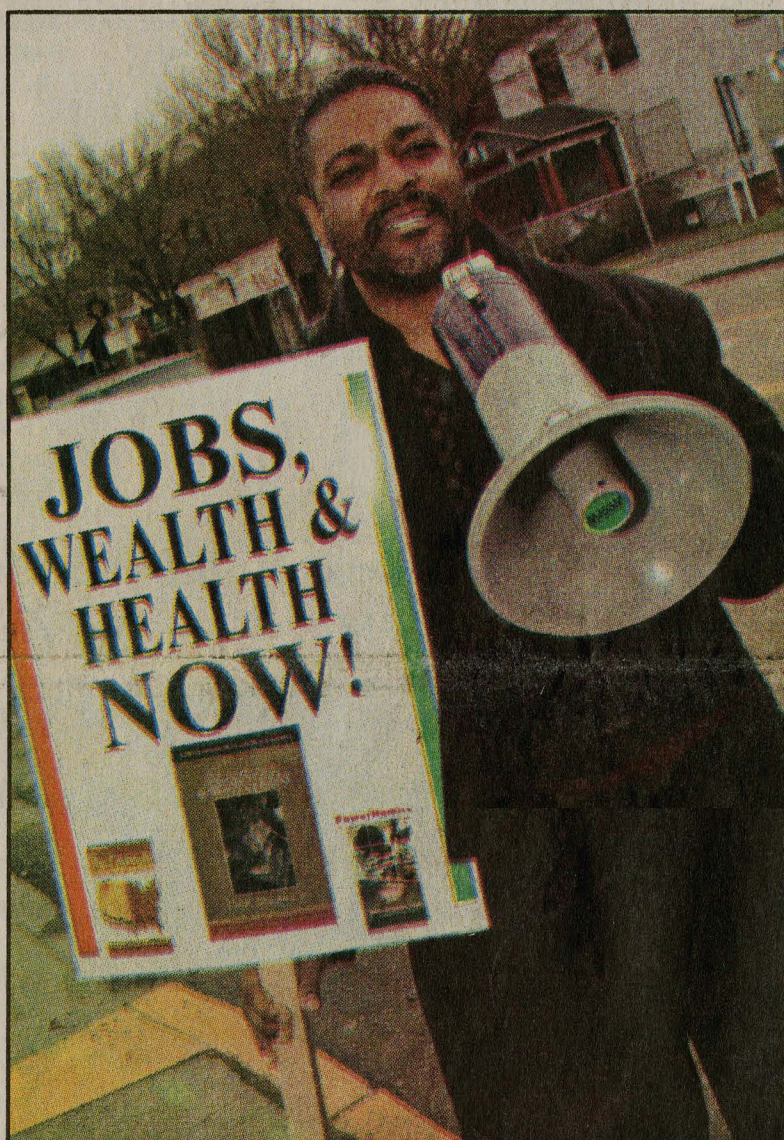
"Too many adults in our communities are unemployed or underemployed, too many fathers are disengaged from their families, and too many families are struggling under the weight of debt," he continued, "The time for a Black renaissance has come!"

Livingston's book provides strategies for the full development of the Black community with regard to finances, emotional and social well-being, and spiritual growth, and this is the message that he hopes to take to the streets and instill in our children and Black families. He believes that in the face of national economic strife and an increase in youth violence, there is yet hope for the Black community.

"If we are going to stop the violence and gang problems in our community, we have to do more than tell our young people what to say 'No' to; we have to give them something to say 'Yes' to," he said.

In an exclusive interview with The Seattle Medium, Livingston said that he will continue to march once a month, until Juneteenth if necessary, to call the Black community to action.

"I'm on calling fathers,



Rev. Carl Livingston will lead a march and rally this Saturday to promote the development of Seattle's Black community.

mothers, business owners, students, and pastors to march with me, and to declare a new day for Seattle," he said. "I'm calling on all of us to join together to develop a comprehensive plan to change the economic landscape of the Black Seattle."

According to Livingston, as the group marches the message will be clear - say "no" to gang violence, unemployment, broken marriages and debt.

"There is much growth that can happen if the community bands together and plans intentionally for

the future," he stated. "We're asking that people come ready to celebrate, build new relationships and grow with one another this Saturday at the Garfield Community Center because the time for the renewal of the Black community is now!"

For more information about this event or about purchasing a copy of the book *Shoestrings & Bootstraps: a Development Plan for Black America*, please contact Carl Livingston at (206)587-2922 or at clivin@sccd.ctc.edu.

Report: U.S. Marshals Misused As Sports Escorts

By Devlin Barrett
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Investigators say a lawyer for the U.S. Marshals Service used government cars and armed deputies to drive himself and broadcasters to major sporting events like the Super Bowl and the World Series.

A report issued Monday by the Justice Department's inspector general was highly critical of the lawyer, Joseph Band, who worked in the agency's Washington office.

Band also worked as a part-time statistician for Fox Sports, and he came under scrutiny after he received rides to two World Series games in 2007 in Boston, as well as the 2008 Super Bowl in Phoenix.

The report issued Monday by Inspector General Glenn Fine found Band sometimes got escorts not just for himself, but for broadcasters as well.

Fox Sports spokesman Dan Bell said company officials were

unaware "that those arrangements were in any way inappropriate, and regret to learn now that they apparently were."

Fine said use of armed government agents as a VIP car service violates ethical standards, and U.S. Marshals in the cities Band visited should not have agreed to his requests.

Band "regularly and inappropriately solicited and received assistance of (marshal service) resources for his personal activities, in violation of government ethical rules," the report concluded.

Band retired from the agency earlier this month, said his lawyer, Jacob Stein.

In a written defense of Band's conduct, Stein said marshals often assist at sporting events and other high-profile activities, and his client had, on his own time, assisted with "public activities helpful to the community reputation of the service."

Band maintained he was granted permission for government personnel "to take time off for the events he covered," and had no "control, knowledge, or decision-making discretion with respect to the use of any government vehicle or government personnel," Stein said.

One deputy marshal said he picked up Band at the airport to bring him to an NFL playoff game in Tampa Bay, then drove Band back to the airport, leading the way for limousines carrying two broadcasters.

The deputy, who was not identified in the report, said he didn't question whether it was appropriate to do so because Band "was the guy who advises us on ethics."

The Marshals Service said it agreed with the report's conclusions that the agency should tighten its oversight of its employees' outside work.

Burris To Be Seated In The U. S. Senate

By Hazel Trice Edney
NNPA Editor-in-Chief

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - U.S. Senate leaders have finally approved former Illinois Attorney General Roland Burris to fill the Senate seat vacated by President-elect Barack Obama.

The decision came Monday afternoon after meetings between Burris lawyers and Senate leaders came to a resolution at the behest of Obama, who had ask that officials solve the controversy.

Burris was expected to be seated this week.

Senate leaders had said the appointment by embattled Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich would not be respected. The governor had been arrested on charges that he tried to sell the seat. Last week, he was impeached by the Illinois Legislature.

Meanwhile, the Congressional

Black Caucus weighed in, calling for Senate Democratic leaders to allow Burris to be seated.

"Today, we met as members of the Congressional Black Caucus and voted unanimously that Roland Burris should be seated by the Senate," said a Jan. 7 letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid from all members of the CBC, chaired by U. S. Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.).

The legal struggle over the seat started after Blagojevich was arrested on federal corruption charges alleging that Blagojevich attempted to "sell" Obama's Senate seat to "the highest bidder."

Pressure had mounted for the governor to step down. But, he has not yet been convicted of a crime. Tape recordings indicating his intention of receiving something in exchange for the seat were widely broadcasted on national media.

The Senate atmosphere began

to soften shortly after Burris was turned away Jan. 6 when Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), chair of the Senate Rules Committee, broke from her colleagues, saying she thinks Blagojevich still has the power to appoint Burris and that the Senate should respect that appointment.

Despite the controversy surrounding Blagojevich, those who know Burris say Burris is a man of integrity.

With Burris, the 100-member Senate, will still have only one African-American.

"I've known him for about 30 years. He's a man of integrity and honor," says U. S. Rep. Diane Watson (D-Calif.). "He was the attorney general and I don't know why he had to be tainted with the scent of the governor. But, the governor had not been proven guilty yet."

County Council Authorizes Settlement Of Federal Complaint Over Inmate Conditions At King County Jail

On Monday, the King County Council approved the authorization of a proposed settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice over conditions at the King County Jail. The authorization also approves close to \$2 million to fund implementation of the agreement.

In 2007 the Department of Justice (DOJ), after investigating practices at the King County Jail, alleged that certain conditions violated the constitutional rights of inmates in three specific areas: the protection of inmates from harm, the protection of inmates from self-harm, and access to adequate medical care.

"The allegations in the DOJ report are very disturbing and the Council will continue its oversight role to ensure that we improve conditions at the facility," said Council Vice Chair Bob Ferguson, who chaired last year's Operating Budget Committee and closely

monitored the settlement negotiations.

Throughout 2008, the Council's Operating Budget, Fiscal Management, and Select Issues committee received numerous briefings on DOJ's investigation and the County's response to the allegations. In January of 2008, the committee discussed the issue at length and received a detailed report on DOJ's findings and the County's preliminary response.

The County has already taken actions to improve practices at the facility, including: the creation of a Use of Force Review Board, which meets regularly; review of all suicide prevention policies and procedures; development of an updated assessment procedure to ensure that inmates are placed in the appropriate housing unit; and twice-a-day meetings involving corrections and health personnel working in the Psychiatric Housing

The agreement, in which the county does not admit that DOJ's allegations are true, is the result of settlement negotiations between DOJ and representatives of King County. It identifies practices and requirements that the county will undertake in the King County Correctional Facility.

Procedurally, DOJ will file a lawsuit against the county after the agreement is signed. DOJ and the county will then file a joint motion for conditional dismissal of the lawsuit should the county after three years or less achieve substantial compliance with the terms of the agreement in four areas: protection from harm, suicide prevention, medical care, and environmental health.

The agreement identifies and appoints a third-party monitor who will oversee King County's compliance with its terms.

Seattle Community Colleges To Hold 35th Annual MLK Celebration This Friday

The Seattle Community College District will hold its 35th Annual MLK Celebration this Friday from 12 Noon - 1:30 p.m. at Mount Zion Baptist Church - 1634 19th Avenue in Seattle.

The program, one of the area's oldest and most significant programs celebrating the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will focus on "Dr. King's Message for a

Changing World." The event, emceed by award-winning broadcast reporter and anchor Connie Thompson of KOMO-TV, will feature a presentation by students from Our Lady of the Lake School; Mount Zion's Mass Choir and Praise Dancers, directed by Phyllis Byrdwell and featuring talented young soloist Marcus Pettit; and a keynote address by Rev.

Aaron Williams, new Senior Pastor at Mount Zion Baptist Church.

The program - which draws people from across the community; civic, education, business, labor and social leaders; and students of all ages - is free and open to the public. For more information call (206) 903-3233 or visit www.seattlecolleges.edu/mlk.

Annual MLK Community Celebration At Garfield Next Monday

The 27th Annual Region-wide Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration will take place next Mon., Jan. 19 at Garfield High School in Seattle.

The annual event will feature workshops, a rally and march. The

workshops will be held between 9:30 a.m. and 11:00, followed by the annual rally at 11:00 a.m. and the march from Garfield to the Downtown Federal Building will begin at 12 Noon.

Immediately after the March, food and refreshments will be served at the Garfield High School cafeteria and is free to all participants!

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