



By James A. Parcell—The Washington Post

Mayor Marion Barry speaks at memorial service held at the Martin Luther King Library.

King Legacy Recalled

By Joseph D. Whitaker
Washington Post Staff Writer

"Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a good man," said Tyrone Andre Nelson, 5, who braved chilly weather yesterday to see the first annual Anacostia parade in honor of the murdered civil rights leader. "He wanted everybody to live together in peace. Somebody shot him."

Nelson never saw his hero, but knows him well. In the weeks leading up to the 50th anniversary of King's birth, Nelson was drilled on every aspect of King's life by teachers at Nichols Avenue Elementary School.

King's birthday, which President Carter has said should become a national holiday, is seen by many as an opportunity to teach younger generations the lessons of the civil rights era.

"Dr. King stood for the rights of black people," said Lynn Bullock, 16, a student at

Ballou High School. "He had the courage to speak out."

In addition to the holiday's educational value, some see it as a psychological shot in the arm for black Americans.

Mayor Marion Barry, keynote speaker at yesterday's official city memorial services at the Martin Luther King Library downtown, said of King: "He is no less worthy (of a holiday) than some of the others whose birthdays we celebrate."

King's birthday is a local holiday for most employees in the District of Columbia, Prince George's County and Maryland state governments. In Virginia, state offices were closed yesterday in honor of Confederate generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson.

Except for D.C., Montgomery County and Alexandria, all area public schools remained opened yesterday.

Audrey Williams, president of the Fairfax

See KING, C7, Col. 2



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Young and old alike attended memorial services for Dr. King at the main city library named for him.

Children Assess Legacy of Dr. King

KING, From C1

County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, also favors the establishment of a national holiday on Jan. 15. "Black history is something our children—both black and white—have been short-changed on," she said.

"I feel people would be hurt if we didn't do something to recognize Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday," said Mary Lee Holston, chairman of the commemorative services committee for Montgomery County government employes. The employes were granted leave to attend services yesterday.

"Just because Dr. King died, our feelings for him didn't die," Holston said.

In Anacostia, about 500 participants in the first annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. birthday parade assembled in freezing temperatures at about 10 a.m. for a lively two-mile march down Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue.

The parade, sponsored by the con-

stituent services committee of Ward 8 Councilwoman Wilhelmina J. Rolark, included several drill teams and cheerleader squads, and marching bands from Ballou and Cardozo high schools.

"This parade is something we often dreamed of," said Calvin Rolark, the councilwoman's husband and president of the United Black Fund, who served as parade grand marshal. "The kids are excited about the parade. Since this is the international 'Year of the Child,' we've dedicated the parade to the children."

When the parade ended at Covenant Baptist Church, 3845 South Capitol St. SE, the children paid tribute to a man who died before most of them were born.

"Dr. King was a gentle warrior of the civil rights movement," said Eric McCoy, 5, of Nichols Avenue Elementary School.

"Happy Birthday Martin Luther King," said LaVaughn Turner Jr., 4, who attends Anacostia Pre-School. "He was a very nice man. He taught peace and love."

Sixteen students from Johnson Junior High staged a mock civil rights

march, carrying protest signs, with one student acting out the part of Dr. King. The group ended their play by asking the audience to join them in a chorus of "We Shall Overcome."

At Martin Luther King Library where some 1,500 people crowded the lobby, Mayor Barry restated his administration's desire to improve the city's housing, health and public safety.

Barry was applauded loudly when he said, "Employes of the District of Columbia are here to serve the people of the city . . . anyone who is in the government who does not want to get on this team has no place in this government."

More than 250 people, including County Executive Charles Gilchrist, jammed the Montgomery County Council chambers in Rockville yesterday for a moving two-hour tribute to King.

The services began with a rocking spiritual sung by a county youth choir and ended with the crowd swaying, locking hands and loudly singing, "We Shall Overcome."

Also contributing to this article were Neil Henry and Jack Eisen.