

## MLK, Jr. Birthday Bill



U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young (l) and Stevie Wonder confer at recent rally in Atlanta. Both spoke at State capitol Building urging passage of

the Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Bill, which would make the late civil rights leader's birthday a national holiday.

Stevie Wonder joined Coretta Scott King, U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young and Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson at the head of a march from Ebenezer Baptist Church in honor of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

The march ended at the State Capitol with a spirited rally. The enthusiastic crowd of thousands heard speaker after speaker, including Mrs. King, Ambassador Young, Mayor Jackson and

Georgia Governor George Busbee vow to support passage of the Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Bill. Wonder, the last speaker on the platform, also pledged his support of the bill. He told the cheering crowd of his plan to perform in concert on April 4, date of Dr. King's assassination, and exhorted other entertainers to follow suit, as a reminder of what Dr. King lived and died for.

Wonder, an active supporter of the King Birth-

day Bill, organized and headlined an SRO concert at the Omni that evening. Other performers included Peabo Bryson and the McCrarys. All proceeds went to the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change.

Prior to the performance of music celebrating King's love, Wonder urged the capacity audience to become actively involved in passage of the King Birthday Bill by observing Jan. 15 as a personal holiday, if possible, and by writing to their congressmen demanding passage of the bill.

Wonder spoke of the need to combine words of love with action. "We all know his dream, and we all say we want it to come true. But words are only berbiage. We must put action with these thoughts to make Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream a reality. January 15 should be a holiday that we all want. If we cannot celebrate a man who died for love, then how can we say we believe in it.

"It is up to me and you. We hold the keys to opening the door to a truth we have all known all the time. Dr. King and all those who died for God's love are extensions of what God's child died for. We would only be adding to the sins of mankind if we let the dream die. We must all combine living with life itself."

The march and concert were part of the King Golden Anniversary Celebration, Jan. 11-16 sponsored by the King Center. Foreign dignitaries and top government officials were here during the six days of activities honoring Dr. King.

President Carter was on hand Sunday (14) to receive the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Prize. Accepting the award from Coretta Scott King, the President vowed to continue Dr. King's fight and help make his dream a reality. The President also said he hoped to sign the King Birthday Bill into law this year.

Senator Ted Kennedy spoke Saturday at dedication ceremonies for the Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Stamp and announced plans to introduce the King Bill in congress.

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