

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MEMORIAL SOUVENIR MAGAZINE

Special Edition

"The Truth Shall Set You Free"

Sentinel Voice

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 38

JANUARY 16, 1986



Sentinel-Voice publisher Ed Brown was first person in the nation to present idea of Dr. King's birthday as a national holiday

Ed Brown can remember when the idea of making Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a national holiday first came up. He suggested it.

As station manager of WNJR-AM radio in Newark, N.J., Brown went on the air within minutes after King's assassination in the spring of 1968 appealing to listeners to endorse a national holiday.

"That was April 4th," said Brown, now publisher of

the Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice, a weekly black newspaper. "By the end of December 1972, I had accumulated more than a million letters from across the nation."

Brown conceived the notion as a way to ease racial tensions that had been building in the Newark area prior to King's death.

"I went on the air to get people to expend their energies in a more positive

way by honoring this man," Brown said.

He eventually handed the letters over to the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives, which first introduced resolutions for the holiday in April 1968 and March 1973. (Copies are shown in this special souvenir edition.)

Brown also received an award for his efforts from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, then

headed by the Rev. Ralph Abernathy.

"Within minutes after Dr. King's tragic assassination, Newark's famed WNJR radio led the nation calling for the establishment of Dr. King's birthday," the National Black Monitor, a monthly magazine syndicated nationally, said of the 5,000-watt station.

Brown, a former Nevada Boxing Commission member,

founded the Las Vegas Sentinel in 1980. He purchased the Vegas Voice in 1982, and later merged the two newspapers.

Last year, Congress passed legislation establishing the holiday as the third Monday in January beginning in 1986. King was born Jan. 15, 1929.

The legislation was approved in the House in August 1983 and eventually

was signed into law by President Reagan, who reversed his longtime opposition.

(The Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice, Nevada's only Black Community Newspaper now serves eight cities in the state: Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Reno, Carson City, Sparks, Hawthorne, Henderson, Tonopah.)

— As reported in part by Larry Werner, L.V. Review Journal 1/13/84

CONGRESS
100th Session

H. R. 16510

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 8, 1968

Mr. CONYERS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To designate the birthday of Martin Luther King, Junior, as a legal public holiday.

- 1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
- 2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
- 3 That subsection (a) of section 6103 of title 5, United States
- 4 Code, is amended by inserting immediately below
- 5 "January 1, New Year's Day."
- 6 the following:
- 7 "January 15, the birthday of Martin Luther King,
- 8 Junior."

Proclamation

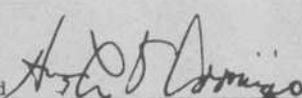


WHEREAS: the nation has suffered a grievous loss as a result of the tragic death of the Reverend, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., an outstanding Statesman and Civil Rights Leader;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, HUGH J. ADDONIZIO, Mayor of the City of Newark, New Jersey, do hereby, in deepest reverence and respect, proclaim:

1. That proper recognition be given to Dr. King's birthday and his many meaningful messages be quoted and featured as a part of the public schools assembly programs which will be appropriately planned to honor this day.
2. That during such period, flags at Newark City Hall, Newark Public Library, Newark Museum, all municipal buildings and all public schools, shall be flown at half-mast.
3. Further, on this day in front of City Hall, petitions be signed with the hopes that officials of the United States Government will see the need to proclaim Dr. King's birthday a national holiday.
4. And finally, that all citizens of the City of Newark are requested to observe in his honor, the memory of the late Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on Wednesday, January 15, 1969.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, HUGH J. ADDONIZIO, Mayor of the City of Newark aforesaid, have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the official seal of said municipality, this 3rd day of January, 1969.

Signed 
HUGH J. ADDONIZIO
Mayor