

King's widow backs affirmative action at lawyers' meeting

Special to Sentinel-Voice
WASHINGTON, D.C. — The widow of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. said Monday affirmative action must continue because blacks still endure "sick bigots" and more subtle forms of racism in America.

"It's not about guilt or blame, or shaming the current generation for the sins of the

past," Coretta Scott King said. Affirmative action, which her husband also supported before his assassination in 1968, is a "good-faith effort to promote sharing of opportunities in business," Mrs. King said.

Some critics call affirmative action nothing more than a giveaway of jobs and educational opportunities to

blacks who may have done little to earn those benefits.

"If the attack on affirmative action is successful, the courts will be the only remedy available," Mrs. King told an audience of personal injury lawyers.

She also blasted "power-hungry careerists" in Congress, "who turn their backs on working people, the poor and

the disadvantaged."

"We need a Congress that legislates more and investigates less," she said to loud applause from the Association of Trial Lawyers of America.

On civil rights, Mrs. King said her husband's work is not yet done. She pointed to "sick bigots" who deface churches and synagogues and to the

death of a black man in Texas, allegedly at the hands of whites who tied him to a pickup truck and dragged him until his body broke in pieces.

"We've also got to deal with the more subtle and sophisticated forms of racism and bigotry that create a climate that encourages hate crimes," she said. "The best place to begin is at the ballot box."



CORETTA SCOTT KING

Interracial couple alleges racially motivated attack

Special to Sentinel-Voice
LAWRENCE, Mass. — An interracial couple celebrating a 20th wedding anniversary were harassed by racial slurs, and when the husband complained, he said, he was beaten by men with baseball bats.

The husband, Charles Love, moved to Massachusetts 15 years ago from Jasper, Texas, where a black man was dragged to death behind a pickup truck last month.

Police arrested Jeffrey Klier, 43, on charges of attempted murder, civil rights violations and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon. He pleaded innocent last Monday and was held in lieu of a \$75,000 bond. Two more suspects are being sought.

The attack began at an Independence Day cookout, said Love's wife, Brandy. When several people drove by shouting racial epithets, she said she recognized Klier.

She and her husband went to his house to confront him.

"Charles got out of the car and was standing there asking, 'What is your problem? I have not had any problem with you all these years and now you are calling my wife 'nigger lover.' It is unnecessary,'" said Brandy Love, who is white.

Two men then attacked her husband with aluminum baseball bats, knocking him to the

ground and yelling slurs, she said. They chased her to her car, Brandy Love said, and Klier smashed the windows.

Charles Love's jaw was shattered. He underwent surgery last Tuesday at Lawrence General Hospital.

Essex County prosecutors described Klier as a "career criminal" with 13 previous convictions for burglaries and assaults, but no record of past civil rights violations.

Former Klansman admits to shooting Blacks at club

Special to Sentinel-Voice
COLUMBIA, S.C. — A former member of the Ku Klux Klan admitted that he shot three people in a crowd outside a nightclub simply because they were black.

Joshua England, 20, of New Holland pleaded guilty in federal court Monday to shooting and injuring three teenagers on Oct. 27, 1996.

England told U.S. District Judge Joe Anderson that he and Clayton Spires Jr. were riding around drinking and had attended a Confederate flag

rally on the day of the shootings.

England said he fired into the mostly black crowd outside Club Illusion in Pelion because of race.

"I wasn't raised that way," he said. "I guess I was having some problems and I got mixed up with a group."

The group was the Klan, which regularly held meetings in Spires' neighborhood. Authorities found a letter indicating England had been in the Klan for two years.

England said he was

"I wasn't raised that way, I guess I was having some problems and I got mixed up with a group."

— Joshua England

"pumped and pumped and pumped" full of hatred for blacks, and the anger boiled over the night of the assault.

The judge said England probably will be sentenced to about 25 1/2 years in prison. As part of the agreement, England also will plead guilty in state court to three counts of

assault and battery with intent to kill.

Spires has been indicted on

the same state charges. Both men remain jailed on \$250,000 bond. One of the injured teenagers, Dale Jones, said she was glad England admitted he did it. She said her brother, Gary Jones, who was the most seriously injured of the three, is doing better but still walks with a limp.

Horace King, grand dragon of the South Carolina Christian Knights of the KKK, said England and Spires have lost their memberships.

"I never taught no one to go out and act violently. I don't believe in it," King said. "He can't blame no one. What he did was wrong."

Brawley

(Continued from Page 1)

charges of racism, shouting matches broke out in the courtroom, and the judge once walked off the bench in disgust. The case lasted far longer than anyone expected.

The racially inflammatory Brawley case began in 1987 when Brawley, then 15, was found in a garbage bag with dog feces smeared on her body and racial epithets scrawled on her. She claimed a gang of white law enforcement officers had abducted and raped her. When asked what happened, she wrote "white cop" on a sheet of paper.

During the furor, Brawley's advisers leveled repeated, unsubstantiated charges that Pagones was among those who attacked her. Most of the allegations were made on radio and TV talk shows in 1988.

That year, a grand jury found substantial evidence that her story was a hoax and suggested that Miss Brawley concocted the tale to avoid punishment for staying out late. The grand jury specifically exonerated Pagones.

Pagones sued the three advisers and Brawley, too. But her refusal to answer repeated subpoenas led to a 1991 default judgment against her in Pagones' favor. Damages have not yet been determined.

The statements found defamatory included an allegation from Maddox that Pagones was "involved in the abuse" of Brawley and another from Mason telling "everyone within the sound of my voice" that Pagones, among others, "raped, kidnapped and sodomized Tawana

Brawley."

Sharpton, in one of the statements, said, "I am again repeating Steven Pagones was involved ... and if I'm lying, sue us."

After the verdict was read, Pagones leaned over to kiss his wife, Niki, as tears welled in his eyes. He called it a bittersweet victory.

He said the three Brawley advisers had "hurt a lot of people."

"I'm hoping the jury comes back tomorrow and helps me gain some accountability from them," said Pagones, on leave from his job as an assistant state attorney general.

His wife said: "To tell you the truth it's all been horrible. At least now they have to pay for it to a certain extent. It was a matter of principle, not a matter of money. Do I think we'll ever collect any money from them? I don't know, but we will pursue that."

Sharpton attended the trial only rarely. On the stand, he repeatedly compared himself to Martin Luther King Jr. and said he made his accusations on the best information he had available at the time.

The civil rights activist, who ran for mayor of New York City last year and ran for the Senate before that, differed in defense strategy from Mason and Maddox, who continued to link Pagones to the attack on Brawley.

The defendants did not call Brawley to the stand. One of the six jurors refused to sign the verdict, which required agreement from five jurors. The jury was made up of one black woman, one black man, one white woman and three white men.

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