

Voting

(Continued from Page 1)
 Avenue, what is past is prologue.

"Remember, friends, that where we are today is not complete," Johnnie Rebecca Carr, the 95-year-old best friend and former classmate of the late Rosa Parks, told the gathering. "The thing that we have just gone through today — the signing — that's not the end. That's just a part of it," explained Carr, president of the Montgomery Improvement Association that sponsored the Montgomery Bus Boycott, for the past 39 years.

She concluded, "So we're going to continue to struggle. We still have work to do. Because we want to see our community and our world [become] America, the real America that we get up and sing about. We want it to be the America that it should be."

America should have a Voting Rights Act that is not only signed, but enforced, says civil rights leaders, who parted, but vowed to hold Bush to the promise that he made in his signing speech:

"Today, we renew a bill that helped to bring a community on the margins into the life of American democracy. My administration will vigorously enforce the provisions of this law, and we will defend it in court," the president said to loud applause.

People For The American Way President Ralph Neas has his doubts. In a statement released only minutes after the White House signing cer-

emony on the South Lawn, Neas said: "He [Bush] owes it to all Americans to ensure that the Voting Rights Act is enforced. Unfortunately, that is not the record of this administration — by a long shot."

In a recent report, the PFAW noted that the Bush Justice Department entered the Ohio presidential voting controversy in 2004 on the wrong side; it backed a Texas redistricting plan that reduced the political power of people of color, and it approved a voter identification law in Georgia that a federal court has now ruled unconstitutional.

Such perceived lack of commitment has led to a "mass exodus of experienced career attorneys" from the Civil Rights Division, the report states.

"In the Voting Section alone, more than 20 attorneys, representing about two-thirds of the lawyers in the section, have left the section in the last few years — over a dozen in the last 15 months alone. Included in this talent drain were the chief of the section, three deputy chiefs, and many experienced trial lawyers, representing almost 150 years of cumulative Justice Department civil rights enforcement experience. In the place of these experienced litigators and investigators, this administration has all too often hired inexperienced ideologues, virtually none of which have any civil rights or voting rights experience," the report ob-

served.

It continued, "His administration's well-documented and unprecedented politicization of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division has dramatically undermined voting rights enforcement. The administration has turned a blind eye to voter suppression tactics moving in states across the country — photo identification provisions, citizenship requirements, and provisional ballots. Voter suppression and intimidation continue to be a problem and continue to disenfranchise voters. But the Bush administration still pretends that discrimination is not a major issue for millions of Americans," Neas stated after the signing.

"You have to notice that there's been a slight change in their attitude," says NAACP Chairman Julian Bond, who has been among the sharpest critics of Bush's record. "The president came

to the NAACP convention. He, early on, loudly endorsed the renewal of the Voting Rights Act. He gave a speech at the signing ceremony where he promised to enforce it, which is a matter of real concern to the civil rights community. If they're not enforcing the existing law, why should we think they will enforce the renewal of the law? I think we're getting some mixed signals, but if indeed there's a change, however slight, we need to take advantage of it."

Others say leaders must do much more than hope.

"One thing we're trying to do is make the Senate have an oversight hearing so we can blow it out of the water to really find out why the Justice Department has not been enforcing the Voting Rights Act. We think that is absolutely critical," says Barbara Arnwine, executive director of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law.

Dorothy Height, president emerita of the Council of Negro Women, said, "The president has said that he will enforce it. So we'll have to hold him to that."

In fact, many say the civil rights community believes that's their next challenge.

"It's significant that the president said they would defend it in court because it's going to be challenged, I'm afraid," said Rev. Joseph Lowery, former president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. "But enforcement, that's our next plateau."

Hilary Shelton, the NAACP Washington bureau chief, says the enforcement problem has already been documented.

"We have created a record that very clearly shows that enforcement falls well short of where it needs to be," Shelton says. "Of course, now we need to see that all that information is introduced into the record for the

House and Senate, making sure that the oversight goes on with the Judiciary Committees and, indeed, pressure is put on the Justice Department to fully enforce the law for all American people."

Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Mel Watt (D-S.C.), worries that Black people might have been exploited as a backdrop to a well-orchestrated photo opportunity. "I think we're dealing with the same George Bush [who has] been in the White House throughout the time he's been president," Watt said shortly after the signing ceremony. "On some issues, we work together. But on most issues we're not able to work together because of philosophical differences. Our challenge is to not let those things that we differ with the president on impede our ability to work with the things that we do agree with him on, and hope that the president feels the same way."

Your Horoscope Says... Aug. 3-Aug. 9

ARIES

This is a good week for exercising that clever mind of yours. Luck will be with you in all endeavors you start. Luck is with you always because positive outlook attracts positive vibrations. Keep smiling and watch the good fortune roll in.

Soul Affirmation: I appear to others what I know myself to be.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 8, 10

TAURUS

Exercise will work off some of your excess energy this week. Take a walk and remember that your world is made up of many beautiful parts. The part you are focusing on so intently this week is not your entire world. Proceed accordingly!

Soul Affirmation: All things work together for good.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 16, 30

GEMINI

Wear your smile like it was your favorite fashion accessory this week. You're sure to feel better when you see how many times your smile is returned to you this week. Do what makes you happy this week.

Soul Affirmation: The slowness of my week gives me time to refresh my energy.

Lucky Numbers: 20, 40, 55

CANCER

Everything seems to be moving along in a very pleasant way this week. Friends are helpful, family is supportive, even the sun seems to be shining just for you. Enjoy this harmony and count your blessings. Finish a task at work.

Soul Affirmation: I let go and let the spirit take control.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 17, 32

LEO

You have very creative mental energy this week. You'll probably want to talk or write or read about health or career matters. Your ability to absorb information is remarkable. Remember that exercise is a wonderful tension-reliever if things get too intense this week.

Soul Affirmation: I give my mind a big rest again this week.

Lucky Numbers: 26, 32, 36

VIRGO

If you want to call you should. You can be the one to get things started. Hanging back and being cool does not work well for you this week. Be charmingly aggressive and make sure that your desires are clear to everyone concerned.

Soul Affirmation: The essence of life is in each grain of sand.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 22, 41

LIBRA

Take a week off from sparkling at work and spend some time thinking about what is most important to you. The solution comes while you are thinking about love. Healthy habits are easy to keep when the love vibe is strong.

Soul Affirmation: I can see clearly now the rain is gone. There are no obstacles in my way.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 16, 25

SCORPIO

If you want to keep your positive outlook intact, avoid gossip and those who might want to just cry the blues for no good reason. You'll be happiest this week if you keep busy and keep your opinions to yourself. However, good advice is available from an older female relative.

Soul Affirmation: I turn all of my emotions toward the home front.

Lucky Numbers: 15, 24, 47

SAGITTARIUS

You may feel restless this week because you have an excess of mental energy. You can channel that into productivity by applying your fine mind to tasks that you have been putting off for a while. You'll feel great at the end of the week.

Soul Affirmation: I let myself adapt to the flow of life around me.

Lucky Numbers: 16, 29, 33

CAPRICORN

You wake up feeling as good as you want to feel. Affirm your right to a healthy, happy, joy-filled life and that's what you'll find that you have this week. Lucky! Treat yourself to a lottery ticket.

Soul Affirmation: I master life by mastering myself.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 6, 11

AQUARIUS

Watch for petty arguments at your workplace this week. Sail past any grumbling coworkers with a smile and think about how your soul vibration radiates your happiness. You'll look and feel very attractive to positive vibrations.

Soul Affirmation: I send words like music to the ears of those around me.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 10, 13

PISCES

You know how to feel what others feel. A compromise may be in order; luckily, it's easy for you to be flexible. That special other person will be very appreciative of your ability to go with the flow when necessary. You are truly one-of-a-kind.

Soul Affirmation: I will actually write a love letter to the universe this week.

Lucky Numbers: 10, 20, 48



"The message of SCLC is to teach and apply Martin Luther King Jr.'s principles of non-violence and conflict resolution."

— Charles Steele
 SCLC President

SCLC

(Continued from Page 2)
 flict resolution.

"Given the international conflict and the lack of cultural understanding we have about people in general — not only in the country but worldwide — it is important to have people trained who can relate to each other and hopefully allow us to deal with those conflicts that keep us apart and to deal with other human beings," University president Lester C. Newman said in a statement.

When Steele took over, the organization was so deeply in debt that it couldn't pay its utility bills. Steele, who prides himself as a fundraiser, reversed that and has announced that in August, SCLC will break grounds on a new national headquarters building in Atlanta.

Looking at the progress SCLC has made under his leadership, Steele said the organization is on the rebound. He said, "We were on life support, but we didn't die."