

SCLC chief: MLK left us a winning business plan

By George E Curry
Special to Sentinel-Voice
NEW ORLEANS — Charles Steele Jr., president of Dr. Martin Luther King's old organization, said the slain civil rights leader left behind a "business plan" for Black economic success.

Opening the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) 50th convention here, Steele said: "If you listen closely to his last speech at Mason Temple [in Memphis], Dr. King was giving us a business plan. Dr. King was taking care of business. If you have taken the most elementary business course — and even if you haven't — you know that the first thing you need when you go into business is a business plan."

The SCLC president mentioned the early struggles of the founder of Radio One and TV One media companies.

"Cathy Hughes talks about starting out in business and being asked, 'What is your business plan?' Her reply: 'I plan to stay in business.' SCLC plans to stay in business.

"Our business plan is straight out of Dr. King's 'I Have a Dream' speech. No, it's not about a dream, it's about economics. The part of the speech that you don't



"By 2011, annual Black spending power will reach \$1.1 trillion, representing almost nine cents of every dollar spent in the United States."

— Charles Steele Jr.

hear repeated every year around his birthday is the section related to economics. He declared, 'America has given the Negro people a bad check; a check which has come back marked 'insufficient funds.'"

Steele said, "We're back here, where SCLC was founded, to say that we came back to get the check. Dr. King said 45 years ago, that America did not have enough funds in its bank account. They gave us a bad check. And today, we're back for a good one. If you can't give us a check, we'll take cash. But with your record, we need cash — and two forms of ID. We probably should ask for a DNA test as well."

Speaking at the Pilgrim Baptist Church in suburban Kenner, La., Steele said: "Nearly five years after announcing we got stuck with

a bad check, Dr. King went to Memphis to outline a business plan, not just a plan to stay in business.

"Dr. King explained: 'We don't have to argue with anybody. We don't have to curse and go around acting bad with our words. We don't need any bricks and bottles, we don't need any Molotov cocktails. We just need to go around to these stores, and to these massive industries in our country, and say, 'God sent us by here, to say to you that you're not treating his children right. And we've come by here to ask you to make the first item on your agenda — fair treatment, where God's children are concerned. Now, if you are not prepared to do that, we do have an agenda that we must follow. And our agenda calls for withdrawing economic support from the federal government.'"

(See SCLC, Page 10)

S.C. judge banished from for snide racial comment

COLUMBIA, S.C. — A South Carolina judge who admitted calling crack cocaine addiction "Black man's disease" has been banned from the bench, the state's Supreme Court said in an order Monday.

Former Beaufort County Magistrate George Peter Lamb, who is White, agreed to the punishment and resigned before the order was issued. The court's order included no other details about the comment.

The justices' ruling outlined problems with Lamb that included behavior toward female employees that the high court said could have been considered inappropriate and the judge incorrectly telling a defendant at a bond hearing the penalty he could face if convicted.

Slavery

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would prompt a greater call for reparations for slavery.

In recent years, Black activists seeking reparations for slavery have gotten private companies, such as banks, insurers and railroads, to apologize for playing a role in bankrolling, insuring, capturing and transporting slaves.

In 2005, Wachovia Corp. revealed that one bank it acquired had put thousands of slaves to work on a railroad. That same year,

victed.

Lamb's lawyer referred questions to the former judge, who did not immediately respond to telephone messages left on his cell phone and at his home. Lamb is a lawyer who served on Beaufort County Council until 2006, when Republican Gov. Mark Sanford appointed him a part-time magistrate.

Lamb was publicly reprimanded by the state Supreme Court, which said it was the harshest punishment it could issue since he had resigned as judge. Lamb agreed to not seek any judicial position in the state without first getting written permission from the state's high court, effectively banning him from the bench.

JPMorgan Chase apologized for the role that a subsidiary had played in using 10,000 slaves as collateral and accepting more than 1,000 slaves as payments when owners defaulted on loans.

Several states, including Virginia, North Carolina, Florida and Alabama, have issued apologies for slavery.

"They had a greater moral authority on this issue than the United States Congress," Cohen said. "I'm proud we did this as a part of this Congress."

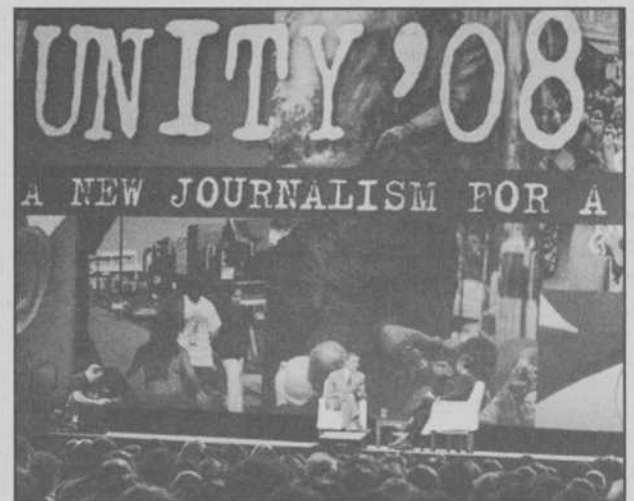
Obama offers test for journalist objectivity

CHICAGO (AP) — When Barack Obama ascended the stage Sunday at the Unity journalism convention, fresh from an exhaustively chronicled overseas tour, he faced a surprisingly divided audience.

Not on the subject of whether Obama should be president — members of the four minority organizations that comprise Unity are largely Democratic. But many at the quadrennial gathering differ on whether the underlying current of enthusiasm for Obama's historic candidacy should be constrained or allowed to spill forth on live television.

In addition to race, the issue boils down to questions of human emotion, empathy versus ethics, and whether a group that has experienced its own share of prejudice can resist responding to Obama's powerful oratory and potent symbolism.

"This is not a pep rally,"



Democratic nominee Barack Obama speaks at the Unity Convention for minority journalists Sunday in Chicago.

said Tonju Francois, a producer for CNN en Espanol and board member of the National Association of Black Journalists. "I don't want to say it's offensive, but the idea that just because he's a Black candidate, somehow our journalistic ethics would go out the window ...I think we need to behave."

So does Unity. In an e-mail sent to the 6,800 conference attendees, the organization advised that "every ef-

fort should be made to maintain professional decorum during the event, especially since it will be broadcast to millions of people."

Yet the same diversity embodied by Unity itself can blur the definition of decorum.

"People don't view (attending Obama's speech) as work," said Connie Llanos, a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*. (See *Journalists*, Page 4)

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