

# King remembered

## Black leadership reunites

Robb Baker

"I am," Rev. Jesse Jackson shouted, "Somebody!" the crowd roared back — and the walls of Holman Methodist Church shook repeatedly as Jackson's simple declaration of human worth found eagerly receptive hearts in the April 4 memorial, "Martin Luther King: Forget Not the Dream."

Rev. Jackson, the "country preacher" from Chicago who shaped a splinter group of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) into the successful People United to Save Humanity (PUSH), made one of his first public appearances in Los Angeles at the rally, which overfilled Holman Church with more than 800 people, most black.

Sponsored by Concerned Clergy, a resurgent black clerics group, plus Coalition for Economic

After years of rivalry between PUSH and SCLC (plus its non-member sympathizers) — rivalry which led to a certain amount of washing dirty laundry in public at a time when the Nixon administration was seriously threatening many important civil rights gains of the 1960's — the two groups settled down to different action programs.

With catch-phrases like "We've won our civil rights, now we need our silver rights," Jesse Jackson

government came to see him (as an enemy) in military terms... his ability to mobilize the masses of people against war was seen as a direct threat to the military-industrial complex."

Recalling King's conviction that SCLC was on the brink of intense working class organizing nationally, Jackson charged the FBI, the CIA and high government officials with plotting Dr. King's murder.

Perhaps it was rethinking King's left-leaning political views late in his career that made Rev. Jackson alter PUSH's approach to solving black problems. Or perhaps it was African politics, as seen through the eyes of Bishop H. H. Brookins, the powerful African Methodist Episcopal cleric from Los Angeles who now presides over both the boards of PUSH and SCLC.

The result is that both groups now have action programs that are probably complimentary since PUSH has launched successful campaigns to help youths in Chicago and Washington, D.C., afflicted with dope and gang problems. Jackson's aim is to keep these youths in school, where they may develop skills necessary to further the task of "self-government" which Jackson sees as the historical stage blacks have reached after the civil rights movement.

Although Jackson now talks about the need for "full employment economy" where black and white workers are allies, not race enemies, he still lacks much of an analysis of the problems that capitalism holds, especially for minority and poor people, according to many black liberation movement activists.

But his youth program is probably very complimentary to the drive Concerned Clergy has launched locally for quality integrated schools. That battle is being fought out in the guise of the busing issue before the Los Angeles Unified School District Board today.

Concerned Clergy — which is much broader than SCLC-West but contains strong SCLC supporters — has actively pursued economic fightback goals with the Coalition for Economic Survival, is preparing a report on the city's housing crisis, especially where it affects non-white senior citizens, and has active committees on transport problems and politics.

Originally formed six years ago, Concerned Clergy was rejuvenated in Tom Bradley's successful second campaign to unseat Mayor Sam Yorty, and in the last two years the group has made increased efforts to provide some measure of leadership to the city's black community of nearly 550,000.

In any case, the April 4 rally marks an important turning point for local politics. The possibility of a large black community united behind dynamic leaders in reaching a variety of progressive economic and political goals is of vast importance, particularly in an election year.

And since that development in Los Angeles would likely include a healing over of a serious division in black leadership for just about the first time since 1968, it's a sure bet the eyes across the nation will be trained on Los Angeles.

Robb Baker is a Los Angeles journalist who specializes in labor news.



MARTIN LUTHER KING, slain human rights leader. Memorial rites held on eighth year of his assassination Saturday in Los Angeles.

Survival, NAACP, Urban League and others, the rally was the best-attended local memorial to date for Dr. King, slain in Memphis in 1968 while leading a garbage workers organizing drive.

Of special significance was the fact that groups building the rally — especially the black clergy — put real emphasis on pragmatic parts of Dr. King's "dream": full employment; peace and an end to racism; quality, integrated education; making the politicians produce, and church-community involvement.

But since the rally also anticipated this week's opening of a West Coast headquarters in Los Angeles for PUSH, the key story behind the April 4 rally was the appearance of Rev. Jackson on the same stage with many of Dr. King's closest former staff members — staunch SCLC supporters who opposed Jackson's formation of a splinter group after King's murder.

became a leading proponent of black capitalism. SCLC, under Dr. Ralph Abernathy's leadership, turned the other way, organizing working people across the country around chiefly economic issues. He allowed himself to be interpreted as an anti-capitalist.

While PUSH met with a certain success in Chicago, and SCLC languished due to a lack of financial support, in many major cities — including Los Angeles — a vacuum appeared in black and other poor communities, an absence of leadership that Dr. King's live presence could have filled. But James Earl Ray — and his co-conspirators? — murdered King at the height of his career.

Indeed, the topic of King's murder is still a hot one, especially since a grass-roots movement is building in Washington, DC to reopen the investigation. "Because of the power Dr. King amassed among the masses," Jackson told the April 4 crowd, "I believe this

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# unta has LA impact

Ridenour

ord, Kissinger, What Do You Say  
w Many Argentinians Have You Killed Today?"

gentinians supported by other  
as and Anglos chanted this  
nt question as they picketed  
Argentine government-owned  
airlines Argentine airlines  
e in downtown Los Angeles  
Saturday with colorful banners  
flags, one week after a  
tary junta overthrew the  
stitutionally elected Isabel  
n regime.

arly 100 demonstrators were  
ght together by the newly  
ed Solidarity Committee with  
Argentine People (SCAP), the  
Committee for Justice to  
n American Political  
oners (USLA), and the Los  
eles Group for Latin American  
arity (LAGLAS).

ne coalition effort marked the  
nning of what promises to be a  
campaign pressuring the  
ed States to end its economic  
political aid to the new  
essive military regime. In its  
two days of rule, this junta  
risoned 2000 persons — mostly  
kers and students — and killed  
es of resisters.

ne protesters are working to  
k the regime's avowed intent  
eliminating" all democratic  
revolutionary opposition. They  
t a restoration of civil liberties  
media are now controlled by  
military and the unions have  
a stripped of power as martial  
is operative), and immediate  
elections.

ne coalition also picketed the  
Angeles Times which, ac-  
cording to co-coordinator David  
nes, "Distorts the news in  
entina by downplaying, and  
n ignoring, the regime's  
ressive bloodshed. The Times  
ns to be in agreement with the  
tical line that the military  
atorship is better than  
ocracy because it is supposed  
ring stability."

Times headline March 25, for  
mple, stated, "Military junta  
ts gargantuan job of imposing  
r in chaotic Argentina."  
hus, if the "gargantuan job"  
iously necessary, cannot be  
omplished, don't blame the  
riotic junta.

conomic stability is the major  
e in Argentina for most  
kers who face a current 700%  
ation, the world's highest, and  
ected to rise to 800% by the end  
he year at the current rate.

artin Guerro, a national  
anizer of the American-  
gentine organization MASA  
ovimiento Anti-Imperialista  
Socialismo en Argentina),  
ently in Los Angeles, main-  
ained that inflation is largely  
sed by multi-national corporate  
trol of his country's economy.  
We are forced to build more  
s than we can use, for instance,  
en people should be put to work  
lding useful products such as  
uses. But workers can be had  
sly there, so corporations  
e us produce what they want to  
d, not what we need," Guerro  
d.

MASA and SCAP have organized  
s year to bring their country's  
ues to North Americans, but  
e to the large Argentine  
pulation in Los Angeles (70,000),

and New York (70,000), and the San  
Francisco Bay Area. (There are  
25,000,000 people in Argentina.  
They rank in the top dozen nations  
in literacy, medical services,  
dietary standards, and they have a  
strong industrial workers  
movement.)

The groups put out a monthly  
newspaper, *Denuncia*, organize  
pickets and rallies, and encourage  
people to write letters and  
telegrams. They are democratic  
organizations — MASA supports  
both the militant workers rank and  
file movement and the popular left  
groups.

Between the Montoneros (a left  
Peronist group which evolved from  
a right-wing group to a basically  
socialist mass movement) and the  
Revolutionary Workers Party  
(PRT), which works in factories  
and fields, and which has an armed  
wing known as the ERP, there are  
some 20,000 activists, according to  
Argentine government sources.  
The government army numbers  
200,000.

Neither the liberal nor socialist  
forces believe a people's revolution  
is imminent. They are building a  
popular movement to force  
democratic developments, while  
some leftists prepare for what they  
believe to be an eventual armed  
struggle for workers power, i.e.,  
socialism.

While the vast majority of the  
nation wants a restoration of  
democracy, there are no  
indications that many Argenti-  
nians, either here or abroad,  
want the Peron family returned to  
power. The Peronist regime was  
unable to stop inflationary prices,  
support workers demands, or  
stabilize the rule of the industrial-  
oligarchy. In fact, the corruption  
and thievery of tax moneys may  
have defused mass resistance to  
the junta as of now.

Although the right wing is solidly  
in control of the country once again  
(six military regimes have come  
to power in the last 20 years), left  
sources are not pessimistic about  
the potential of a growing  
revolutionary working class. One  
thing is certain — Los Angeles will  
see more motion by activist  
Argentinians working in concert  
with other Latins and Anglos.



(Photo by MARK JONES)

ARGENTINIANS DEMONSTRATE with supporters against military coup in Argentina recently.

## LA Latins keep struggling

Ron Ridenour

Two million people of Los Angeles County's seven  
million are of Latin-American descent. Although  
most are Chicanos, or immigrants from Mexico,  
more Latins are streaming into the area seeking  
work or fleeing the military dictatorships which  
increasingly control Latin America.

Some of the exiles have founded  
or joined local groups concerned  
with Latin American struggles.

LAGLAS (Los Angeles Group for  
Latin-American Solidarity) is one  
of the oldest groups in the city.  
Founded in 1969, it is a democratic,  
anti-imperialist academic and  
community-oriented coalition of  
individuals and groups organized  
against repression in the  
Americas.

Tim Harding, 41, a professor of  
Latin-American history at  
California State University at Los  
Angeles, and a founding member  
of LAGLAS, said that some anti-  
war activists were concerned in  
the 1960s that once the war was  
over, people would forget that the  
"same economic-political inter-  
ests which brought us the  
Vietnam war, are at work in Latin-  
America, as well as other parts of  
the world."

LAGLAS has sponsored many  
protests against totalitarianism  
and US aid to repressive regimes.  
It organizes concerts, most  
recently by Inti-Illimani and Las  
Parra from Chile, and Roy Brown  
from Puerto Rico. It has also  
started a film group called  
LUCHA. "Chile with Poems and  
Guns," a documentary on US in-  
volvement in the overthrow of the

Allende government, is its first  
film. Three others about Argenti-  
na, Peru, and the relationship  
between events in Latin America  
and US workers are in the making.

LAGLAS is one of the many  
sponsors of a conference on Latin  
American women, set for April 21-  
23, at California State University at  
Fullerton and in the nearby  
community.

On May 22, LAGLAS is bringing  
Spanish exile singer-poet Juan  
Manuel Serrat to Los Angeles at  
the Wilshire-Ebell Auditorium.

Of the many countries  
represented in LAGLAS, four have  
active committees working for  
democracy in their countries.  
Besides Argentina (see story on  
this page), they are from Chile,  
Nicaragua, and Puerto Rico.  
People from Guatemala and Brazil  
are in the process of forming  
organizations. CASA and La Raza  
Unita Party work with LAGLAS  
and represent both Chicanos and  
Mexicans here. (LAGLAS can be  
reached at: 2208 Tuller Road, Los  
Angeles 90032).

\*\*\*CHILE DEMOCRACIA. "The  
United States has given \$2 billion to  
the fascist military regime in Chile  
since it helped overthrow the  
constitutionally elected  
democratic government of  
Salvador Allende," one of the  
organizers of this group said.

There are no profit controls in  
Chile now, in contrast to 1973, but  
there are absolute wage controls.  
No unions or political parties are  
allowed. The press is totally  
government controlled. Many  
thousands of Chileans have been  
imprisoned, tortured, and killed.  
The population overwhelmingly  
opposes the government and an  
underground movement grows. No  
resistance is legal.

There are only 12,000 Chileans in  
the United States — 1,500 are in  
L.A. but there are Chile  
Democracia groups in a score of  
cities, including Los Angeles. A  
recent rally of 2500 at the Con-  
vention Center protested the  
Chilean regime and pressed for US  
non-intervention. Since then films,  
leaflets, petitions, letters and other  
methods have been used to show  
people what is happening and to  
press for democracy.

Interested persons may contact  
Chile Democracia at 715 S. Park  
View Ave., Los Angeles, 90057.

\*\*\*LACC (El Comité Civico  
Latino Americano Pro Liberacion  
de Nicaragua) is an active group of  
Nicaraguans who work in Los  
Angeles, and other US cities, to  
inform people about the U.S.-  
backed 40-year-old Somoza  
dictatorship and to pressure the US  
for non-intervention. LACC also  
supports the only mass movement  
in Nicaragua, the Frente San-  
dinista de Liberacion Nacional  
(FSLN) which is composed of  
workers, peasants, and the  
educated. The Frente, or Front,  
seeks to overthrow the oligarchy  
which has kept 70% of the 2.2  
million people illiterate and one-  
third of the workers unemployed.  
The country had a median income  
of \$90 per year and an infant death  
rate of 50% before five years of  
age.

(Twenty thousand of 120,000  
Nicaraguans living in the United  
States reside in Los Angeles).

LACC, along with its non-  
Nicaraguan supporters in "Non-  
Intervention in Nicaragua,"  
organized three years ago to aid  
the victims of Managua's  
disastrous earthquake, which  
claimed at least 10,000 lives in and  
around the capitol. LACC sent 420  
tons of food, medicine, and clothes,  
and \$50,000 which went to build two  
hospitals and purchase four fire  
trucks.

Since then, LACC has been  
lobbying Congress to stop all  
economic and military aid to  
Nicaragua. There are 450 US Army  
Rangers there and more are  
coming as both governments  
expect the FSLN to seize large  
portions of the countryside soon.  
An insurrection is reportedly  
impending.

\*\*\*PUERTO RICAN SOCIALIST  
PARTY (PSP) was formed in 1959  
on Marxist-Leninist principles to  
establish an independent Puerto  
Rico run as a democratic socialist  
republic by the workers, according  
to Zollo Torres, 22, secretary of  
information for the PSP in Los  
Angeles.

"Puerto Rico is really a colony  
where the capitalist world  
economic crisis is exacerbated  
because multi-national  
corporations run rampant. Cor-  
porations don't have to pay any  
taxes for 17 years, yet one-fourth  
of the workers live on \$500 a year in  
an economy where prices are  
higher than here," he said.

Continued on page 8

*The little  
Spaghetti  
Factory*

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