

Editorial

New national holiday victory against racism

It took some time, but it finally happened. Despite the last-minute efforts of North Carolina Sen. Jesse Helms, the U.S. Senate has finally agreed to acknowledge the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. with a national holiday. In doing so, the Senate has shown Americans of all races that it is willing to recognize great achievements by men of all races. The decision is a victory against racism in itself.

Helms' attempt to delay a vote on the measure, and then to open sealed FBI files on King, only makes the Senate's vote a sweeter victory for those across the nation who have been working toward establishment of the King holiday.

From the beginning, there seemed to be little reason not to honor King in some way. What could possibly be so wrong with giving a nation the chance to reflect on this man's achievements in the same way it reverses George Washington or Abraham Lincoln?

The reason approval of the King holiday took this long can be traced to actions of men like Helms. King's birthday symbolizes much to black people. Not only does the day recognize a fallen leader of our race, it also recognizes what he stood for — non-violence, self-pride, peace and love.

It is understandable why a national holiday honoring King would mean nothing to Helms, who of course wasn't among those King spent his life sacrificing and fighting for. But why is it necessary to take a stand against what King stood for?

It would be unfortunate if the FBI tapes Helms wanted opened so badly did show King had received aid from the American Communist Party. But wouldn't it be difficult to believe an early 1960s' FBI report on a minority leader? It is no secret that J. Edgar Hoover and even Robert Kennedy sought to stop the civil rights movement King played such an important role in. How difficult would it be to connect him to any party or movement to help attack King's image?

It's the same type of mentality that Helms displayed this week. One that would rather tear down a man than give him credit for what he symbolizes to those of his own race and what he stands for.

The only legitimate complaint about the King holiday I've heard came, oddly enough, from a black man. The editor of a conservative news magazine in Washington. He wrote that King may not be the leader blacks want to commemorate with a national holiday, because he entered in the middle of an already growing movement. The editor added, where do you stop? In other words, if blacks are allowed to let "their" man have a holiday, what's to stop women, homosexuals, Mexican-Americans and others from expecting the government to give their heroes similar recognition?

I and many others believe that Martin Luther King stood for something more than just his race.

—Ward W. Triplett III



Ugly words reveal ugly sentiments

A friend and I met a man at Bill's Saloon last week. We talked for awhile. He told us about his 24 years in the Air Force, how his wife's death after 22 years of marriage affected him, his athletic prowess in high school.

Christopher Burbach

We told him of our feelings about the Air Force and armed forces in general and about our lives as college students.

I thought we were on common ground as fellow humans, in spite of our differences in age, background and opinions. I thought our equality extended beyond our giddiness from overindulging in Bill's cold brew.

We stayed at the bar until the clock forced our departure, then he asked us for a ride. We talked more as we walked to my car, sharing beer-inspired guffaws and trading advice.

The air of camaraderie amidst us was snapped,

however, by the outcome of this conversation. The man asked me what nationality I was.

"German, Swiss, Irish and I don't know what else," I replied.

"Oh, well, I'm a half breed."

"Yeah?"

"Yup, I'm half Negro and half nigger."

I laughed, but didn't mean it.

It became important for the first time that evening that his skin was black and mine was white. The word "nigger" reconstructed walls of prejudice and misunderstanding which we had, or so I thought, destroyed.

I began to wonder if he thought of me as "whitey" or if I thought of him as "darke."

We didn't discuss such matters, though; I didn't ask why he used the word nigger or what he meant by it, I just emitted a nervous titter and we talked about something else. That was a mistake.

Nigger, kike, chink, spic, wetback, honky and even frat rat are ugly words which reveal ugly sentiments. Such slurs demean those who use them and patch walls which reason should have laid to ruin long ago. Yet ignoring them will not cause their disappearance; we must face them.

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Campus Quotes

Who do you think will be the next president of the United States?



Curt White
sophomore
business

"As far as I'm concerned, Ronald Reagan is probably the best choice for the job. I can't think of anyone else who can do as good a job as he can."



Boy Lindfield
sophomore
business

"I really think Ronald Reagan will be. He's put a lot of policies in effect that affect different groups, like cutting student group loans or cutting unemployment benefits. It's making a few groups angry, but helping others as a whole. He's doing the best of the



Jeff Selby
senior
finance

"I think Reagan will do it. All the economic indexes are coming around, plus he's been there for four years. I don't think Mondale can do as well as he (Reagan) did. Glenn is liable to use the old astronaut ploy."



Kelly Schoepf
junior
fashion merchandising

"Who's running? Reagan won't be it, for sure. He's made too many mistakes already. I've never voted yet and I'm not going to this time, but I'd say probably Mondale."



Annette Sabowaty
freshman
architecture

"I really don't know. Anwar Khandani is a pretty good one."

Staff photos by Joel Sartore