## DAWN TALKS WITH:

## Mrs. Coretta Scott King

- \* She discusses the role and mission of the Center.
- \* Non-violence and its implementation is explained.
- \* She shares a bit of her personal life with Martin.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. center grew out of the movement tradition in terms of the way it operates or its style of operation. The center was founded to basically develop a site and a program around the ideals that Martin embraced, specifically the issues that he identified as being the three evils in our society.

We knew that these evils were universal and they were interrelated and they were forms of violence that had to be looked at in terms of trying to find a solution as they had to be looked at together.

Those issues were poverty, racism and war.

Martin had evolved a method of struggle,
namely, the non-violent philosophy and nonviolent strategy to bring about social change.

That method, he had basically derived, first from his beliefs as a Christian who said he got his motivation and inspiration from Jesus, and techniques he got from Gandhi.

Gandhi evolved a way in which masses of people could be programmed and organized in a non violent campaign that would help to change the conditions of injustice in a society.

And Martin said that he had almost despaired of the Christian ethic being a force for social transformation until he came across Gandhi and saw how he had applied the same method in India to bring about the independence for the Indian people from the British rule of colonialism.

He said, "I saw how the Christian love, unconditional love - how that could transform individuals and make them better people, but that was difficult to take a whole group of people and deal with it that way.

After having discovered this when Montgomery started, he went back and started reading Gandhi again.

We started in 1968 with documenting the history. Papers were collected the first two years. We did lot of oral history - just talking to people because black people are oral people, they didn't write things down.

We knew that one day there would be a scholarly look at Martin's papers. It's happening right now.

There will be collected works of Martin published in about 10 to 12 years, the first volume should come out soon. There should be about 12 volumes and that can be shared with libraries, etc.

That is the kind of research piece that we started out with, but we want to go beyond that research to deal with black perspective.

How do you create programs to bring about change, into creating justice and peace in our society by using the non violent approach --in dealing with all the combination of problems that blacks and poor people face, in America, around the world.

We developed a proposal that we talked about - a research analysis and dissemination component. We developed a proposal and we submitted it to funding source like the Rockefeller Foundation. They like it.

In 1977 they were going to fund it, but they wanted us to get other funding sources or aid to share it. They did not feel they should be asked to do it all because they gave us the planning grant.

They were getting ready to have the on-site visit. We needed to identify someone to come on board to move the project. The person who was our director at that time was on loan from Michigan State and he left in 1977 and then it was back with me again trying to deal with all of this. And we never did move that.

But what we did was to move toward set-

The Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial sits in a reflecting pool at the Martin

Luther King Center for Non-Violent Social Change in Atlanta, Ga. It is includ-

ed in the state National Historic Site designations.

ting up the next campaign to finish off the building complex. We had built a community sub complex, the birth home in 75 and 76. In 77, the permanent tomb - and so this piece had to be done.

We started working and continued to develop various kinds of programs over the years and other programs as well. We started workshops ----it's in its 11th year.

We have a scholars internship program for college graduates and students training them in various practice of non violence. They come here for a semester or a quarter.

We have students coming from colleges and universities across the country - maybe 8 to 10 at a time. They are white, black and all colors and all racial groups.

And they come here and many of them have an interest that they don't understand, such as the background of the movement. They don't understand Martin Luther King's non-violence and we teach them --we take them the first two week through an orientation the readings, the films with the documentary "Montgomery to Memphis."

Then they have weekly seminars with the director then are placed in programs in the summer. There was a time when we didn't have enough programs to place all of them.

The first student that came in 1974, we placed her down at City in urban planning I guess. She was from Simmons College, so she worked at the Mayor's office.

Now we place all of our students in the King Center. They see the process of change. How it takes place in reality and we try to provide them with as many experiences as possible in terms of action.

We teach them that action is not always demonstration. You can march on ballot boxes. You get people registered to vote, but there's a way to organize in a community and this process of non violence can be applied to any facet of human endeavor.

And most of all if you study non violence and become a King disciple, then you embrace it as a way of life.

Martin said that it most not only be used as a tactic or strategy, it must be used as a way of life.

Everything you do is looked at, related to on the basis of that philosophy, non-violence which is the way Ghandi and the way Martin lived out their lives.

They demonstrated what they taught in their own lives. They tried to be as moral as they possibly could be. Both of them in their private lives -- they loved unconditionally.

It means loving everyone, even your enemies. And it doesn't mean necessarily liking them, because Martin used to say love is greater than like.

But unconditional love is the love of God operating in the hearts of people. So its kind of like God's love-- somehow humans experience that.

There's a discipline that has to be followed in all of this. It just can't happen. The people most effective are highly disciplined in terms of the way in which they do this.

It is an everyday thing and you don't solve it once and for all -- it's a lifetime struggle. The pursuit of truth is a never ending one because you find basic truth, but there's a truth about every situation.

Do your research and find what is the truth of the situation. Once you find that truth then you begin to bring those voices together. You

Following his history-making speech before the National Press Club in D.C., Dr. King speaks with Dr. James Nabrit, president of Howard Univ. Dr. King was the first black to address the press club.

have to learn how to relate properly to other people in terms of human need in order to fully develop and grow. The need to reach out to others, be unselfish, to be loving with others, that's the other development. To be giving, sharing and the 3rd one is proper relationship with God.

Love is the unifying force. All the great religions ar founded on love. Any religion that is not, is a sect, so we have a lot of cults.

Christianty is a holistic philosophy Christ talked about the physical and the spiritual. He dealt with the whole man. What we are try-

(Continued on page 14)



17 mg. "tar", 1.3 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Cigarette Smoke Contains Carbon Monoxide.