

# MLK papers case goes to jury



BOSTON (AP) — A lawyer for Boston University didn't accuse the widow of Martin Luther King Jr. of lying but disputed her claim that her husband wanted back 83,000 documents that he had deposited at the school.

Lawyers for both sides delivered closing arguments Wednesday in Coretta Scott King's lawsuit against the university, and jurors deliberated briefly before recessing for the day. No verdict was reached.

"This case is not about anybody lying. This case is about something both beautiful and preserving the human condition," Earle Cooley, a university trustee and its lead attorney, had told the jurors.

"How easy it is to believe with your heart and soul that something is the truth because it is your desire," Cooley said, noting that Mrs. King was remembering events that took place nearly 30 years ago.

King signed a July 16, 1964, letter saying the papers would become BU's "absolute property" upon his death, and Cooley said that was a legally binding contract.

But Rudolph Pierce, representing Mrs. King, said the letter was simply a declaration of King's intentions, not a contract. He asked the jury to conclude that the civil rights leader had changed his mind before his April 4, 1968, assassination and wanted the papers returned to the South as soon as a suitable home for them was found.

Pierce also argued that King had to give the papers to BU while he was alive or will them to the university.

King died without a will and there was no evidence that he turned over ownership of the papers to the university during his lifetime, Pierce said. His 1964 letter made clear that he retained ownership of them.

Mrs. King sued the university in Suffolk Superior Court seeking the return of about 83,000 documents King deposited at BU in 1964 and 1965.

Mrs. King testified during the trial, which began April 21, that her husband had changed his mind before his death. But Boston University President John Silber testified King never told BU that.

Mrs. King's testimony was supported by a sworn written statement by Harry Wachtel, who represented the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the 1960s. Wachtel, a New York attorney, said he asked King in 1967 if the civil rights leader had changed his mind, and King told him he had.

Pierce said it also was virtually impossible that the Southern Christian Leadership Conference would have set up a committee in 1966 to deal with the issue of King's papers without King knowing about it and approving it.

Cooley also argued that Mrs. King waited too long — until 1987 — to file the lawsuit. But Pierce said Mrs. King didn't know for sure until a December 1985 meeting with Silber that Boston University wouldn't return the papers.

Mrs. King wants to unite all of her late husband's papers at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center For Non-Violent Social Change in Atlanta. The center now has most of the King papers from 1961 on.

# School edits gorilla sex from textbook

ERIE, Pa. (AP) — Passages about the mating habits of apes were deleted by teachers from the book "Gorillas in the Mist," the mother of a ninth-grader said.

Signe Prior said she was appalled that teachers were using felt-tip pens to black out passages from the book by naturalist Dian Fossey. The book was assigned to her 15-year-old son's honors class last year.

"I thought, 'What country do we live in?'" she said.

The book has been used at Westlake Middle School since 1988. As many as 60 honors stu-

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— Joseph Cuzzola, principal, Westlake School

dents in English classes read the book each year.

Millcreek School District officials this week refused Prior's second request to stop deleting the sections. She began protest-

ing last year.

Westlake Principal Joseph Cuzzola said he permitted teachers to black out the passages after considering the potential concerns of parents.

"You're always walking a tightrope," Cuzzola said. "We came down on the better side of caution."

No other parents have complained, he said.

The book is based on Fossey's years of observations of gorillas in Rwanda, East Africa. The passages in question are largely clinical.

# House OKs revised voter registration bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House on Wednesday approved a scaled-back "motor voter" registration bill that Democratic supporters said would "give a political voice to millions of Americans."

The vote was 259-164. Republicans fought the measure, saying it would give orders to the states on how to register voters without providing the money needed to pay for the changes.

But Democrats suggested the GOP simply didn't want more people to register.

The Senate is expected to approve the compromise reached by House-Senate negotiators and send the bill to the White House later in the week for President Clinton's signature.

"Here's another example of President Clinton moving on a campaign commitment and delivering," said Rep. Bill Richardson, D-N.M. "It will give a political voice to millions of Americans."

"It will widen the circle of democracy even more," said House Majority Leader Richard A. Gephardt, D-Mo. "It makes the voter registration process user friendly."

The measure permits voter registration by mail or at motor vehicle offices and a wide range of other agencies, including public assistance and disability offices.

Under the compromise insisted on by Senate Republicans, states are required to offer voter registration at welfare offices under a set of rules designed to prevent coercion by officials favoring one party over another.

States would be permitted, but not required to allow people to register to vote at unemployment offices.

And voter registration also would be offered to people seeking to enlist in the armed forces.

Many Republicans insisted the bill still was seriously flawed.

"It mandates pushing new costs on the states," said Rep. Porter Goss, R-Fla. "It takes away the right of local voting officials to fully purge the voting rolls, opening the doors to fraud."

"It should be called the auto-fraudo bill," said Rep. Bob Livingston, R-La.

But Democratic Rep. Al Swift said, "What we're seeing today is people shopping for an argument that is as respectable as they can possibly find for not registering more people to vote."

"There are colleagues in the institution whom I must compliment for their great ability to carry obfuscation to a very high art," said Swift, of Washington.

Before moving to final passage, the House defeated, 252-170, a GOP motion to return the bill to conference with instructions to change it so states could ask for evidence of citizenship when people register to vote.

Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Calif., said that without the provision the bill should be named "the illegal alien registration act."

But Democrats said the bill provides criminal penalties for those who register fraudulently.

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Applications are now available at the Emerald, Suite 300 EMU, for the following staff positions for the 1993-94 school year:

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• Sports Editor, Reporter	• Higher Education Editor, Reporter
• Police Reporter	• Photographer
• Graphic Artist	• Copy Editor
• Photo Tech	• Staff Columnist

Applications must be turned in by Wednesday, May 12, 1993. For more information, call Jake at 346-5511.

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