

King's children
to visit Portland
Page 13



Special Issue
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Local King
Day Events
Page 12



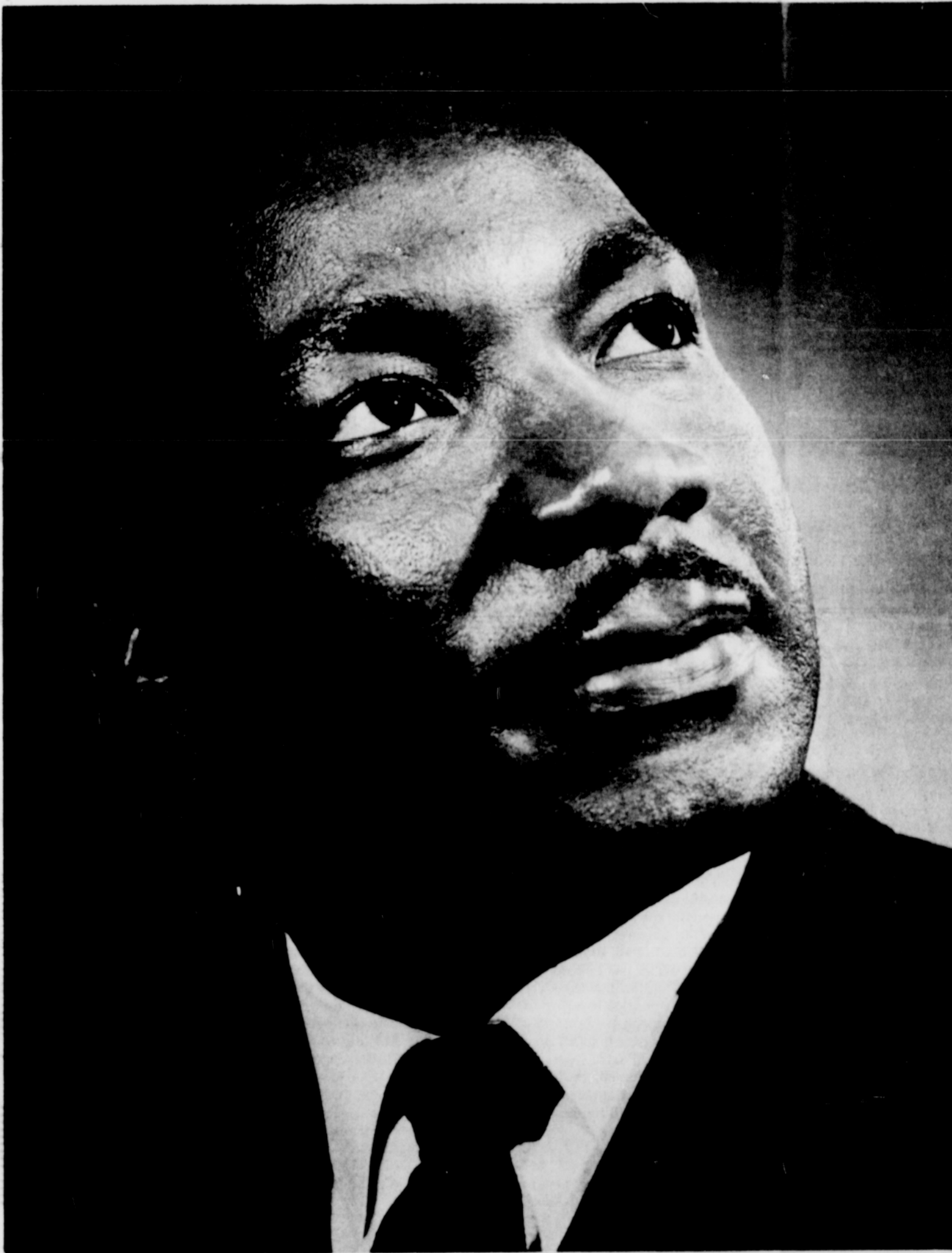
PORTLAND OBSERVER

Volume XVI, Number 11
January 15, 1986

\$1.00

Two Sections

USPS 800-800-800
Cox Publishing Co., Inc. 1984



The Portland Observer is proud to present our fifth annual special issue on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

A man of peace and a disciple of Gandhi, King sought to eradicate problems that remain today—problems of poverty, racism, injustice. He attempted to bring to his non-violent movement a global perspective—attacking the problems of war and oppression.

He captured the heart and soul of the world as no other because he felt the pain and suffering of humanity.

We still need peace, love and humility in the world. Let us look to Dr. King for inspiration and attempt to make his dream a reality.

January 20, 1986 will mark the first observance of the Federal legal holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. The Act creating the holiday was passed after more than 16 years of effort by the King family, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc., and the countless friends and supporters of Martin Luther King, Jr. Support for the legislation came from all walks of life—from select members of Congress, the White House, business and labor, from civil rights and religious groups—and, most important, from those individuals who have worked continuously to make his dream a reality.

The Act sets aside the third Monday of January as the official Federal holiday. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s actual birthday is Jan. 15. According to the Act, "the holiday should serve as a time for Americans to reflect on the principles of racial equality and nonviolent social change espoused by Martin Luther King, Jr."

Once the Federal legal holiday was enacted, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, President of the King Center, asked Congress to establish a Federal commission to assist in the first observance of the holiday. Congresswoman Katie Hall of Indiana was asked to introduce the legislation and the bi-partisan leadership of the Congress honored Mrs. King's request by expediting passage of the Act creating the Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission. President Ronald Reagan signed the legislation on Aug. 27, 1984.

The Act calls for "the Federal Government to coordinate efforts with

Americans of diverse backgrounds and with private organizations in the first observance of the Federal legal holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr." The Commission's purpose is to encourage appropriate ceremonies and activities throughout the U.S. and provide advice and assistance to Federal, State and local governments and to private organizations in planning and conducting their activities.

Mrs. King has asked that Dr. King's birthday celebration focus on encouraging improved race relations as a means of unifying America in the spirit of Dr. King's dream. The holiday must be a time to remind America and the world of those ideas for which Dr. King marched, preached, and finally died. It is a time for the nation to renew its commitment to achieve positive social change through the use of nonviolent means. It must be an opportunity to address Dr. King's unfinished agenda—a time for serious study and reflection on his life and work. It must be a day of national unity—a day in which Americans of every race, religion, class and political persuasion are involved in the celebration of Dr. King's legacy, life and dream. Americans are encouraged to fly the Nation's flag on Monday, Jan. 20, to honor the memory of Dr. King, truly an American hero and patriot. The holiday should be a day for coming together, sharing and caring for one another in the tradition of Martin Luther King, Jr. This holiday will ignite a spirit that will continue for years to come.

The Commission is asking for the cooperation of governors, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories and U.S. military installations overseas in estab-

lishing Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commissions, modeled after the Federal Commission. State commissions will be urged to involve the public in planning appropriate events honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. and in promoting widespread public participation in the activities and ceremonies of the holiday.

The Commission, with 31 members, reflects the broad range of support and respect of all segments of our society for Dr. King's inspiration and accomplishments. Mrs. Coretta Scott King serves as the Chairperson of the Commission and Governor James R. Thompson of Illinois is the Vice Chairperson.

Recognizing that the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center is the official memorial established to continue Dr. King's legacy and work, Congress mandated that the Commission include, in addition to Mrs. King, two members of the King family and two representatives from the King Center. The Act requires that the Commission be equally represented by Democrats and Republicans, composed of: four officers of the executive branch, appointed by the President; eight members of Congress, four each from the House and Senate selected by the leadership of Congress; and 14 commissioners representing such diverse groups as organized labor, business, civil rights, education, religious groups, youth organizations, sports, and the entertainment world, to be selected by the original 17 appointees.