

Martin Luther King, NATIONWIDE

continued ▲ from MLK Front

"For many whites, a street sign that says Martin Luther King tells them they are lost," Tilove writes. "For many blacks, a street sign that says Martin Luther King tells them they are found." Tilove notes that, unlike the Martin Luther King Day holiday, the street names are the result of spontaneous, local grass roots efforts.

"They honor Martin Luther King in precisely the way the national holiday cannot, by provoking passions and controversy and conflict, by stirring fervent debate about the meaning of his life and what kind of street would do him credit," the author writes.

There was often heated controversy about the renaming of the streets, especially if it involved territory outside the black community. In 1986, both San Diego and Harrisburg, Penn. changed their Market Streets to Martin Luther King Boulevards, only to have the change reversed by initiative, and smaller streets named MLK in their stead.

Minnesota, the last state to have an MLK street, adopted three in 2002; on one of them, in the town of Mankato, a white motorist deliberately knocked down two of the street signs while shouting racial epithets at children.

In Portland the opposition included business owners who objected to having to order new stationery (and perhaps had other unstated motives), conservatives such as Walter Huss who didn't want Dr. King to be honored, and people like

the late Steve Rogers.

An inner northeast community activist, Rogers argued that to rename Northeast Union Avenue, in the condition it was then in, would be an insult to King.

Tilove notes that Rogers' view is shared by some African Americans. He quotes Angela Williams of Belle Glade, "The worst street in the city is named after Martin Luther King. Give a black man a black street in a black neighborhood? The purpose is to honor him. They should name Main

For many whites, a street sign that says Martin Luther King tells them they are lost. For many blacks, a street sign that says Martin Luther King tells them they are found.

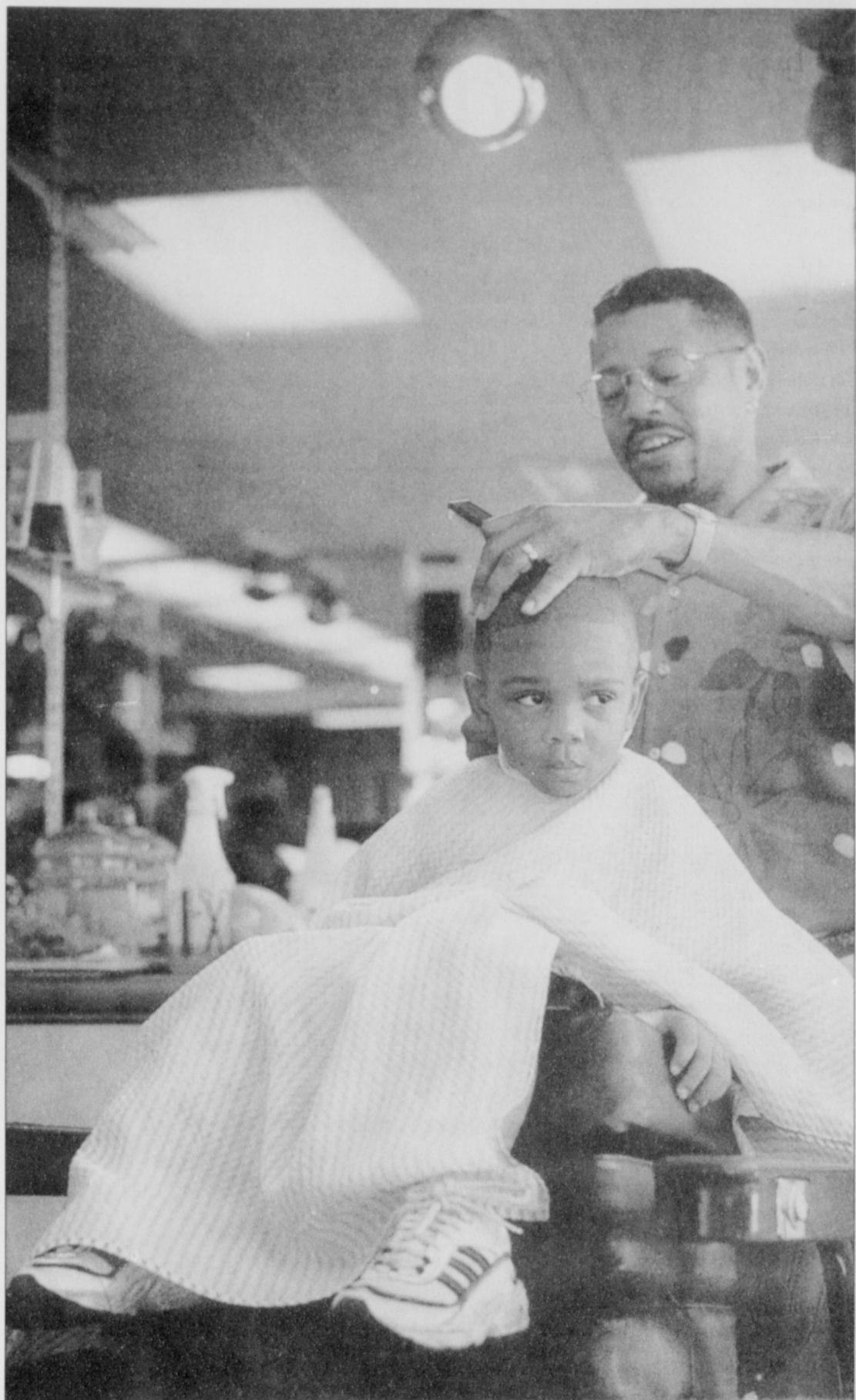
— Jonathan Tilove, author of "Along Martin Luther King, Travels on Black America's Main Street."

Street Martin Luther King Boulevard."

In contrast Annie Williams (same town, no relation), said, "Got to keep it black, got to keep it black, Martin Luther King got to be black."

Nationwide, the streets so often encompass landmark events in King's life that, Tilove says, "At times the journey along King is like a pilgrimage along the stations of the cross for the martyred hero."

continued ▼ on page B4



Paul Knauls Jr. gives Carter Vann a haircut at Geneva's Shear Perfection on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The photograph was included in a book devoted to MLK streets across the nation.

DIVERSITY
OF PEOPLE,
THEIR IDEAS
AND EXPERIENCES,
ARE THE RICHES
OF A COMMUNITY.

The Port of Portland
celebrates diversity of all people and
recognizes Dr. Martin Luther King's
impassioned drive for civil rights.

PORT OF PORTLAND

The Port is an equal opportunity employer, committed to affirmative action. Please call the 24-hour Job Hotline at 503.944.7480 or visit www.portofportland.com.

**PEOPLE, BUSINESSES,
AGENCIES AND
ORGANIZATIONS
WHO BELIEVE
THAT BLACK PEOPLE
CAN DO MORE THAN
SING, DANCE AND
SCORE POINTS.**

AACC African-American
Chamber of Commerce
www.blackchamber.info
(503) 796-0777