

Black family crisis economic — Mrs. King

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Conservative male economists are to blame for the "crisis" in the black family, Coretta Scott King told an Oakland University audience Tuesday.

"Some 55 percent of all black babies are born to unmarried mothers," the widow of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. told several hundred students in the Oakland Center.

"The No. 1 priority is political empowerment," she said, calling for federal policies to provide more jobs and services to single-parent families.

KING SPOKE as a visiting scholar under a 1986 state-funded program named for her husband, agriculture unionist Caesar Chavez and civil rights activist Rosa Parks.

The program's sponsor, state Rep. Morris Hood, D-Detroit, referred to her as "the first lady of the civil rights movement" and "the widow of the dreamer."

Students, mostly black, were

bussed in from Pontiac and Detroit to hear her hourlong lecture and ask questions. They gave her standing ovations.

Under the King-Chavez-Parks program, OU in one year has brought more than 4,200 prep students to the campus for visits, brought 60 Detroit and Pontiac students to a summer residential program in the humanities, brought 18 minority scholars to campus to teach and conduct seminars, and appointed a full-time visiting scholar in the music department.

CORETTA SCOTT KING today is president of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change in Atlanta, where workshops for the non-violent attainment of human rights are offered and "think-tank" work done. Dr. King, a Baptist minister and civil rights leader, was assassinated in 1968.

With a federal grant, she said the King Center conducts programs to teach single-parent families self-sufficiency. "There's also a network so they share problems and gain sup-



'Poverty is the primary cause of the disintegration of families in the black community... No reform will heal America as much as a full-employment economy.'

— Coretta Scott King
"first lady of civil rights"

port from each other," she said.

"Poverty is the primary cause of the disintegration of families in the black community," she said, launching into the focal point of her lecture. She quoted her husband's speech that unemployment is "cul-

turally and socially induced."

She blistered "underemployment," too — the lack of decent jobs at good wages compared to minimum wages. "Let them (politicians) try raising a family on a minimum wage income."

"NO REFORM will heal America as much as a full-employment economy," King said, charging that the conservative, male-dominated Reagan Administration economists are wrong in supposing private enterprise alone can provide full employment.

Women — particularly black women — are underrepresented in Congress, she said, encouraging the students to become politically active. For their proportion of the population, black women should have 40

seats in Congress instead of only one.

She advocated such federal programs as increasing the minimum wage, expanded public service employment, housing, child care, combating infant mortality and transportation.

"The purchasing power of black Americans alone is greater than that of all but 10 nations," King said. She urged a nationwide consumer program to "support those who support us."

Jobless rates drop in 6 areas

Unemployment rates in six of the state's major labor market areas dropped in August because of seasonal job gains, the Michigan Employment Security Commission reported today.

Richard Simmons Jr., director, said the jobless rates in five of the state's largest labor markets rose in August and remained unchanged in one.

Areas reporting declines in their jobless rates in August were Benton Harbor, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Lansing-East Lansing and Saginaw.

The Upper Peninsula remained unchanged at 8.3 percent from July to August.

MICHIGAN'S seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate, which MESC reported in early September, fell by half a percentage point to 8.3 per-

cent from 8.8 percent in July. The number of jobless workers dropped by 18,000 to 389,000 during August.

Simmons stated that all 12 areas reported labor force growth in August, along with seasonal job growth in retail trade, construction and other service-producing industries.

In addition, employment rose in some areas as automotive facilities recalled workers from temporary model changeover and production adjustment layoffs.

THE DETROIT area had the largest drop — a full percentage point from 9.5 to 8.5 percent in August. Automotive recalls and growth in the service sector accounted for the large decline, Simmons said.

The Flint and Battle Creek areas had the largest increases. Their unemployment rates areas rose by 0.5 percent.

High-tax schools penalized—MEA

Declaring "Too many schools would be losers," Michigan Education Association President Larry Chunovich said the statewide teachers union would oppose recommendations in the report of the Michigan Commission on School Finance.

An MEA representative was one of the "no" votes last week when the commission adopted, 32-3, the report

of the so-called Harden Commission. "Our objection came when they refused to guarantee new funding for the quality issues and when, because of this, it became apparent that large numbers of high tax effort school districts would be severely penalized," said Chunovich, a former Southfield math teacher.

"We cannot support the commis-

sion's report when it blatantly disregards how school districts across the state will be impacted. The plan is deceptive. Some districts will benefit, but many more will lose funding and be forced to immediately vote additional new (property tax) mills just to maintain the program they currently have."

"The only guarantees in the pro-

posal are to big business. How schools and citizens will fare is far from guaranteed. There are too many questions left unanswered."

"We think it's obvious that the commission's real goal was to lower industrial property taxes and the impact on schools was much further down on the list of priorities," Chunovich said.

Harden report: Schools of choice, state standards

Here are excerpts from the so-called "Harden Commission" report on state educational standards. The 43-member Michigan School Finance Commission on Sept. 22 completed its report to the State Board of Education entitled "Educational Quality in the 21st Century."

Choice and competition

"... Parents and student should have the opportunity to select a school that they believe will best serve their needs."

"Adopting a 'schools of choice' approach to school assignment would necessitate individual school units developing and conducting programs that were distinctive enough in nature to draw students for enrollment. (It) would create competition between schools."

"Wherever feasible, school districts should be encouraged to permit parents to choose a public school within the district, at the appropriate grade level, to which they will send their children."

"WITH SOME exceptions, Michigan school districts generally require children to attend a particular neighborhood school... By giving parents the right of choice, there is potential for unleashing much of the creative potential of our schools."

"First, schools can specialize to meet the special interests and needs of particular groups of pupils. "Second, pupils and parents can exercise an effective tool to improve the administration of a school — the threat to take their business elsewhere. This forces each school to compete effectively in order to survive and flourish."

"MORE THAN a decade ago, the East Harlem Community School District No. 4 of New York began experimenting with choice among its schools, which have gradually become more specialized both in educational philosophy and in content."

"Pupil interest and pupil performance — once at dismal levels — have both dramatically improved as the system has developed."

"The establishment of statewide standards will prevent schools from competing for pupils by offering low educational programming. Further checks are needed to prevent schools of choice from being vehicles for additional segregation along economic or social lines."

"THE STATE should offer incentives for implementing standards and 'schools of choice' programs."

"Dollars follow pupils... A school in which enrollments are growing must be given the resources to continue to do the job. A school with declining enrollments must not be allowed to maintain its share of a district's budget."

State standards

"Historically each school district

has had little accountability for its curriculum or educational results."

"The commission recommends that the Legislature and the State Board of Education:

- "Define a 'core curriculum' for the K-12 system. (It) would indicate what courses must be required of every pupil and what additional elective courses must be available to every pupil.

- "Establish performance standards for the schools. (These would include) the level of learning accomplishment at several key grade levels (as measured by test scores) and the level of retention of pupils in the system."

- "Have ultimate power to declare educational bankruptcy in a district that persistently fails to meet standards, creating a receivership for either the district or for particular schools or programs within it."

"The proper role of the state will be to set parameters inside which experimentation can take place. The state should not dictate rigid standards."

Revenue for education

"The commission recommends that the Legislature enact an 'Educational Trust Fund' (of) approximately \$200 million (to) improve the quality of K-12 education."

"The commission was emphatic that new dollars be spent on specific programs and not be put into a general formula increase."

Local district responsibilities

"1. (I)mplement the state core requirements. Achieve acceptable educational results in the following areas and provide evidence of implementation in kindergarten through 12th grade."

(Commission footnote: The Department of Education believes that more than 50 percent of all school districts do not meet the standards of quality needed in course content, student achievement and/or instruction.)

The commission listed these "core" areas:
Communication skills
Mathematics
Science
Social studies
Health, physical education
Career, vocational
Arts, humanities

"2. (E)valuate the district instructional program as defined by the core requirements. This evaluation must include:

- Test scores
- Employability measures
- Attendance, graduation rates
- Graduation follow-up
- Instructional implementation

Editor's note: The Harden Commission's recommendations on property tax reductions and a sales tax increase were published Sept. 24 on page 5A.

POISON FOR THE BODY

The mystery continues.

Introducing Poison Body and Body Essentials from Christian Dior. A new line created in the mystery of the original creation.

Body Poisons: 150 Perfumed Body Lotion, 140 Perfumed Soap in Liquid Dish, 120 Perfumed Body Cream, 145 Perfumed Body & Shower Gel, 135 Creams, Handmade.

Body Essentials: 140 Perfumed Lotion, 140 Perfumed Cream, 140 Perfumed Soap in Liquid Dish, 120 Perfumed Body Cream, 145 Perfumed Body & Shower Gel, 135 Creams, Handmade.

ORDER BY PHONE: toll-free 1 800 233-2000. USE YOUR HUDSON'S SHOPPING CARD: VISA, MasterCard, The American Express Card or Discover Card.