

MLK's Niece Thanks Trump for Honoring Slain Civil Rights Leader

President Donald Trump signed a bill this week to upgrade the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthplace into a national historical park, much to the delight of King's niece, who issued a statement to CBN News.

"I was there on Air Force One, and I was there when the president signed the bill in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., my uncle, making that historic site here in Atlanta, Georgia, where I live, a national park," Evangelist Dr. Alveda King told CBN News.

It's the first national historical park in Georgia.

The president signed the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act of 2017 on board Air Force One in Marietta, Georgia, prior to attending the college football national championship game Monday.

Alveda King told CBN News that the president's signing of the bill refutes the narrative that Trump is a racist—a narrative that circulated after Trump's response to the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia. Many felt the president did not denounce racism and bigotry forcefully enough.

"And so that (the signing of the bill) was not a racist act, and somebody says, 'Well, he had to sign it.' Well, he didn't," Alveda King said. "Presidents veto bills all the time. President Trump was happy to sign that bill."

"And so many times, President Donald John Trump has expressed admiration for Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.," she added.

The country honors King this Monday with a federal holiday.

The president tweeted Tuesday afternoon, "It was my great honor to sign H.R. 267, the 'Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park Act,'..."

"I believe that President Donald John Trump is working very hard to make America great again," the niece of the slain civil rights leader said. "And he continues to demonstrate that he wants to do that for all Americans, so the question of racism just doesn't fit that profile to me."

Alveda King also said Trump is working for every American, no matter their "skin color and socioeconomic conditions."

"So do I believe that President Donald John Trump is a racist? No, I do not," she emphasized. "And I celebrate 2018 and believing that Americans will come together and lead the world as an example as one nation under God."

Rep. John Lewis, D-Georgia, sponsored the bill. He said the upgrade and expansion would dramatically boost how the National Park Service maintains and shares the legacy of King to the public.

In addition to signing H.R. 267, the president signed a related bill, the African American Civil Rights Network Act of 2017. It calls for the National Park Service to connect different historical sites involving the civil rights movement.

Trump also signed into law the 400 Years of African-American History Commission Act. It marks when the first Africans arrived in the English colonies in 1619 in Virginia. {eo}

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