

NOTHING FUN ABOUT 'KILLER' VIDEO GAMES

NEW YORK—On Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, which is traditionally the largest shopping day of the year, a Nov. 25 protest of "killer" video games was held in front of a video game store on 125th Street in Harlem's shopping district.

Protesters—which included concerned parents, members of independent schools, parenting organizations, members of the Hood Research of Detroit, MI, and local organizations such as the National Association of Social Workers—charged that such games promote messages that romanticize murder and mayhem to children.

"These games promote murder, drug use, violence, blood and gore. These are games that you have to kill people in order to move to another level in the game," stressed Bob Law, chairperson of the New York State Local Organizing Committee of the Millions More Movement. "Our challenge as a community and parents is to help our youth vision a new reality and not simply embrace the unreality the video games are promoting as normal."

The protesters aimed to convince shoppers not to purchase such video games.

"Prisons are being filled with our youth who are being influenced by these games," asserted Nathaniel Muhammad of the Learning Tree School of Queens. "As an educator, I believe we have to start at an early age putting positive ideas and thoughts in their young minds."

Writer and performance artist Camille Yarborough spoke on how killer video games give youth a false sense of reality as they search for power due to the lack of family togetherness.

"It is time for the Black family to stand up between these killer games and our children and say 'no more,'" implored Ms. Yarborough, who went so far as to urge parents to return the killer video games their children already own. "We must become more actively involved with this pernicious evil that is being perpetrated on our young people," insisted Cliff Fraser, chairman of the Bronx Local Organizing Committee. "We must not be quiet and indifferent and allow this to happen, for these are our children and they are our future," he added. "We must reach out to our young people."

On Nov. 28, in a C-Span interview, Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) announced that he and Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) are proposing a bill before the Senate that will address concerns that these violent games are affecting the moral fiber of America.

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SIBLINGS FIGHT SALE OF KING CENTER

DISPUTE MAY CLOUD PARK SERVICE DEAL

By ERNIE SUGGS

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

On the steps of the famed civil rights institution their mother founded, Martin Luther King III and his sister, Bernice King, said they opposed selling the Martin Luther King Jr. Center to the federal government.

At a news conference Friday, the siblings also criticized their brother, Dexter Scott King, for beginning sales talks with the government after what Martin King called an illegal takeover of the center's board this year.

"Bernice and I stand to differ with those who would sell our father's legacy and barter our mother's vision, whether it is for 30 pieces of silver or \$30 million," he said. "To many, this issue may seem a mere squabble among siblings. Instead, we are facing a monumental moral and historical decision regarding Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King and what their legacy means to this city, this nation and the world."

Bernice King said the siblings had been unable to reach agreement. "There have been conversations with Dexter. We've had a lot of meetings. But it is difficult to work when one party ceases to listen and keeps going with his plans."

Last week Isaac Farris, the center's new president, said the board was exploring the prospect of selling the civil rights landmark to the National Park Service, which runs the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site across the street. The sale would include several buildings at the Auburn Avenue complex and the civil rights leader's birth home. Efforts to reach Farris on Friday were unsuccessful.

The news conference marked the first public airing of the dispute over the King Center's future between Martin and Bernice King, who oppose the sale, and Dexter and another sibling, Yolanda King, who favor it. Neither could be reached for comment. Their mother, Coretta Scott King, is in Florida, recuperating from a stroke in August and unable to speak.

Bernice King said her mother realized the center might be sold eventually. "Prior to my mother's stroke, Martin and I had a conversation with her," she said. "She felt at some point, [the center] may in fact end up with the government, but she never envisioned it in her lifetime."

On Friday, standing in the shadow of the King Center beneath a banner of their parents heralding the upcoming King holiday, the two asked the government to cease negotiations until the siblings reach agreement. Neither Dexter King nor Yolanda King attended the news conference.

Bernice King said she and Martin King were willing to work with the government. "For the record, let me be clear. We are not opposed to some sort of cooperative agreement between the King Center and the federal government through the Park Service," she said. "But we are opposed to the transfer of ownership of the center to the government and/or any of its auspices."

Just months after her husband was assassinated in Memphis in 1968, Coretta Scott King established the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in her basement. By 1981 she had raised enough money to build the \$8 million Auburn Avenue facility, just steps away from King's birth home and the Ebenezer Baptist Church where he preached.

"She knocked on doors, helped raise funds and did whatever needed to be done to make sure the center was built," Bernice King said.

Coretta King chaired the center's board until she turned over the reins to Dexter King in 1994. Board membership dwindled from dozens of national and community leaders to a handful of family members. Conflicts between Dexter King and Martin King over control began in August 2004, when the nine-member board voted Martin King president and chairman. The board's "life members" were the civil rights leader's family and former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young.

Martin King said he received six votes, a majority. He continued as chairman until earlier this year when his brother took over.

"Dexter found a technicality that the majority didn't really matter," Martin King said. "He arbitrarily added eight additional members to the board. The [original] board did not participate in those selections. They were made by the chairman. That is not a democracy." The new board subsequently voted to sell the center and removed Martin King and Bernice King as its president and secretary. The two were the only board members who voted not to sell. They said they might pursue legal action to prevent the sale.

Saudia Muwakkil, a spokeswoman for the National Historic Site, said the Park Service "looks forward to learning what path the King Center intends now for its own future."

As the news conference concluded, Bernice King said the family dispute had not affected the siblings' feelings for each other. "I love my brother and sister. At the end of the day, we are family," she said. "We still love each other."

**Bernice and
Martin King
speak out
Friday against
their brother
Dexter's plan
to sell the
King Center
to the federal
government.**