

**INTERNATIONAL ATLANTA A weekly column from and about the ethnic
communities of Atlanta THE KING LEGACY Immigrants from four continents
remember Martin Luther King Jr. Pilgrimage for justice**

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Body

Every German tourist coming to Atlanta has on his or her agenda a visit to the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Non-violent Social Change. The visit almost takes on the aspects of a pilgrimage.

It's more than a tourist stop. Almost every German visiting the center is thoroughly knowledgeable about the center and what it stands for.

King's legacy has particular resonance with the people of Germany because of their past. Today's generation of Germans have learned from the mistakes of their forefathers. A message of equality for all has become part and parcel of their mindset.

Both Martin Luther King Jr. and his mission are widely supported and admired in Germany. King's message of equality and his efforts at achieving his goal through nonviolence are now very much a part of the German soul.

This may come as a surprise to those who obtain their perceptions of what is happening in Germany solely through media images, especially the much-hyped "rise of the neo-Nazis" that has become a staple of TV news.

But seldom reported are the huge, peaceful protests against this small minority of extremists whose actions against foreigners are tarnishing the image of the country. Those Germans willing to stand up for justice - and they number in the millions - demonstrate vividly that King's universal message on the rights of individuals everywhere to live free against discrimination based on the color of their skin has taken root in Germany.

My hope now is that the controversy between the King family and the Park Service can be resolved in an amicable way and will not undermine the legacy that King left us. King was a public figure who belongs to people all over the world. It is crucial that private and public interests work together to honor him in the proper manner.

It is particularly important that at this time in history - when ethnic, religious and nationalistic chauvinism is on the rise - that King's powerful message of peace and justice for all is not muted by bickering over his legacy in his own hometown.

Karin Westbrook, a native of Berlin who came to Atlanta in 1968, is a vice president at Summit National Bank.

Graphic

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LEGACY Immigrants from four continents remember Martin Luther Kin....

Photo: mug of Karin Westbrook Chart: WHAT DO YOU THINK? Do you have ideas for a possible solution to the feud between the **King** Center and the National Park Service over the funding and control of the center? We will publish excerpts from your responses Friday - the day before a scheduled meeting between the two parties. Let us know how the **King legacy** should be preserved. WRITE **King Legacy** / Viewpoints P.O. Box 4689 **Atlanta**, Ga. 30302.FAX 404-526-5611 PHONE 404-222-1928 WILSON LOWREY / Staff

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