

Confidant: King would be saddened

by UPI

STANFORD, Calif. -- The man who was Martin Luther King Jr.'s confidant and attorney says the state of race relations in the United States would sadden the civil rights icon. Clarence Jones, who smuggled King's "Letter From a Birmingham Jail," which explained why civil disobedience was necessary, wrote a book as a partial response to his anger, USA Today reported Friday. "What Would Martin Say?" was released to coincide with Friday's 40th anniversary of King's assassination in Memphis Tenn. In the book, Jones, now a scholar in residence at Stanford University's Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute, speculates what King might say about today's divisive issues. King "would be saddened and disappointed that, 40 years after his death, America still seems to be afflicted by amnesia about the 20th-century treatment of African-Americans," the pastor's attorney said. However, the Nobel laureate would have approved of Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama for his speech on race relations. "Whatever one may think about Barack Obama, (King) would applaud him for having the courage to go into the living room, the national living room of America, and to talk (about) the 800-pound gorilla of race relations sitting in there," Jones said.

Copyright © 2008, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Confidant: King would be saddened by UPI