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Commencement '85

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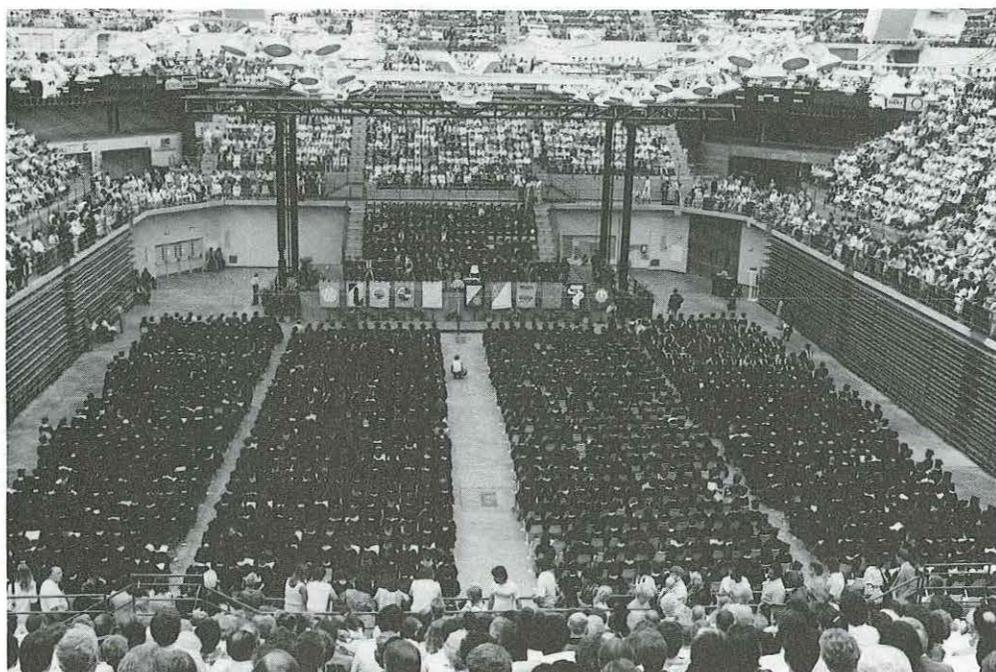
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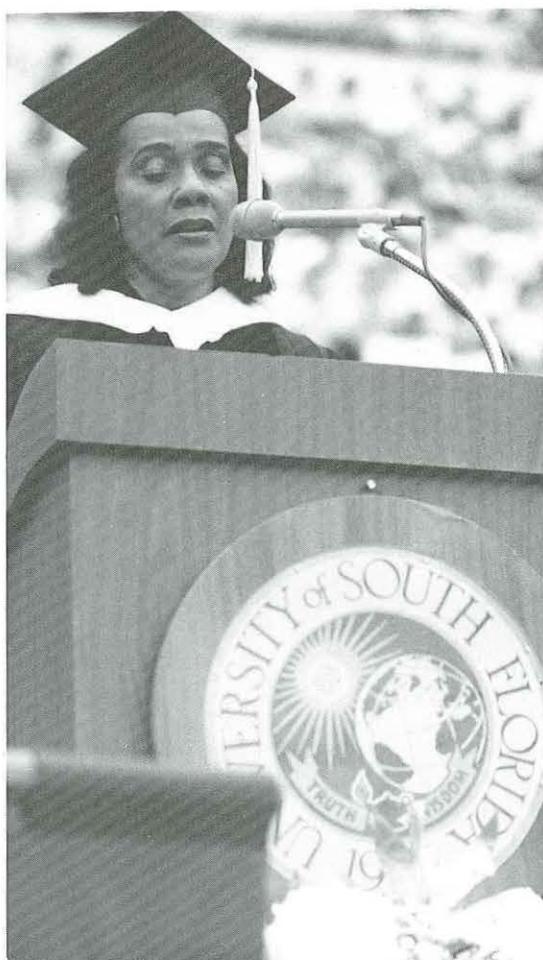
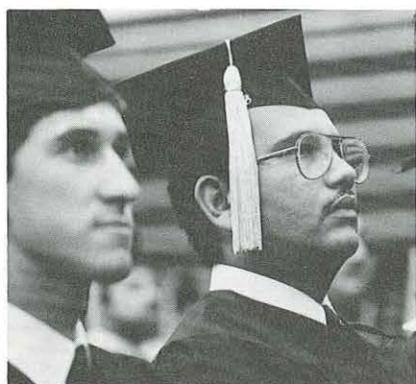
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Commencement '85

Largest, longest and best yet for
1,500 graduates and families



Coretta Scott King delivered an address which urged non-violent struggle against injustice.

Civil rights leader Coretta Scott King, speaking before 1,500 USF graduates at the spring commencement, continued her late husband's commitment to non-violent social change and urged them to join the fight against apartheid.

"Of all the great issues you will be facing in the future, I believe none are more urgent than how we can challenge the growing threat of violence in our society and our world," King said.

She has lived through World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War and the Vietnam era. She's experienced the assassination of her husband, Martin Luther King Jr. Her house has been bombed twice. Her friends have been beaten.

"And yet, I can stand before you tonight and say to you that your generation is facing an unprecedented crisis of violence," King told the students and some 10,000 family members and friends gathered in the Sun Dome. "The escalation of the arms race and the spread of global conflicts is a crisis of such fierce urgency that my experience could seem easy in comparison."

Today's violence, she said, is nowhere "more clear than in South Africa."

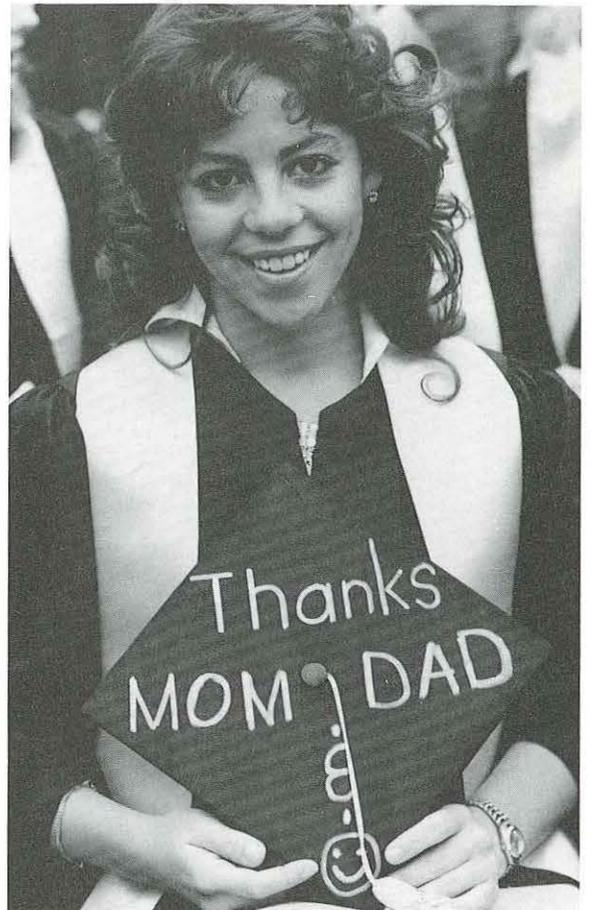
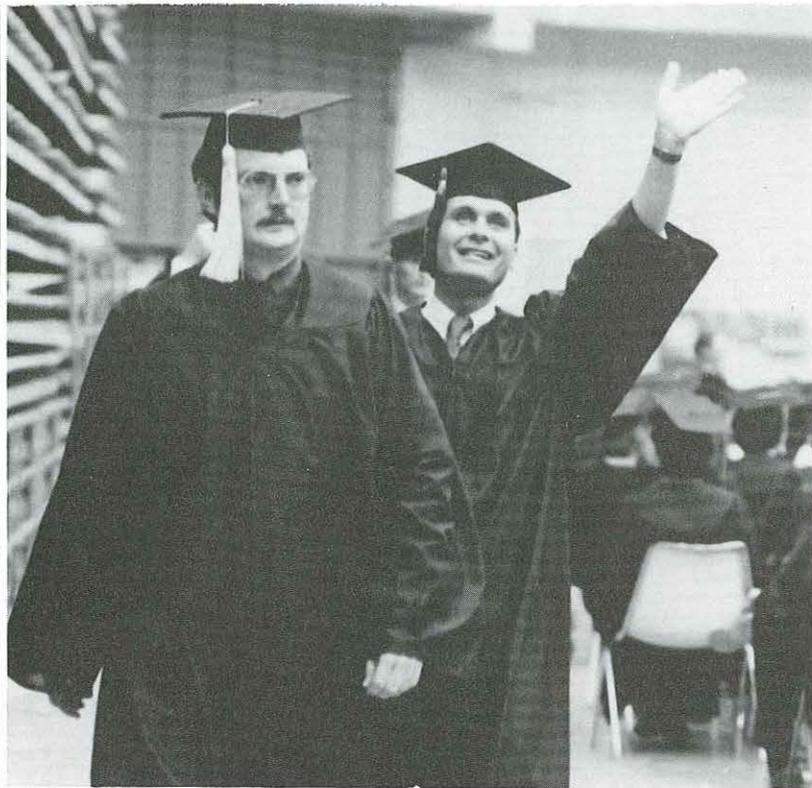
The vast majority of our brothers and sisters . . . are preparing to destroy apartheid, whatever the cost," King said. "The struggle is escalating and so is the violence. Time is running out and with it our hopes for a nonviolent solution."

King urged the graduating class, the faculty and USF administrators to "rise up in non-violent solidarity" and join the "Free South Africa Movement." She encouraged the students to stage campus demonstrations, protest companies and institutions that have investments in South Africa and support bills like the proposed Kennedy-Gray Anti-Apartheid Act of 1985 that would limit trade between the United States and South Africa.

She stressed the importance of keeping a commitment to non-violence in the struggle against poverty, racism and violence.

"Martin Luther King Jr. taught us that nonviolence means active opposition to all forms of injustice," King said. "Nonviolence assertively engages in conflict but with an uncompromising love and respect for our adversaries even while opposing their behavior."

King received standing ovations before and after her commencement speech. The ceremony, USF's 27th commencement, brought a record crowd and broke the record for being the longest. As a result of a vote taken by students earlier this spring, all graduates walked across a platform below the stage and received a handshake from USF President John Lott Brown, stretching the event to three and one-half hours.



Two outstanding graduates were saluted during the ceremony. Marie R. Tomassi, an English major at the University's St. Petersburg campus, won the King-O'Neal Award for graduating with a 4.0 average, and Nancy Newell Taylor, a part-time student and full-time university employee, was named the Alumni Association's 1985 Outstanding Senior.

Edyth Hargis, coordinator and instructor in management, was presented the Senior Class Outstanding Professor Award.



King-O'Neal winner Marie R. Tomassi, at St. Petersburg's commencement.