COPPER-COLORED CHRONICALS
MAY 2026 EDITION
"Where Our Voices Shape Our Future."

WE'RE COMING FOR OUR CHECK

Understanding What Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Meant — And Why It Still Matters in 2026

When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. declared that America had written Black people a **"bad check"**, he was not speaking in metaphor alone. He was indicting the nation for failing to honor the promises embedded in its founding documents — promises written by the Founding Fathers and guaranteed to *all* Americans.

The "check" was the **Declaration of Independence**, which guaranteed:

- life
- liberty
- the pursuit of happiness

But those rights were never delivered to Black Americans. King's message was simple:

"We are not asking for charity. We are demanding what was already promised".

SECTION I — WHAT CHECK WAS MLK TALKING ABOUT?

Dr. King's "check" referred to the **promissory note** of American democracy — the written guarantee that all men are created equal. In 1963, he said America had defaulted on that promise where Black citizens were concerned.

Who was the check written to?

All Americans. But Black Americans were the ones who were denied the ability to cash it.

Were the checks supposed to be individual? No. King was speaking about **collective rights**, not individual payouts. He was demanding the enforcement of constitutional guarantees.

Modern Translation

Black Americans were owed:

- equal protection
- equal opportunity
- equal access
- equal dignity

And the nation had failed to deliver.

SECTION II — THE TWO NATIONS OF BLACK AMERICA

Dr. King warned of a growing divide:

- one Black America rising into the middle class
- one Black America trapped in poverty, violence, and systemic neglect

This divide persists in 2026.

Henry Louis Gates Jr. described the revolutionary identity of Black America as a people aligned with "the revolution," standing firm with "the persecuted and harassed." This identity shaped the Black Panther Party and the broader struggle for liberation.

King's warning was not about division — it was about **unfinished business**.

SECTION III — THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

The Emancipation Proclamation (1863) was a wartime executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln. It declared enslaved people in Confederate states to be free.

But it had limits:

- It did **not** free slaves in border states.
- It depended on Union military victory.
- It did not end slavery nationwide — the 13th Amendment did.

Still, it transformed the Civil War into a fight for freedom and allowed nearly **200,000 Black soldiers** to join the Union Army and Navy.

The Proclamation was a **milestone**, not the finish line.

SECTION IV — SERVITUDE DEFINED

Webster's 1828 Dictionary defined **servitude** as:

- the condition of a slave
- involuntary subjection
- bondage
- slavish dependence

This definition underscores the brutality of the system the Emancipation Proclamation sought to dismantle.

SECTION V — WHAT IS A SELL-OUT POLITICIAN?

A "sellout" is someone who:

- betrays their community
- acts against the interests of their people
- abandons principles for power or money

Randall Kennedy (NPR, 2008) defined a racial sellout as:

"A person who knowingly or with gross negligence acts against the interest of Blacks as a whole."

This is not about disagreement. It is about **betrayal**.

SECTION VI — PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON ANNUAL MESSAGE TO CONGRESS DECEMBER 6, 1830

On December 6, 1830, in his Annual Message to Congress, President Andrew Jackson suggested that **Indians** wishing to remain in the East could do so only by submitting to the authority of the states in which they lived. He stated that those who remained would be **"subject to the laws of the State"** and **"merged in the mass of its population."** Although he did not use the word "citizen," this language meant that Indians who stayed would lose their tribal sovereignty and be absorbed into the state's political body.

Jackson portrayed removal as a "benevolent policy" that would save the Indian from "utter annihilation" and free him from the constraints of state laws. The alternative he offered required Indians to abandon their traditional tribal structures and mingle with the white population — a prospect many leaders considered impossible.

Despite the rhetoric of voluntary relocation, the administration used the Indian Removal Act, signed May 28, 1830, to pressure and coerce tribes into ceding their ancestral lands. More than 60,000 Indians were ultimately forced westward, including the Cherokee, whose resistance was met with military removal. Jackson's policy effectively made remaining in the East untenable, forcing tribes into a choice between losing their cultural identity or losing their ancestral homes.

These Indians are the same "blacks" that Martin Luther King is referring to in sections I and II above!

CLOSING MESSAGE

The check Dr. King spoke of was never symbolic. It was a **contract** — a binding promise of equality.

And in 2026, the demand remains the same: **Honor the contract. Cash the check. Deliver the rights already promised.**

LEGAL DISCLAIMER PAGE

This publication is for educational and historical analysis. No statements are intended as factual allegations against any living individual. All quotations are used under Fair Use for commentary and scholarship. Historical documents referenced are public domain. Opinions expressed are commentary, not legal or professional advice.

REFERENCES

- National Archives — Declaration of Independence
- National Archives — Emancipation Proclamation
- Stanford King Institute — "The Other America"
- PBS Frontline — Henry Louis Gates Jr.
- NPR — Randall Kennedy interview (2008)
- Webster's 1828 Dictionary (public domain)
- U.S. Military Commentary on Emancipation Proclamation (2009)
- **Andrew Jackson, Second Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1830.** In *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, ed. James D. Richardson. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896. (Public domain)

EDITORIAL — "THE REAL QUESTION"

If states erased Indigenous identity, if the 14th Amendment did not protect our people, if racial categories were political tools, and in 1963 when MLK stated "*We are not asking for charity. We are demanding what was already promised*" - King was speaking about **collective rights**, not individual payouts. He was demanding the enforcement of **Constitutional Guarantees**.

Then the question becomes: How come in 1963 a specific population (reclassified Indians 'blacks') who were United States Citizens fighting for Constitutional Rights?

THIS MONTH'S CULTURAL FOOD DISH

SHARED BY

- **Chief Alease Jones, Vice President Waya Nation "aka" THE VEGAN QUEEN!**



VEGAN LENTIL PATTIES



Base Mixture

- **8 ¾ oz cooked lentils**, drained
- **2 medium carrots**, finely diced
- **1 medium onion**, finely diced
- **2 garlic cloves**, minced
- **½ bunch fresh parsley**, finely chopped (optional)
- **1 small bunch fresh chives**, finely chopped
- **1 cup chickpea flour**
- **½ teaspoon vegetable bouillon powder**
- **½ teaspoon onion powder**
- **½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- **½ teaspoon ground paprika**
- **½ teaspoon black pepper**, or to taste

Binding Mixture

- **1 cup chickpea flour**
- **½ cup plant-based milk**

Cooking Instructions

- **¾ cup olive oil**, for pan-frying

1. Prepare the Base Mixture

In a large mixing bowl, combine the cooked lentils, finely diced carrots, diced onion, minced garlic, chopped parsley (if using), and chopped chives. Add the chickpea flour, vegetable bouillon powder, onion powder, garlic powder, paprika, and black pepper. Mix gently to distribute the seasonings evenly throughout the vegetables and lentils.

2. Prepare the Binding Mixture

In a separate bowl, whisk together the chickpea flour and plant-based milk until smooth. The mixture should resemble a thick batter with no lumps.

3. Combine and Form Patties

Pour the binding mixture into the lentil-vegetable mixture. Stir thoroughly until everything is fully incorporated and the mixture holds together. Using your hands or a scoop, form the mixture into small to medium-sized patties, pressing firmly so they keep their shape.

4. Heat the Oil

Add the olive oil to a large skillet and warm it over medium heat. The oil should be hot enough to sizzle lightly when a patty touches the pan, but not smoking.

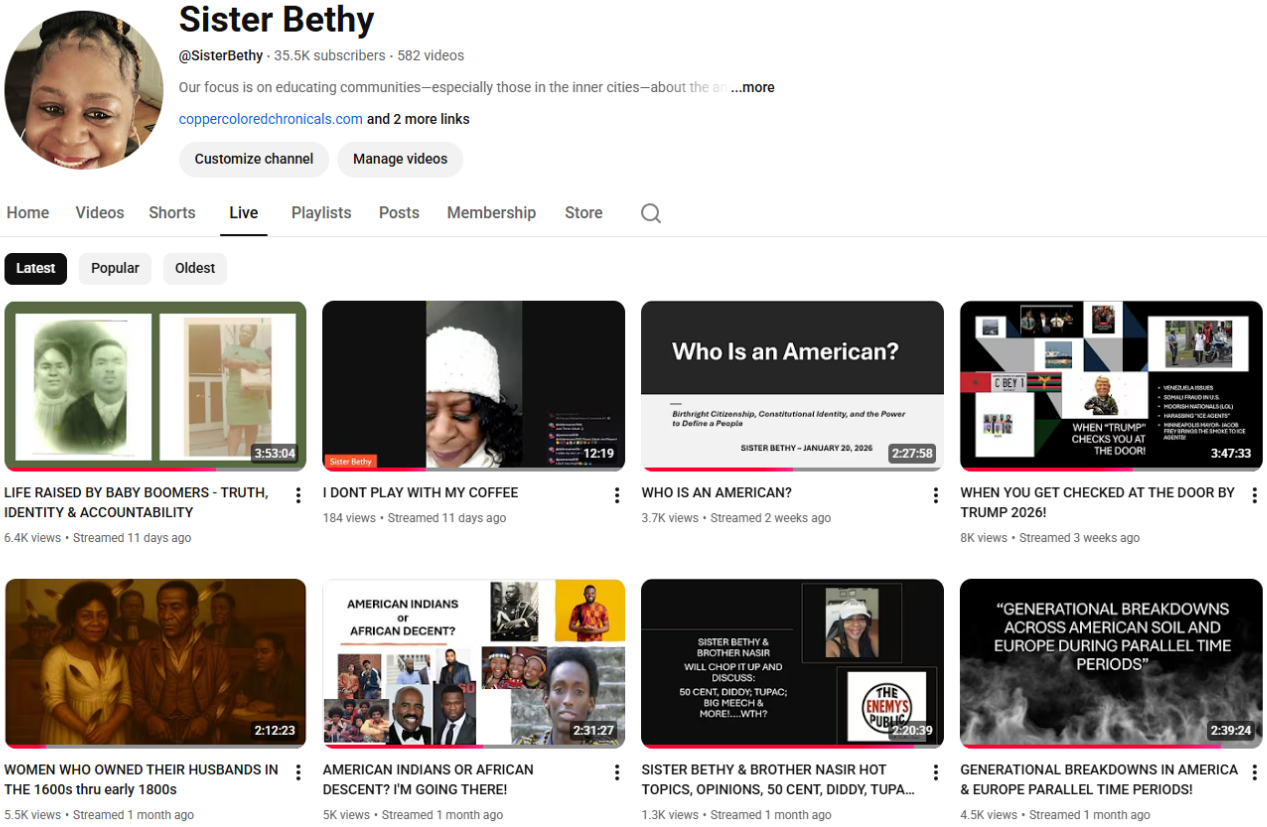
5. Cook the Patties

Place the patties into the skillet in a single layer, leaving space between each one. Cook for **2–3 minutes per side**, or until golden brown and crisp. Flip carefully and cook the second side for another **2–3 minutes**. Adjust the heat as needed to prevent burning.

6. Drain and Serve

Transfer the cooked patties to a plate lined with paper towels to absorb excess oil. Serve warm as a main dish, in wraps, on salads, or as a snack.





- **SUBSCRIBE TO OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL:** https://www.youtube.com/@SisterBethy
- **REGISTER TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF OUR MONTHLY NEWSPAPER:** www.coppercoloredchronicals.com