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FOR RELEASE:
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CONGRESSMAN

NEWS CHARLES B. RANGEL

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RANGEL CHARGES KING CONSPIRACY COVER-UP,
REQUESTS JUSTICE DEPARTMENT INQUIRY

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Congressman Charles B. Rangel, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, today charged that a "conspiracy of silence" surrounds the facts of the assassination of Martin Luther King and called upon the Attorney General to reopen the investigation of the assassination. In a letter to Attorney General Levi, Rangel cited the statement recently received by Atlanta Police Commissioner Reginald Daves and the allegations made by James Earl Ray as evidence that the case was closed prematurely. Rangel questioned "the validity and integrity of ending the investigation of the death of Dr. King with the incarceration of one man." "The one man conviction" of murdering Dr. King claims he is innocent of the charge, and certain features of the case tend to support Ray's claim," Rangel continued. "I never believed that Ray could have acted alone, given the complicated arrangements which facilitated his escape from the scene of the murder."

Rangel stressed that his primary concern, in light of the recent, and disturbing, revelations of FBI surveillance and harassment of Dr. King, as well as the puzzling elements of the case itself, is the people's right to know. "While the Congressman expressed his belief that James Earl Ray deserves a fair and open trial, he emphasized that the American people 'deserve a chance to review the results of a fair and open investigation of the King assassination.' Rangel warned that "Without such an investigation, in the atmosphere created by Watergate, illicit CIA and FBI activities, and unconfirmed rumors of CIA plots to assassinate foreign leaders, the public will inevitably react to the troubling facts and allegations associated with the King assassination and the prosecution of Ray with the suspicion that there has been a cover-up."

Concerned about the growing public belief that political institutions are inherently corrupt, Congressman Rangel argued that the King assassination case must be reopened, for "Not only justice, but also faith in the integrity of our democratic government, is at stake."

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