

Arrest 'Close' In King's Death

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MEMPHIS — Investigators reported yesterday they were "getting very close" to the arrest of the assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as the city administration made cautious efforts to ease tensions spawned by the slaying and its aftermath.

STATE ADJ. GEN. Robert W. Akin announced that more than 1,000 National Guardsmen from East Tennessee will be airlifted to Memphis tomorrow to add to and relieve troops already in this city's most critical areas.

The move was made in the

wake of sporadic outbursts of shooting, looting and fire-bombing that broke out last night. In one instance, a sniper riddled a motorist's car with rifle bullets.

U.S. Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark, who flew here from Washington to assume personal command of the search for King's killer, said "substantial evidence" has been discovered. He added:

"REAL PROGRESS is being made. I'm fully confident this crime will be solved eventually. We are getting very close."

Asked during a press conference what he meant by

"eventually," Clark replied that "I don't know if an arrest will be made in the next hour, in six hours or in 12 hours."

Clark said the federal government entered the case under a federal law which makes it a crime to deny a person of his civil rights.

This caused speculation that police may feel that an arrest is imminent in the slaying which shook this Mississippi River city to its foundations Thursday night.

KING, WHO had come here to head the efforts of striking sanitation workers to gain recognition for their union, was shot to death as he stood on a second story walkway outside his motel room here about 6 p.m. Thursday. He died about an hour later in St. Joseph Hospital of a gaping neck wound caused by a rifle slug which severed his spinal cord.

Sporadic looting continued in the city. Five cars were fired upon last night but no serious injuries were reported from the actions.

Police, however, said a 63-year-old man was shot in the back as he and two other men fled the scene of a looted liquor store. He was identified by police as Roosevelt Jennings, no address available, and was listed in satisfactory condition at a Memphis hospital.

ABOUT 240 PERSONS have been arrested on various charges since the death of King.

As the hunt intensified yesterday for the lone sniper—believed to be a white man—