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Knoxville News-Sentinel Sept. 3, 1978
Renew Funding for King Probe, Jackson Urges

MEMPHIS (UPI) — Civil Rights activist Jesse Jackson, Saturday called for the renewed funding of the House Assassinations Committee investigation into the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in order to "restore confidence in the American government."

Jackson, who serves as national director of People United to Save Humanity, told a news conference he is urging all Americans — black and white — to send telegrams to House Speaker Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill in hopes of winning another \$790,000 for the probe.

"It is in the national interest, not just the black interest, to find out who killed Dr. King," he said, "and to find out if our Government was involved."

Jackson said he thinks the investigation should continue to receive funding until it is determined who fired the shot that killed King in Memphis seven years ago; who besides James Earl Ray, King's confessed assassin, was involved in the slaying and if the FBI played any part in the murder.

"I am convinced that if the committee is allowed to complete its work, they will establish that the Government itself, especially the FBI, is implicated prior to and after Dr. King's death," Jackson said.

Jackson said he is pleased with the work already done by the committee, including its investigation of 22 conspiracy theories and the questioning of more than 2000 witnesses.

"We must remain vigilant, however, until we find the killers of Martin," said Jackson, who was on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel with King the day he was slain.

Jackson, who has talked with Ray about the 1968 assassination, said the investigation gives new insight into Ray's personality, but has not proved he acted alone.

"I have less doubt that he pulled the trigger," he said, "but the committee stopped short of putting Ray's finger on the trigger."

"Ray appears to be the most alive link in the plot and we need to move as quickly as we can before anything happens to him."

Ray, who was taken to Washington to testify before the committee, is serving a 99-year term at Brushy Mountain State Prison near Petros.