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Clinton eying new inquiry into King slay

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WASHINGTON — President Clinton told the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s widow yesterday that he would consider her request to appoint a commission to take a new look at her husband's 1968 assassination.

Coretta Scott King, accompanied by three of her children, said she understood that Clinton needed time to "see what his options are."

White House lawyers. "He has enormous respect for Mrs. King and, of course, for Dr. King," Toiv said. "Emotionally, he was moved by the feelings that she expressed, and he is looking forward to getting a recommendation from the Justice Department."

Coretta Scott King, along with her children Bernice, Dexter and Martin 3rd, spent 40 minutes in the Oval Office with Clinton, explaining 30 years' worth of pain over the loss of King. They also told Clinton they believe that the late James Earl Ray, the man who pleaded guilty to the slaying, did not act alone.

Ray confessed in 1969 to shooting King as the civil rights leader stood on the balcony of a Memphis hotel. But Ray recanted three days later and maintained his innocence until his death in April.

White House spokesman Barry Toiv said Clinton is waiting for the Justice Department's review of the family's request and for advice from

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Each one of us did speak about our feelings... that we tried to ignore this for years but it wouldn't go away," Coretta Scott King said. "It's difficult for me to appreciate the

fact that one lone person could engineer what [Ray] did in terms of his escape, and what I know about him not being a good shooter. We want to know the truth."