

Till

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face was beaten beyond recognition, with a bullet hole through his skull. An all-White jury acquitted the two men, who later confessed in a *Look* magazine article that they killed Till.

Early on, Jackson said that Till's mother did not want her son's body to be exhumed. But later, he said that he would support whatever decision the family came to.

"I don't think Rev. Jackson was fully aware of what was going on," Beauchamp said, regarding Jackson's earlier statements. "When we heard they were going to exhume Emmett's body and place him next to his mother's mausoleum, we believed this would be a perfect opportunity to examine his body," Beauchamp said in a recent interview.

"I think Ms. [Bertha] Thomas and Rev. Jackson

jumped the gun on this without knowing all of the facts," he said.

But now that the family has apparently decided to go ahead with exhuming Till's body, Jackson said that the public's attention should remain on the FBI and the state of Mississippi. The civil rights leader chastised the federal agency and state officials in Mississippi for failing to offer an apology to Till's family for the murder

and the subsequent cover-up. "The simple request by Ms. Mamie Till Mobley for an apology has not been fulfilled," said Jackson, noting that Till's mother spent 48 years seeking that apology.

"I'm appealing to legislators in Mississippi to take this issue to the floor and come up with some apology from the state." Jackson chastised the FBI, saying that the agency "has not done its job. This is the same FBI that

failed to pursue justice in the murders of Schwerner, Goodman and Cheney [three slain civil rights workers]. This is the same FBI that overtly threatened to "expose" Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., who complained that justice was moving too slowly. We are not going to get off of the FBI's lack of effort to pursue the killers when the trail was hot," he added.

For his part, Beauchamp

said he will continue to press for the exhumation of Till's body, even though the family members apparently have come to an agreement.

"There are still some matters to be settled," said Beauchamp. "My main concern is to see that Emmett receives justice and that all those involved in the crime are prosecuted."

Herb Boyd and Tanangachi Mfuni write for the Amsterdam News.

Clinton

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African-American culture.

"Here's a picture of me with BeBe Winans," he said, pointing out a photograph of him posing with the gospel singer that sits on his coffee table, several feet from his desk. The walls leading into his office are adorned with photographs of singer Ray Charles, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzie Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Duke Ellington and Wynton Marsalis. His bookshelves are fully stocked with African-American authors. Clinton, who remains popular with Blacks, says that the connection is genuine.

"I think the rational explanation is that I come out of a culture that's very similar to that shared by a lot of African-Americans," he said, adding that he knew Blacks from a very young age. His grandfather owned a business that catered to a large Black clientele.

"I was raised by grandparents who supported civil rights," Clinton said, adding that their response to Blacks helped to shape his consciousness early on. "I deserve no credit for any of that, but that's sort of a rational explanation," he said, adding that intuitively, he is connected to African-Americans and they to him because "you like people that you think get you," he said.

"You ever meet a person —anybody, same race, different race, doesn't matter — and you've known them five minutes, and you feel like you've known them all your life because they get you and you get them?" he asked.

"And they like you and you like them — I think that's a lot of it. I think people just get it. They think they know me, and they can say, 'Well whatever I think about this guy, he really cares and he gets me, he knows where I'm coming from, what my life's like and he cares about it and he likes me, so maybe I should like him,'" Clinton chuckles. "I don't think it's very complicated."

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