

Jesse Jackson to Gov. Rick Perry: No Apology for Comments

By Gary Fineout
The Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Civil rights activist Jesse Jackson isn't backing down from comments he made comparing Florida's struggle with the Trayvon Martin case to the civil rights clashes with police during the 1960s in Selma, Ala.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott on Wednesday demanded that Jackson apologize for his comments calling the state the "Selma of our time." He also said Florida has been an "apartheid" state.

But Jackson, in an interview with The Associated Press, defended his remarks. He cited the state's voter laws and incarceration rates of blacks versus the general population as examples of "apartheid like conditions."

Jackson made his original remarks while taking part in a protest at the Florida Capitol. He joined a group upset that George Zimmerman was acquitted in the shooting death of Martin.

Jackson spent the night with protesters upset that George Zimmerman was found not guilty of second-degree murder in the shooting death of Martin. They've refused to leave the Capitol until Scott calls a special session to have legislators overhaul the state's self-defense laws.

Jackson called Florida the "Selma of our time" and even compared Scott to former Alabama Gov. George Wallace. While he was governor, Wallace famously stood in the door at the University of Alabama to try to block the entry of two black students.

Scott so far has refused the request and the protest has dragged on for more than two weeks. The protesters have gotten national media attention and won support from celebrities such as entertainer Harry Belafonte and others who have urged people to boycott Florida.

Scott in a release blasted Jackson's comments as "reckless" and "divisive" and said that he should apologize to residents.

"It is unfortunate that he would come to Florida to insult Floridians and divide our state at a time when we are striving for unity and healing," Scott said.

But Bishop Tavis Grant, national field director for the Rainbow PUSH coalition started by Jackson, said there was no need for an apology.

"The governor has a deafening ear to the cries of those asking him to take a moral stand, not a political stand," Grant said.

Jackson left Tallahassee earlier Wednesday and wasn't immediately made available to comment.

Grant, though, said Jackson made his comments not only in response to the Zimmerman verdict but because of the case of Marissa Alexander.

Alexander, who is from Jacksonville, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for firing a bullet at a wall to scare off her husband when she felt he was threatening her. A judge refused to let her use a "stand your ground" defense.

Grant said that thousands of Floridians support Jackson and agree that the state's "stand your ground" law is egregious.

Services for Teddy Peoples, 1949-2013



Services for Teddy James Peoples are Aug. 9 at 11a.m. at the Community AME Zion Church, Vancouver, WA. Interment is Aug. 12 at 10 a.m. at the Tahoma National Cemetery, 18600 SE 240th St. Kent, WA. A repast is Aug. 12, from 4-7 p.m. at the Royal Esquire Club, 6016 Rainer Ave., Seattle.

He was born June 14, 1949, in St. Louis, Mo., to Dorothy Peoples and William Bruce. Teddy met Shirley King (Peoples) in 1969 and later married; they were together for 25 years.

Peoples enlisted in the United States Marine Corp and received an honorable discharge in 1969. In 1979 Teddy moved to Seattle, WA to work at Boeing Aircraft for 25 years as a machinist. He and Shirley operated the kitchen at The Royal Esquire Club. They owned and operated Scotia Best Catering. Teddy was in partnership of the Hollywood Underground Club and Restaurant downtown Seattle. He loved fishing, boating, hunting and camping. Teddy passed July 31, 2013. Arrangements by Dayspring-Fitch Funeral Home.

But that view isn't shared by Scott or other Republican leaders in the Florida Legislature. Senate President Don Gaetz earlier this week that while he understands that some people are "frustrated" with the verdict that doesn't mean the law should be changed.

"In our system, a verdict is not then referred to a referendum of the people who are interested in the issue or who are passionate about the issue," Gaetz said. "A verdict is a verdict."

The protesters, many of whom belong to a

group called the Dream Defenders, want the special session to consider changing state laws to repeal Florida's "stand your ground" law and to end racial profiling and zero-tolerance policies in public schools.

Protesters this week started their own mock session in the Old Capitol. They also are trying to urge 32 legislators to ask for a special session. Under Florida law, if 32 legislators make that demand, then the Department of State must poll the Legislature. If three-fifths of lawmakers agree, then a special session must be called.

Check Out The Skanner News Turn-the-Pages WebPaper

Go to www.theskanner.com home page and click on 'Turn the Pages' button to view our complete newspapers, exactly as they are printed, but on-line!



Just click to turn the pages and click to zoom.

