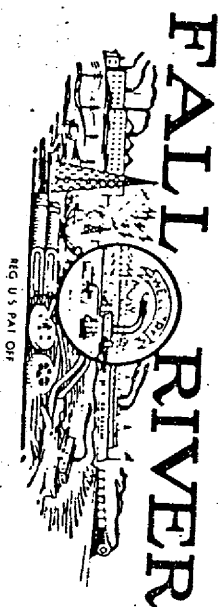


Professor says cloud hangs over RFK murder probe

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Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn at no other. - Benjamin Franklin.

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SMU professor says cloud hangs over RFK murder probe

By Fred Rhines
Herald News Staff Reporter

Professor Philip H. Melanson, head of the Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archives at Southeastern Massachusetts University, said Wednesday more than 50 taped interviews that would support a conspiracy theory are missing from files released by the Los Angeles Police Department of its probe into the murder.

Melanson contends those missing tape recordings would include statements by 29 persons whose stories "relate directly or indirectly to questions of conspiracy."

"For more than two decades Los Angeles officials touted this investigation as one of the most thorough in history," Melanson said. "They said they wanted to avoid 'another Dallas.' So they took great pains to generate a detailed, well-documented investigative record." Melanson also said, "The best circumstantial evidence indicates that more data did exist but disappeared. Moreover, the majority of what should be here, in terms of key witness interviews, and isn't, deals directly or indirectly with the possibility of conspiracy."

He said a preliminary survey, based on a check list of significant witnesses defined by FBI files, Los Angeles district attorney's office and LAPD's interview summaries, revealed there were 51 people with "important or potentially important information for whom no tapes exist."

He raised the issue of whether assassin Sirhan Sirhan was accompanied by a female accomplice the night of the shooting, June 5, 1968. "The so-called polka dot dress girl," he said.

Melanson said one of Kennedy's volunteer workers, Susanne Locke of Los Angeles, gave FBI agents a detailed statement in which she said Sirhan Sirhan was at the hotel earlier in the evening. It suggested that Sirhan may have even stalked the senator for several hours prior to the shooting.



Professor Philip Melanson, who heads the Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archives at Southeastern Massachusetts University is shown in front of a poster of the late senator. AP Laserphoto