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SMU adding long-awaited police files to

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DARTMOUTH — At 2 p.m. Tuesday in Sacramento, officials at the California State Archives will release the Los Angeles Police Department files on the 1968 Robert F. Kennedy assassination.

Within hours, a copy of the microfilmed files — containing some 50,000 pages of previously sealed documents, interviews and other

material gained by police investigators — will be on its way to Southeastern Massachusetts University's RFK Assassination Archives.

No one will welcome it more warmly than Dr. Philip H. Melanson.

Three times since 1985, Dr. Melanson, an SMU political science professor and recognized authority on assassinations, has traveled to California to lobby for the release of the files. Working with former Kennedy aides, supporters, edu-

"How valid are the official conclusions?"

— Phillip Melanson

collection on RFK assassination

cators and historians, he has unflinchingly argued the public's right to know.

On Tuesday, his and the efforts of others will finally pay off.

"This is the last and most major (report) to be released. It's the primary investigative file in the case," Dr. Melanson said Wednesday. And, in contrast to a "hacked to death" summary issued initially by Los Angeles police, Dr. Melanson said, the California archives material

represents the full police file, "99 percent uncensored."

It has been a "very long three-year battle with a lot of frustrations and delays," Dr. Melanson said, "but (Tuesday) is going to be a big day."

Coincidentally, the files will be made public in California exactly 24 hours before SMU dedicates and officially opens the RFK Assassination Archives.

(See FILES, Page 10)