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Key R.F.K. Material Missing, Archivist Says

DARTMOUTH, Mass. (AP)—The head of an archive on Robert F. Kennedy's assassination says key material supporting a conspiracy theory appears to be missing from recently opened Los Angeles Police Department files.

Professor Philip H. Melanson said Wednesday that discrepancies existed between earlier accounts of how much testimony was taped and the amount of audiotape made available for public perusal last month. Melanson said the records contain no taped interviews of 51 key witnesses.

Los Angeles police spokesman Cmdr. William Booth said, "Everything that we had in [the] file with regards to that case had been turned over to the [state] archives."

The Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archives are part of Southeastern Massachusetts University library's private collection. Melanson started the archive when the college accepted material gathered by the Robert F. Kennedy Truth Committee, a group believing that more than one person was involved in the 1968 shooting.

Melanson said that of the 3,470 interviews Los Angeles police conducted in investigating the killing, only 301 were available on tape in the recently released record. Melanson said he was told in 1985 by Theodore Taylor, co-author of the book "Special Unit Senator," that "every single interview was taped."

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