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# the Torch

## Library to get Kennedy archive Papers shed light on R.F.K. death

By Anne Kinnane

What began as a victorious night for Robert F. Kennedy on June 5, 1968, ended in death on the kitch floor of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. While the horrors of that night have faded in the minds of some, it lives on in the records of the Kennedy Assassination Truth Committee (KATC)—records which will soon reside in library at SMU.

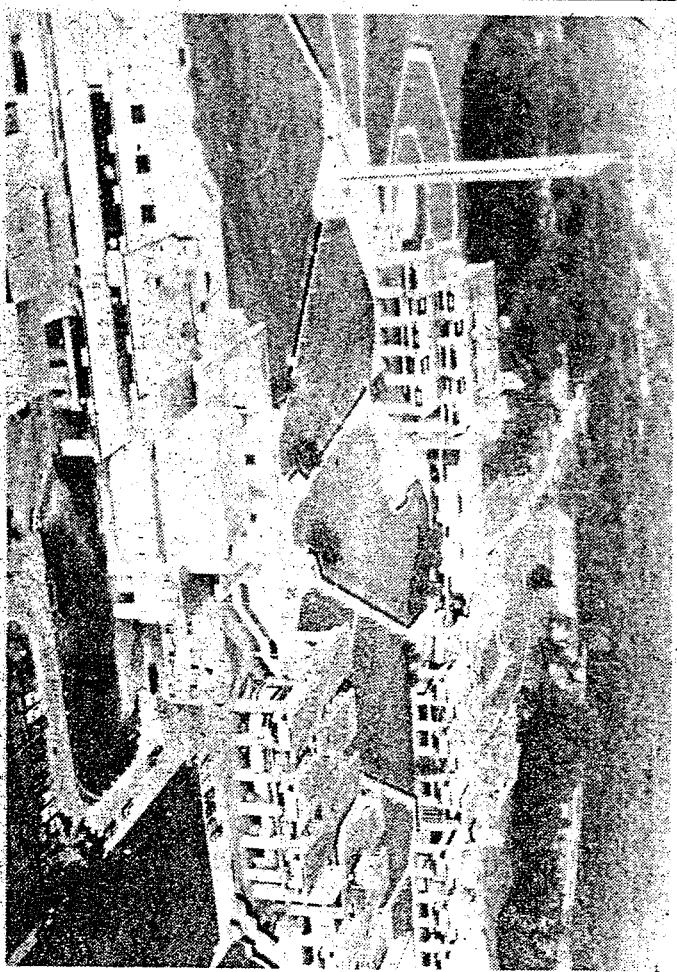
The records were obtained by the SMU library with the help of Professor of Political Science, Philip Melan-

ings about the John F. Kennedy assassination."

Nelson became active by joining KATC, where he met an accountant Lillian Castellano, who Nelson says, "had a photographic memory." Ms. Castellano died in 1976. Between 1968 and 1976, however, Nelson and Castellano worked mainly together in compiling material.

"She (Castellano) was very effective on the phone," said Nelson. "She could really do wonderful things. She could really crank information out of people."

Nelson and Castellano, along with other members from KATC interviewed witnesses, gathered news clippings, recorded trial transcripts, and



*You may have wondered why that funny green helicopter was buzzing the campus yesterday. The Army National Guard, as part of a retraining visit to the campus treated SMU President John Brazil and a Torch photographer to a birds eye view of the campus and surrounding area.*

son, a specialist investigating assassinations.

"It's the richest, most definitive collection on the RFK assassination," said Melanson, adding "Other collections may be larger in size- this is about 40 to 50 archive boxes, but it is primary source material, other collections are not as extensive."

The success of this collection is largely due to a native Californian Floyd Nelson, 53, a former KATC member.

One no longer hears much about that frightful June night sixteen years ago that ended Robert Kennedy's life. One man, Sirhan Sirhan, is behind bars, but some question whether or not he was a lone assassin. Some believe it was a conspiracy.

This is what went through Nelson's mind when he first viewed the live televised murder. He remembers thinking, "They got him." And following what he calls "a botched up investigation" by the Los Angeles Police Department, he remembers thinking, "They got away with it."

In a recent telephone interview with the Veterans Hospital aid at his Los Angeles home, Nelson talked about how he initially became involved in investigating the Kennedy assassination. "I was eating dinner when the news came over the television... I was watching him (Kennedy) being murdered! It was a time when the country seemed to be coming apart at the seams. In rapid succession Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed and then Robert Kennedy. I just couldn't be passive anymore. I felt something was terribly wrong... I began to wonder, who was running this country."

From the beginning Nelson believed Sirhan Sirhan was not alone and he attributes some of his initial suspicion to having "already had personal feel-

collected tapes of TV and radio programs pertaining to the assassination.

Though other collections have been made, Nelson maintains that this is a "unique" one.

"In order to retain our integrity, we never collected money for anything. This way people realized we were serious and therefore would bring information to us. They knew we didn't have an ax to grind and that we were trying to be objective."

Nelson said that he is presently organizing the boxes to send to SMU. According to SMU's Associate Librarian, Jenny Howard, the boxes should arrive within the next few weeks, at which time the library will hold a "publicity campaign" to notify the media and other libraries.

Melanson said the collection was first brought to his attention by assassination researchers. He proposed that the SMU library look into it and subsequently the library financed a trip to Los Angeles in mid-July for Melanson to review the material.

According to Melanson SMU is now number one in the nation to have what he calls, "a historically definitive collection" on the RFK assassination. He added that any of the books that have been written about Robert Kennedy, the authors "started by going to Nelson's collection first for information."

Upon research of the SMU library, Nelson said that he was glad the library planned to use it for research and that students would work directly with the material. He added that SMU is suitable because it is "three thousand miles away from sources of material" and is "Kennedy country."

When asked why he did not donate the collection to a west coast univer-

sity, he said, "I could have arranged something with UCLA, but I have distrust of them in my mind... the university does not live in a vacuum. The police department, who botched up the investigation, has influence in this community."

Nelson claimed that other people involved in his research approached the Kennedy Library in Boston with the collection, but felt that they would have "just stored it away."

According to Nelson, when he first presented the Kennedy Library with the idea that Sirhan Sirhan may have had accomplices, he said their reaction was, "This is crazy. Everybody knows. They have TV shots of it." However, ballistic reports made in 1977 indicate that the number of shots fired is inconclusive.

Despite any controversy surrounding the night of June 5, 1968, any attempts by KATC or Nelson to reopen the case have failed.

Said Nelson, "The L.A. county and

city has done everything to stonewall any attempts to reopen the case. Let's face it, it's embarrassing to them."

According to Melanson, the collection contains material that corroborates with the 1977 ballistic test.

Once the collection arrives at SMU, Melanson plans to involve his students in the process of sorting through the material to aid in their research.

According to Jenny Howard, Students will receive contract learning to index and file the collection for the SMU archives. She added that the library hopes to obtain a grant to pay for the cost of copying the tapes in order to protect the originals.

Said Howard, "This collection will certainly benefit the students directly for it is primary research material."

Having finally dispensed of the collection, Nelson said, "I feel like I cut the anchor off around my neck... it's really a relief."

## Concert

# First choice Eddie Money how to runner-up Ramones

By Deborah Borden

Early October will see SMU turn into a collegiate version of Rock 'n' Roll High School.

The Ramones were chosen by the Program Council yesterday after a student poll ranked them second on a list of preferred bands. Students' first choice, Eddie Money, was not availa-

ble because of a last minute schedule change.

The council had originally narrowed their choice to three bands that had an inexpensive price; that is, whose ticket prices would be under \$10. They narrowed their choices to three: Eddie Money, the Ramones, or Romeo Void, with ticket prices of \$7 to \$9, \$4 to \$5 and \$4 to \$5 respectively.