

Stevens Point Journal 1/24/78

FBI documents pledged to UW-SP

Copies of FBI documents on President John F. Kennedy's assassination — ordered released last week to author-critic Harold Weisberg — have been pledged as a gift to the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

Weisberg of Frederick, Md., said his set of nearly 100,000 pages of material will be sent to the Stevens Point campus when he's finished with it to be added to an archival collection on political assassinations. The material is worth about \$10,000 in copying costs.

The archive was established more than a year ago when Weisberg was at the university to speak at an assassination symposium and to confer with Chancellor Lee S. Dreyfus and David Wrono, a historian who has become a national figure for scholarly investigations of the two Kennedy brothers and Dr. Martin Luther King's murders.

Last week, U.S. District Judge Gerhard Gesell ordered a second batch of FBI documents made public with a free set for Weisberg. Gesell also said Weisberg should be reimbursed by the federal government for his cost of copying previously released materials.

Weisberg filed a federal court injunction in late December for the free set of materials that he has been seeking under the Freedom of Information Act for a decade. He requested a waiver of fees on the grounds he could not afford them.

The author said the FBI ignored his request but the Justice Department offered him a set at a reduced rate of six cents instead of the standard 10 cents per page. Gesell, however, said, "It is apparent no consideration was given to Weisberg's claim of poor health and indigency. The equities are very substantially and overwhelmingly in the plaintiff's (Weisberg's) favor."

Had it not been for Weisberg and his long pursuit of the documents, the records would not be coming to light now, Gesell said.

Weisberg's litigation led to a Congressional change in the law, opening the door to FBI investigatory records, the judge concluded.

Representing Weisberg in court was James Lesar, an attorney who has long been involved in litigation over King and Kennedy assassination matters. Lesar also spoke at the UW-Stevens Point symposium.

To support his arguments for Weisberg, Lesar filed three affidavits during the one-hour hearing in court which lauded the quality of the author-critic's work. They were by Howard Roffman, clerk of the federal appeals judge in Florida; Less Whitten, an associate of columnist Jack Anderson; and Wrono.

Wrono said the judge's decision "reaffirmed an ancient and hallowed democratic principle of the people's right to know."

The nearly 100,000 total pages

of documents that have been released on two different dates stack more than 20 feet high, but are still only part of those materials collected by the FBI. The biggest batch still remains in a regional bureau office in Dallas, the city where President Kennedy was killed, Weisberg said.

When they eventually come to the university, the documents will be part of an archive made up also of films, photographs, books, audio and videotapes, miscellaneous materials plus voluminous personal files and correspondence of Weisberg and others, Wrono said.

Currently held materials are available for public use and arrangements can be made for film showings without cost in the archive section of the Albertson Learning Resources Center.

Wrono said the Weisberg gift will mean that "we'll have one of the finest research libraries in the world on the Kennedy and King assassinations that cannot be replicated anywhere."

"We're going to carry the truth of Dallas historically right here at our university — they're going to have to live with what they did — they won't be able to bury it," Wrono said of government agencies which he has criticized for the manner in which they investigated JFK's death.

While announcing his gift of Kennedy materials, Weisberg also said he would give the university approximately 50,000 pages of documents he has

collected about the King assassination.

What does he foresee happening this year as a congressional committee investigates the president's murder?

Not much.

Weisberg is critical of the committee's work charging that it is focusing on people who have sensationalized the assassination. Some of them, he added, are "irresponsible critics who have been titillating the American people in talks before student groups and so forth."

He also gave a preview of a fact that will probably be forthcoming about former President Gerald Ford's involvement as a member of the Warren Commission that investigated the JFK killing nearly 15 years ago.

The latest-released documents had information about Ford serving as an informer for the FBI about commission activities. The material was supposedly sent to then FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. Another document is a written comment that Ford was a "toad" for doing it.

A coincidence in the court case involving Weisberg and Gesell: The judge is the son of the late Dr. Arnold Gesell, an 1899 graduate of the university who became a noted pediatrician and child psychologist. The UW-SP's Gesell Institute for the Study of Early Childhood is named for the elder Gesell.

Milwaukee Sentinel 1/25/78

UW Center Given Data on JFK's Death

Special to The Sentinel

Stevens Point, Wis. — Copies of FBI documents on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy have been pledged as a gift to the University of Wisconsin — Stevens Point by author-critic Harold Weisberg, the school announced Tuesday.

Prof. David Wrone said the gift will give the university "one of the finest research libraries in the world" on the assassinations of President Kennedy, his brother, Robert, and the Rev. Martin Luther King.

Weisberg, of Frederick, Md., has notified the university that his set of nearly 100,000 pages of material, worth about \$100,000 in copying fees, will be sent to the campus for addition to an archive on political assassinations.

The archive was established more than a year ago when Weisberg visited the university.

Federal Judge Gerhard Gesell last week ordered a second batch of FBI documents be made public. Gesell also ruled that Weisberg should be reimbursed by the federal government for his cost of copying previously released materials.

Weisberg petitioned the court last month for a free set of materials he had been seeking under the Freedom of Information Act for a decade. He asked a waiver of fees on grounds he could not afford them.

Milwaukee Journal 1/25/78

School Will Get JFK Documents

Special to The Journal

Stevens Point, Wis. — Copies of FBI documents on President John F. Kennedy's assassination have been pledged as a gift to the University of Wisconsin — Stevens Point.

Author-critic Harold Weisberg, of Frederick, Md., has informed the university that his set of nearly 100,000 pages of material worth approximately \$10,000 in copying fees would be sent to the Stevens Point campus when he is finished with it and added to the archive on political assassinations.

The archive was established more than a year ago when Weisberg was at the university to speak at an assassination symposium and to confer with Chancellor Lee S. Dreyfus and Professor David Wrone, a historian who has achieved national prominence for investigations of the murders of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King.

Last week, Federal Judge Gerhard Gesell ordered a second batch of FBI documents made public. The judge ordered that Weisberg be given a free set of that material.