

Board might free Kennedy reports

By MICHAEL C. TIPPING

LOS ANGELES (UPI) — Historians, researchers and reporters have been trying for years to gain access to the 50,000 pages of investigative reports on the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

On Tuesday, the Police Commission took a first step toward releasing the material, which some authorities have opposed on the grounds it could harm national secu-

rity and compromise confidential sources.

The commissioners agreed they could not allow release of information related to national security, confidential contacts with other law-enforcement agencies or material that would invade the subject's privacy.

But Commission President Stephen Yslas said, "We have an obligation to release as much material as we can."

The commission voted unanimously to appoint a subcommittee to immediately begin deciding how much of the material, which includes a 1,500 page summary and more than 1,700 photographs, can legally be made public.

Virtually all the police files on the June 5, 1968 assassination have been withheld from the public and from researchers and historians, who point out the Warren Commission report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, along with the Congressional probe into the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., have been released.

The commission's vote was only a partial victory for the researchers, historians and journalists who have spent more than 10 years trying to see the file's thousands of reports, interviews, search warrants and photographs.

"If the CIA and FBI can release thousands of pages" on the John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King murders, "we can responsibly process these documents in a way that protects individuals," said Phillip H. Melanson, a director of the Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archive at Southeastern Massachusetts University.

Palestinian refugee Sirhan Sirhan was convicted of killing Kennedy and was recently refused parole from the life sentence he is serving at Soledad prison.

Summary of probe into RFK's killing to be made public

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Police Commission has decided to release a 1,500-page summary of the investigation of Robert F. Kennedy's assassination and will consider the release of more than 50,000 pages of documents from the probe.

The City Council also may have to approve the summary's release because it is city property, Deputy City Attorney Byron Boeckman said Tuesday after the commission voted to make public the report on the June 5, 1968, slaying.

"The LAPD files are the primary investigative files in one of the major assassinations in this country's history," said Philip Melanson, a political science professor and director of the Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archive at Southeastern Massachusetts University.

Portions that may be sensitive to national security, or contain private and confidential information, will be removed. Kennedy, a U.S. senator and Democratic presidential candidate, was slain by Sirhan Sirhan on the night of the California presidential primary. Sirhan was convicted of first-degree murder.

The commission also voted to establish a subcommittee to develop guidelines for the release of more than 50,000 pages of investigative material, which has been long sought by scholars and researchers.

JULY 31, 1985