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Top FBI Officials Order By Oswald Destroyed, Source Says

BY MARTIN WALDRON

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Washington — Top officials of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), probably including former Director J. Edgar Hoover, ordered the destruction of a letter in which Lee Harvey Oswald conveyed violent threats about 10 days before he killed President John F. Kennedy, according to a source familiar with the meeting where this decision was made.

The source said that the decision to destroy the letter, which made threats against the Dallas police, was made at a meeting in Washington on the weekend after Kennedy was murdered in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

The FBI has always maintained that it had no reason to believe Oswald was capable of violence and therefore had not reported on him to the Secret Service.

The source said that the decision was made because of potential embarrassment to the FBI and not to hinder the investigation of Kennedy's death.

The existence and destruction of the letter was first reported two weeks ago by the Dallas Times-Herald.

The letter's destruction was cited by Sen. Richard S. Schweiker, R-Pa., as a prime reason for his introduction of a Senate resolution directing the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence to inquire into Kennedy's murder as part of its investigation of the FBI and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The resolution is spending.

Schweiker said that since he introduced his resolution, his office has received information that strengthens his belief that 17 still-secret FBI reports to the Warren Commission and 23 from the CIA

might contain information that the public should have.

The order to destroy the letter was relayed to Dallas, where the letter was on file, by one of Hoover's assistants, who never would have ordered the destruction of possible evidence except on Hoover's express order, evidence said.

Both Hoover and James P. Hosty Jr., the FBI agent who received the Oswald letter, told the Warren Commission that they had no reason to believe that Oswald was capable of violence.

When Hosty testified in April 1964 before the commission, which found that Oswald was the lone assassin, he said:

"Prior to the assassination of the President of the United States, I had no information indicating violence on the part of Lee Harvey Oswald. I wish the record to so read."

Clarence M. Kelley, who became FBI director in 1973 after Hoover's death, has said there is evidence that the letter was received and destroyed.

The FBI refused last week to direct Hosty to break his silence and discuss

the destruction of the letter, an action that has prompted a growing demand to reopen the investigation of the assassination. Hosty, now working in the FBI office at Kansas City, Mo., has refused to comment.

An FBI spokesman said that any comment would be inappropriate at this time because of an internal FBI investigation of the incident was under way.

The Oswald letter contained a threat to "blow up" the Dallas Police Department, according to the source.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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