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KENNEDY (EXCLUSIVE) (10 P.M. EDT EMBARGO)
BY MARTIN WALDRON
FO. 1975 N.Y. TIMES NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON - TOP OFFICIALS OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION - PROBABLY INCLUDING FORMER DIRECTOR J. EDGAR HOOVER - ORDERED THE DESTRUCTION OF A LETTER IN WHICH LEE HARVEY OSWALD, ASSASSIN OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY, CONVEYED VIOLENT THREATS ABOUT 10 DAYS BEFORE HE KILLED THE PRESIDENT, 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 TAKEN AT A MEETING OF TOP FBI OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON ON THE WEEKEND AFTER KENNEDY WAS MURDERED IN DALLAS ON FRIDAY, NOV. 22, 1963. THE FBI HAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED THAT IT HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT OSWALD WAS CAPABLE OF VIOLENCE AND THEREFORE HAD NOT FILED REPORTS ON HIM WITH THE SECRET SERVICE. THE SOURCE SAID THAT THE DECISION TO DESTROY THE LETTER WAS MADE BECAUSE OF POTENTIAL EMBARRASSMENT TO THE FBI AND NOT TO HINDER THE INVESTIGATION OF PRESIDENT 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 SENATOR RICHARD S. SCHWEIKER, R-Pa., AS A PRIME REASON FOR HIS INTRODUCTION OF A SENATE RESOLUTION ON SEPT. 3, 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. THE RESOLUTION IS PENDING. SCHWEIKER SAID IN AN INTERVIEW LAST WEEK THAT SINCE HE INTRODUCED HIS RESOLUTION, HIS OFFICE RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT STRENGTHENED HIS BELIEF THAT 17 STILL-SECRET REPORTS THE FBI AND 23 FROM THE CIA TO THE WARREN COMMISSION

~~LETTER OF OSW
TO DALLAS
OFFICE~~

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THE ORDER TO DESTROY THE LETTER WAS RELAYED TO DALLAS, WHERE THE LETTER WAS ON FILE, BY ONE OF HOOVER'S ASSISTANTS; BUT THE ASSISTANT WOULD NEVER HAVE ORDERED THE DESTRUCTION OF POSSIBLE EVIDENCE EXCEPT ON HOOVER'S EXPRESSED ORDER; THE SOURCE 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 HE TESTIFIED IN APRIL, 1964, BEFORE THE COMMISSION, WHICH INVESTIGATED THE ASSASSINATION AND FOUND THAT OSWALD WAS THE SOLE ASSASSIN; HOSTY 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 THAT 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 BE INTERVIEWED.

AN FBI SPOKESMAN SAID THAT ANY COMMENT WOULD BE "INAPPROPRIATE" AT THIS TIME, BECAUSE AN INTERNAL FBI INVESTIGATION OF THE INCIDENT WAS UNDER WAY.

THE OSWALD LETTER CONTAINED A THREAT TO "BLOW UP" THE DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT; SAID THE SOURCE FAMILIAR WITH THE MEETING THAT ORDERED THE DESTRUCTION OF THE LETTER.

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STADD AT END: KENNEDY, WASHN X X X LETTER.

EDITORS: THIS IS FOR PAPERS DESIRING A LONGER STORY.

EARLY REPORTS SAID THAT THE LETTER THREATENED VIOLENCE TO THE
FBI OFFICE AS WELL AS TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT. BUT THE SOURCE
SAID THAT THE LETTER THREATENED ONLY THE DALLAS POLICE,
ALTHOUGH IT ALSO TOLD THE FBI TO STOP TRYING TO INTERVIEW
OSWALD'S WIFE, MARINA.

OSWALD MARRIED HIS RUSSIAN-BORN WIFE IN THE SOVIET UNION
WHILE HE WAS LIVING THERE IN 1961.

HE WROTE THE LETTER IN NOVEMBER, 1963, AFTER HOSTY HAD TWICE
CALLED ON RUTH PAINE, AN IRVING, TEX. HOUSEWIFE WHO WAS
BEFRIENDING MRS. OSWALD AND HER TWO SMALL CHILDREN.

BOTH MRS. PAINE AND HOSTY TOLD THE WARREN COMMISSION THAT
HOSTY LEFT HIS NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER WITH MRS. PAINE ON
NOV. 1, 1963, TO GIVE TO OSWALD, WHO AT THE TIME WAS RESIDING
IN A DALLAS ROOMING HOUSE.

HOSTY'S NAME, TELEPHONE NUMBER, OFFICE ADDRESS AND A CLOSE
APPROXIMATION OF HIS AUTOMOBILE LICENSE NUMBER WERE FOUND
IN OSWALD'S ADDRESS BOOK BY DALLAS POLICE OFFICERS AFTER
OSWALD'S ARREST ON THE AFTERNOON OF NOV. 22, 1963.

MRS. PAINE SAID THAT SHE HAD GIVEN HOSTY'S NAME AND TELEPHONE
NUMBER TO OSWALD, AND THAT OSWALD LATER TOLD HER HE HAD GONE
TO SEE THE FBI AGENT.

HOSTY TESTIFIED THAT HE HAD GONE TO MRS. PAINE'S HOME AS
PART OF A ROUTINE CHECK THAT HE WAS MAKING ON OSWALD. HE
SAID THAT A FILE ON OSWALD, WHICH HAD BEEN CLOSED, WAS

REOPENED BECAUSE OF OSWALD'S ACTIVITIES WITH THE FAIR PLAY
FOR CUBA COMMITTEE, A PRO-CASTRO GROUP, AND BECAUSE OSWALD HAD
BEGUN SUBSCRIBING TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY NEWSPAPER, THE WORKER.

THE FILE HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN OPENED BECAUSE OF OSWALD'S
ATTEMPTS TO DEFECT TO THE SOVIET UNION.

OSWALD'S THREATENING LETTER WAS APPARENTLY WRITTEN AND DELIVERED

AFTER HOSTY PAID A SECOND VISIT TO THE PRINE HOME ON NOV. 3.
THE SOURCE OUTLINED WHAT OCCURRED AFTER HOSTY'S SECOND VISIT
AS FOLLOWS:

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, OSWALD HAND CARRIED THE LETTER TO THE
FBI OFFICE IN DOWNTOWN DALLAS. THE FBI OFFICE WAS ABOUT A
QUARTER OF A MILE FROM THE TEXAS SCHOOLBOOK DEPOSITORY
- A TEXTBOOK WAREHOUSE - WHERE OSWALD WAS WORKING AS A LABORER.
THE LETTER, ADDRESSED TO HOSTY, WAS LEFT WITH AN FBI RECEPTIONIST.

WHEN HOSTY READ THE LETTER, HE SHOWED IT TO THE AGENT IN
CHARGE OF THE DALLAS FBI OFFICE, J. GORDON SHANKLIN, WHO ASKED
HOSTY IF OSWALD WERE CAPABLE OF CARRYING OUT THE THREAT.

HOSTY REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW.

SHANKLIN THEN SUGGESTED THAT HOSTY CONTINUE HIS SEARCH FOR
OSWALD AND INTERVIEW HIM.

IN PRESENTING THE BASIC OUTLINE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING
THE LETTER, THE SOURCE SAID THAT WHEN THE LETTER WAS GIVEN
A FILE AND ITEM NUMBER IN NOVEMBER, 1963, IT BECAME AN OFFICIAL
DOCUMENT AND THAT DESTRUCTION OF IT MIGHT HAVE VIOLATED
FEDERAL LAW.

IN TESTIMONY AND AFFIDAVITS GIVEN TO THE KARRER COMMISSION
SOME MONTHS AFTER THE ASSASSINATION, HOOVER AND HOSTY SAID
THAT THEY HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT OSWALD WAS CAPABLE
OF VIOLENT ACTION.

SHORTLY AFTER THE ASSASSINATION, THE FBI'S DALLAS OFFICE
NOTIFIED ITS HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON OF THE EXISTENCE
OF THE LETTER. THE MEETING TO DISCUSS WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE
LETTER ENSUED.

SOME TIME LATER, HOOVER SENT OUT LETTERS OF CENSURE TO 27
AGENTS AND FBI OFFICIALS BECAUSE OF THE INCIDENT, AND HOSTY
WAS SUSPENDED WITHOUT PAY FOR 30 DAYS AND TRANSFERRED TO HIS
PRESENT POST IN KANSAS CITY.

THE SOURCE SAID THAT HOOVER "WAS HADDER THAN HELL."

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