

Nothing Is Clear On Oswald Letter

Officials and agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation have told contradictory stories about their roles in the destruction of a threatening letter written by Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President Kennedy.

The Justice Department has decided not to seek an indictment because, a spokesman said, the statute of limitations has barred prosecution of whoever issued the order. Congressional committees are still pursuing the matter, however; it was before a House group that the agents' contradictory stories were detailed last week by James B. Adams, a bureau official who conducted an internal inquiry.

The letter, threatening to blow up the Dallas police headquarters, was written by Oswald about 10 days before the assassination. After it, and two hours after Oswald himself had been murdered, the letter—which did not mention the President or assassination—was destroyed. At whose direction? Why?

Those questions will probably never be fully answered because one or more of the F.B.I. men who know the answers appear to be lying to investigators now. An agent who destroyed the letter says he did so at the direction of his superior; the superior denies it. The Justice Department did not explain why it had decided against seeking perjury indictments.

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