

Hoover Linked Longer story filed WC -R

Order to Destroy Oswald Evidence

Washington

Top FBI officials — 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 ten 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 Schweiker (Rep-Pa), as a prime reason for his introduction of a Senate resolution September 8, 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.

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 lone 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."

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.

An FBI spokesman said that any comment would be "inappropriate" at this time, because an internal FBI investigation of the incident is 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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