

CIA Copied a Letter It Denied Ever 'Existed'

NEWS
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The Central Intelligence Agency yesterday reportedly offered to hand over a certified

copy of a letter it once said "never existed" if its former top undercover agent, Hans V. Tofte, will drop his \$25,000 suit against CIA Director Richard Helms.

Byron Scott, Mr. Tofte's lawyer, said admission that the letter exists came while Mr. Helms' lawyer, Laidler B. Mackall, was taking Mr. Tofte's deposition.

Mr. Tofte claims CIA agents took the letter from his house during a "raid" in July. The CIA denied this but said it found

hundreds of its classified documents in the Tofte Georgetown home.

Mr. Tofte was suspended, then fired without explanation, but after widespread publicity on his charges against the Agency.

Mr. Tofte told reporters that the letter from Mr. Helms in the mid-1950's urged him to return to the CIA for life.

Yesterday, Mr. Scott said, Mr. Mackall began quoting from the letter, then offered Mr. Tofte a certified copy of it if he would drop the suit.

Mr. Scott said Mr. Tofte refused anything but the original.