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FBI Agent-Criticism 450

HILLSDALE, N.J. AP - A former FBI agent said Saturday he resigned rather than accept what he considered a punitive transfer after writing a letter criticizing some FBI procedures.

Jack Shaw, 37 an agent for seven years, said the letter was an academic and private communication written to Dr. Abraham S. Blumberg, professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, where Shaw was enrolled in graduate courses.

The letter, Shaw said, defended the FBI against some of Blumberg's criticism, but also attacked the way the bureau selects its leaders, disciplines its men and reacts to bad publicity.

Blumberg voiced his criticism of the FBI in class last July and Shaw subsequently drafted a 16-page response, parts of which were obtained by the bureau's New York office when Shaw sent it to the typing pool.

As a result, Shaw said, Hoover sent him a telegram accusing him of "atrocious judgement."

In October, John Jay announced that Hoover ordered 15 other agents taking courses there to withdraw from the college.

The FBI refused to comment on Shaw's analysis of the bureau's operations or on the resignation of the 15 agents from the college.

Shaw said he was ordered to report to the FBI's Butte, Mont., office, which he said was a bog house for agents out of favor.

He resigned instead and said he received a telegram from Hoover, saying "your resignation is accepted with prejudice." As a result, Shaw said, he has been unable to get another job in the law enforcement field.

At this point, the only absolution I want is to have the stigma removed," he said in an interview.

In his letter, the agent defended the FBI as an "effective law enforcement agency" and argued that, despite a "cult of personality," Hoover was a man of integrity.

"It is certainly no military secret, though I'm sure, not widely published either," he wrote that adulation of the director in some form or other provides the main catalyst in the process of administrative advancement."

Judgements of an agent's merits, for promotion Shaw wrote, were made on the basis of brief "three-to-five minute" interviews with Hoover.

Discipline, the former agent wrote Blumberg, was "swift and harsh."

Unfortunately too," he added, "it is often arbitrary. Punishment is usually meted out in direct proportion to the amount of bad publicity generated by the particular mistake or incident."

Shaw said the bureau tended to seek new "successes" and to concentrate manpower on areas such as stolen car cases, petty thefts and bank robberies because "these types of crime have produced high statistical success in the past."

Because of a rigid internal power structure, Shaw contended, cooperation with outside agencies was difficult.

Professional jealousy is not an uncommon FBI shortcoming," he said.

"We are not simply rooted in tradition," he said. "We're stuck in it up to our eyeballs. And it all revolves around one key figure, viz., the life and exploits of J. Edgar Hoover."

Shaw asked Blumberg to keep his letter in "complete confidence."

"In the bureau's eyes, of course, however academically intended, my statements would constitute a prima facie case of heresy. I would prefer not to be martyred in this calendar year."

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