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(320)

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., SEPT. 23 (AP)-RICHARD A. LAUCHLI JR. OF COLLINSVILLE FORMER ILLINOIS HEAD OF THE ANTI-COMMUNIST "MINUTEMEN" GROUP, WAS INDICTED BY A FEDERAL GRAND JURY TODAY ON CHARGES OF ILLEGAL MANUFACTURE OF FIREARMS.

LAUCHLI, 37, ALSO WAS CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY AND INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION AND RECEIPT OF FIREARMS.

LAUCHLI AND DONALD STURGIS OF FAIRMONT CITY WERE ARRESTED BY TREASURY AGENTS FOLLOWING A HIGH-SPEED CHASE OVER RURAL ROADS NEAR CLINTON MAY 19.

AGENTS SAID THE TWO TRIED TO ESCAPE AFTER AN UNDERCOVER AGENT WHO POSED AS A MIDDLEMAN FOR AN UNNAMED FOREIGN POWER HAD PAID LAUCHLI \$17,000 FOR A STOCKPILE OF WEAPONS, INCLUDING MACHINEGUNS.

ASSISTANT U. S. ATTY. LEON SCROGGINS SAID STURGIS WAS NAMED AS A CO-CONSPIRATOR BUT NOT AS A DEFENDANT.

NAMED IN A SEPARATE CONSPIRACY INDICTMENT WITH LAUCHLI WAS CHARLES M. VON KRIEGSFELD, 26, A CICERO GUN DEALER. VON KRIEGSFELD WAS ARRESTED MAY 21 AND CHARGED WITH POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. SCROGGINS SAID WEAPONS WERE FOUND IN VON KRIEGSFELD'S HOME WHEN HE WAS SEIZED.

SCROGGINS SAID THE TREASURY AGENT WHO PURCHASED THE GUNS FROM LAUCHLI POSED AS "A GENERAL FROM A SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY, NOT CUBA."

"THE AGENT TOLD LAUCHLI HE WAS PURCHASING THE GUNS FOR REVOLUTIONARY PURPOSES," SCROGGINS SAID.

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AFTER LAUCHLI'S ARREST IN MAY, U.S. ATTY. EDWARD PHELPS SAID THAT DESPITE LAUCHLI'S PAST CONNECTIONS WITH THE MINUTEMEN, "THIS CERTAINLY WASN'T TIED UP WITH THE MINUTEMEN OPERATION."

"ANY REPORTS THAT HE WAS IN THE BUSINESS FOR PATRIOTIC OR POLITICAL REASONS ARE FALSE AND COMPLETELY UNFOUNDED ON THE BASIS OF EVIDENCE WE HAVE," PHELPS SAID.

THE INDICTMENT CHARGED THAT LAUCHLI PURCHASED 1,537 PARTIALLY SCRAPPED THOMPSON SUB-MACHINE GUNS AND 114 PARTIALLY SCRAPPED

BROWNING MACHINE GUNS FROM RICHARD EVANS IN PROVO, UTAH.

ON MAY 14, THE INDICTMENT SAID, LAUCHLI AND STURGIS CONVOYED A TRUCK CONTAINING 109 MACHINE GUNS TO THE BUTTERWORTH FARM NEAR WAPELLA, ILL., WHERE UNDERCOVER AGENTS HAD AGREED TO PURCHASE THE FIREARMS.

IN 1961, LAUCHLI LED DETACHMENTS OF MINUTEMEN THROUGH GUERRILLA WARFARE MANEUVERS. HE HAS BEEN CONVICTED ONCE FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, PHELPS SAID.

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