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(400) TOFTE-CIA

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WASHINGTON, SEPT. 20 (AP)-VETERAN CIA AGENT HANS V. TOFTE FIRMLY INSISTS THAT THE WRONG MAN GAVE HIM HIS WALKING PAPERS SO HE ISN'T LEGALLY FIRED FROM THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

"I CONSIDER MYSELF UNFIRED," HE PROCLAIMED.

BUT THE CIA JUST AS FIRMLY INSISTED TODAY THAT TOFTE'S CAREER WITH THE CIA AFTER 17 YEARS WILL END ON SCHEDULE OCT. 15, AS HE WAS INFORMED LAST WEEK. AND THE CIA SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT WAS THAT--AND THE CIA WOULD BE ITS HUSH-HUSH SELF FURTHER ON THE MATTER.

THE 55-YEAR-OLD DANISH-BORN AGENT WAS SERVED A 30-DAY DISMISSAL NOTICE BY EMMETT D. ECHOLS, CIA DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL, ON RECOMMENDATION OF A BOARD OF INQUIRY. BUT TOFTE REPLIED THAT THE ONLY MAN IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WHO CAN KICK HIM OUT OF THE SUPER-SECRET AGENCY IS CIA DIRECTOR RICHARD HELMS.

TOFTE AND HIS SUPERIORS HAVE BEEN AT ODDS SINCE A JULY 23-24 WEEKEND INCIDENT INVOLVING SOME SECRET PAPERS HE HAD TAKEN HOME. AND WHEN HE WAS SUSPENDED HE TOOK HIS CASE TO NEWSMEN, WHICH THE INQUIRY BOARD WAS UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE FELT REDUCED HIS VALUE AS A SECRET AGENT.

TODAY, TOFTE MADE PUBLIC ECHOLS' LETTER OF DISMISSAL TO HIM AND HIS REPLY TO ECHOLS DATED YESTERDAY.

"DOES IT OCCUR TO YOU," TOFTE WROTE, "THAT DICK HELMS IS BEGINNING TO HIDE HABITUALLY BEHIND 'UNDERLINGS'? YOUR LETTER IS NOT SIGNED BY ORDER OF THE DCI. HE IS THE ONLY FELLOW THAT CAN FIRE ME WITHOUT EXPLANATION WITHIN THE ENTIRE FEDERAL HIERARCHY. I DOUBT WHETHER HE CAN EVEN DELEGATE THAT AUTHORITY.

"SO BE GOOD ENOUGH TO GET TOGETHER WITH HOWARD OSBORN (CIA DIRECTOR OF SECURITY) AND TELL DICK TO FIRE ME PROPERLY OVER HIS OWN SIGNATURE IN HIS CAPACITY OF DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE. MEANWHILE, I CONSIDER MYSELF UNFIRED...AND YOU CAN SCRAP THE MID-OCTOBER DATE AS OF RIGHT NOW."

THE POINT NOW AT ISSUE BETWEEN TOFTE AND THE CIA IS WHETHER HE IS A SALARIED STAFF MEMBER OR IS UNDER CONTRACT. THE CIA CONTENDS, IT IS UNDERSTOOD, THAT HE IS UNDER A CONTRACT WHICH IT CAN TERMINATE ON 30 DAYS' NOTICE AND HE CAN TERMINATE WITHOUT NOTICE.

IN HIS LETTER TO ECHOLS, TOFTE CONTENDED "I WAS PERSUADED TO SIGN THAT CONTRACT IN 1956 AS A TEMPORARY MEASURE RELATIVE TO AN UNDERCOVER 'PILOT MISSION', AND THAT IT WAS DEFINITELY UNDERSTOOD THAT I WOULD REVERT TO STAFF EMPLOYEE STATUS AT SOME FUTURE DATE.

"I KNOW THAT MY PERSONAL FILE IN YOUR DEPARTMENT BY NOW INDICATES THINGS TO THE CONTRARY," TOFTE WROTE ECHOLS, "BECAUSE I HAVE SEEN IT MANY TIMES IN SPITE OF THE 'EYES ONLY' CLASSIFICATION. THAT IS WHY I STAND ON MY OFFICIAL RECORD--THAT FILE OF YOURS IS A MESS."

TOFTE'S TROUBLES WITH THE CIA BEGAN WHEN HE PUT HIS NORTHWEST WASHINGTON HOUSE UP FOR RENTAL OR SALE THAT JULY WEEKEND AND ONE OF THOSE COMING TO THE PREMISES WAS A CIA MAN. TOFTE WAS NOT AT HOME AT THE TIME.

CIA'S VERSION WAS THAT THE EMPLOYEE WENT TO THE HOME PURELY AS A WOULD-BE RENTER, THAT HE SAW SOME SECRET CIA MATERIAL THERE IN VIOLATION OF CIA RULES AND THAT HE THEREAFTER RETURNED WITH ANOTHER CIA AGENT TO PICK UP THE MATERIAL.

TOFTE CONTENDED THEY ENTERED THE HOUSEHOLD UNDER FALSE PRETENSES AND VIOLATED HIS CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS.

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