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# CIA Sued by Homosexual for Removal of Security Clearance

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LOS ANGELES, Nov. 23—John William Green, 51, is a conservative Republican who describes himself as "very much a nationalist, one of those flag-wavers. And I have always had a great deal of faith in my country and its intelligence-gathering activities."

But Green says that faith has been shaken because it took the CIA 13 years to discover that he is a homosexual, a fact that he insists he never tried to hide.

Now Green is the plaintiff in a suit against the CIA that gay leaders believe may be a watershed case for homosexual rights.

Green has worked as an aerospace engineer at TRW Inc., a major defense contractor, for 15 years, during which he received five security clearances. In 1981, 13 years after he

started at TRW, the CIA discovered that Green was a homosexual and revoked the clearances.

Green since has filed suit in U.S. District Court in an attempt to force the agency to restore his clearances, and said he is prepared to take his case to the Supreme Court.

Until now, most cases concerning homosexuals and security clearances have been resolved at the administrative level, and none has gone to the Supreme Court.

In 1973, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that revocation of a security clearance for homosexuality was "probably illegal." But the issue was not fully resolved.

A current case in the D.C. Court of Appeals, *Doe v. Casey*, is considered weaker than Green's. The defendant is a CIA employe and under the law may be fired at will by the

CIA director. Green, however, is employed by private industry. He has what his attorney calls "a spotless security record." And in his 15 years at TRW, he has lived an openly gay life.

Green grew up in northern California, served in the Navy and at age 21 began a homosexual relationship that lasted 21 years. After it broke up, Green lived alone for four years until he met his current lover, another TRW employe with whom he has lived for 4½ years. It was during a security check of that man that the CIA discovered Green's homosexuality—and the source was

Green himself. "I said, 'You couldn't have come to a better person. We live together, and no one knows him better than me,'" Green related.

Green said the investigator asked only if he considered the relationship a long-term one. Green said he did.

Green's lover, who asked that his identity be withheld, said the investigator came to his office about a week later, and asked questions about Green. He added:

"After about five minutes, she asked, 'Are you and he having a homosexual affair?' I said yes."

Shortly afterward, Green's security clearances were revoked and TRW gave him a job that did not require clearances.

The government's position is that homosexuals are subject to blackmail and coercion. But this, Green believes, is "a bureaucratic Catch-22 [wherein gays] who hide nothing and

have nothing to hide lose our clearances. The people who keep their clearances are the frightened and closeted homosexuals who can be blackmailed, and who really are dangerous targets for foreign espionage."

Green said that since his Navy days he has never tried to conceal his homosexuality.

Neither the CIA nor TRW asked if he was gay, he said, and he never volunteered the information. A number of Green's co-workers have written to the CIA, stating that they had long known of Green's sexual preference and that he made no secret of it.

Green said the government is essentially saying to him, "We have no record of your being gay. Therefore, you hid it. Therefore, you are subject to coercion."

John McDermott, a Los Angeles civil rights attorney who is handling Green's case, said the question is "to what extent homosexual conduct renders an individual vulnerable to blackmail."

Green's record "is the most compelling evidence that he's not a security risk," he said.

Green, who admits that he experimented once with marijuana and once with cocaine, said he is certain he will win his case.

"I haven't got a fear. There aren't any closets." Then he laughed, and said, "No. There aren't any skeletons in the closets."

TRW and the CIA declined comment on the case.