

STATE DEPT., CONGRESS IN RUNNING FEUD

FOIAb3b

Committee Hears It Is Being Probed

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

[Chicago Tribune Press Service]

Washington, Jan. 15 ~~The~~

Senate internal security subcommittee suspects that it is being investigated by the state department in the war between congressional committees and government agencies.

The war is over the authority of the committees to investigate the agencies. The agencies are resisting, and are even telling their officers and employees not to speak freely when called by the committees as witnesses.

The possibility that a department is investigating a subcommittee or a committee is not so far-fetched as it may seem. The agriculture department actually began in investigation of Senators Karl Mundt [R., S. D.] and Carl Curtis [R., Neb.] during the Senate permanent investigations subcommittee's inquiry into the department's Billie Sol Estes scandal.

Dodd Tells Suspicion

Suspicion that the state department is investigating the internal security subcommittee was voiced by Sen. Thomas J. Dodd [D., Conn.] at the subcommittee's recent hearings in the Otto F. Otepka affair.

Otepka is a veteran state department security officer who has incurred the ire of some higher-ups in the department by trying to rid it of employees who are security risks.

The internal security subcommittee has called on him for information to be used in weeding out security risks, and some of Otepka's superiors began to wonder if he were volunteering information that had not even been asked.

They tapped his telephone and began searching thru his waste receptacle, known in state department gobbledegook as a "burn bag."

Read Carbon Papers

The snoopers came up with a used typewriter ribbon and some old carbon papers, from which they say they obtained evidence that Otepka had been writing questions for the subcommittee to ask of state department witnesses.

Charges were filed against Otepka and he was about to be fired when the subcommittee came to his rescue and notified the department that it would be in trouble if it fired him. The firing was postponed.

Then stories began to circulate that the department was conducting an investigation of the subcommittee's staff workers, and possibly of the senators themselves.

Sen. Dodd asked the state

department about the stories at the Otepka hearings. The department denied that it was conducting an investigation.

But Dodd is determined to find out whether the stories are true.