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# Allen-Scott Report Compromise On Otepka?

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President Johnson is trying his hand at mediating the long and painful dispute between the State Department and suspended security officer Otto Otepka—but so far with no visible progress.

The President is proposing this compromise: the State Department to rehire Otepka, but in another job at his previous pay.

Both sides have rejected this backstage formula.

Secretary Rusk, who personally approved the ouster of Otepka on charges of "breach of departmental regulations," is balky at taking him back. In turn Otepka is insisting on being restored as chief of the security evaluation division. He is badly refusing to take anything else.

What happens next in this stormy tangle is up in the air.

Two influential senators who are strong supporters of Otepka are pondering this baffling deadlock, but have come up with no promising solution as yet.

Senators James Eastland, D-Miss., and Thomas Dodd, D-Conn., chairman and vice chairman of the potent Judiciary Committee, would like to see Otepka come to some terms "in order not to embarrass the new President." At the same time, they fully back Otepka's demand that his controversial security evaluation program be continued unchanged.

Otepka indignantly contends that since his ouster his important program has been scuttled. He argues that's the real issue at stake in this bitter melee.

Reinstating him in some other job, Otepka is emphatically telling Senators Dodd and Eastland, would still not restore the urgently needed security evaluation program. Rusk continues to strongly oppose that, and Otepka holds this is the crux of the acrid controversy.

In Otepka's adamant opinion that is vitally essential is reuniting the resumption of security evaluation. He also feels that the only way to be effectively done is by the direction

That's why he is demanding his job back and why his Senate friends are stumped about breaking the impasse with Rusk.

### Untouched Security Risks

As devised by Otepka, his security evaluation program linked security and intelligence information to ferret out security risks.

As proof of his program's effectiveness, Otepka cites the fact that through it a number of security risks were weeded out of the State Department and others were prevented from getting in.

Prior to his ouster he had compiled a list of several hundred department employees who either had unfavorable information in their files or whose security investigations were incomplete. Otepka was working on special evaluations to determine whether these questionable employees should be thoroughly investigated by the FBI when he was suspended and his program ditched.

Fighting the "breach of regulations" charge, Otepka demanded a civil service hearing to enable him to fully air this dynamite-loaded backstage situation. Under senatorial pressure, Rusk promised a hearing.

But, on direct White House orders, it has been put off until "late January."

The reason is obvious: The President is trying to avoid a public unfurling of the details of Otepka's complaints about State Department bumbling and fumbling on security problems. That could prove highly explosive in an election year.

The President is clearly hoping to work out some kind of a compromise that will placate both Rusk and Otepka — and keep the lid on this potential bombshell.

The President has scored one backstage success involving Otepka.

At the President's persuasion, Senator Eastland and Senator John McClellan, D-Ark., withdrew an amendment they were planning to attach to the State Department's appropriation bill barring the expenditure of certain money until Otepka was on his job back.

Eastland drafted the rider, and McClellan, member of the Appropriations' Committee, had lined up the votes to put it over. The President phoned them and prevailed on them to shelve their amendment.

They agreed on his assurance he would personally see to it that Otepka was rehired.

That still hasn't happened. If it doesn't, Eastland and Dodd are prepared to release testimony, obtained by their committee at closed-door sessions, about security risks in the State Department, and the reputed effort of one official to bring convicted Alger Hiss back into the government.