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Otepka Requests Hearing, Asks Lie Test for Accusers

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By EARL H. VOSS
Star Staff Writer

Otto E. Otepka, chief security risk evaluator in the State Department until he was fired November 5, today appealed for a hearing and demanded that his principal accusers in the department submit to lie detector tests.

His boss, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State John F. Reilly, and two other associates in the Office of Security have been accused by Senators of giving misleading testimony about tapping Mr. Otepka's phone.

Mr. Reilly, David I. Belisle and Elmer D. Hill revised their testimony before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee last Wednesday after having

denied last summer any connection with the tapping of Mr. Otepka's phone.

In his letter notifying the State Department of his desire for a hearing, Mr. Otepka charged that Mr. Reilly, was guilty of "a breach of departmental regulations and a violation of a Federal statute."

Mr. Reilly admitted to the subcommittee last week that he had directed a subordinate to tap Mr. Otepka's telephone but said no conversations were intercepted.

Mr. Otepka said "the case against me was to a large extent built by John F. Reilly, either personally or through others under his immediate direction and control . . . It has now been established that in

his overzealous attempts to build a case against me, Reilly was guilty of serious misconduct, and that he thereafter testified untruthfully under oath when questioned about his improper activities."

"Unworthy of Belief"

Mr. Reilly and Mr. Hill have been placed on administrative leave with pay while the State Department considers what to do about their reversal of testimony before the subcommittee.

"In view of the circumstances," Mr. Otepka said in his letter of appeal, "I respectfully submit that Reilly and Belisle are unworthy of belief and that any findings against me based upon their testimony or upon evidence produced by them cannot and should not stand.

"I submit further that this entire proceeding is tainted and vitiated by the improper activities and the untruthfulness of these men, so that prosecution of any charges in which they are involved would deny me due process of law."

Mr. Otepka charged that Mr. Reilly "did not act in good faith" in seeking his dismissal.

"On the contrary," Mr. Otepka said, "his action was prompted by personal bias, prejudice and malice and by a desire to punish me for telling the truth to the Senate subcommittee, and thereby embarrassing Mr. Reilly. The purpose of the charges was not to protect the interest of the Government, but rather to shield Mr. Reilly."

Denies Clipping Papers

The demand that his superiors take lie tests came in connection with charges that Mr. Otepka had clipped classification labels from certain documents on security-risk cases.

Mr. Otepka has denied he clipped the documents and also rejected the "insinuation" of the State Department that he had turned over the clipped documents to the chief counsel of the Senate subcommittee, J. G. Sourwine.

"I respectfully suggest that to assist in the resolution of this matter of the clipped docu-

ments all of the individuals who had access to the documents should submit to a polygraph (lie detector) test, to be administered by a competent and impartial examiner," Mr. Otepka said.

"I shall be glad to submit to such a test."

Calls for 36

He asked that 36 State Department employes be made available to the hearing officer

who will take testimony on the Otepka appeal.

Mr. Otepka will continue on the department's payroll throughout the appeal procedures.

Mr. Reilly, Mr. Belisle and Mr. Hill were called to testify today before the Senate subcommittee to expand on their letters of last week acknowledging they were involved in the attaching of an eavesdropping device to Mr. Otepka's telephone.