

OCT 15 1963



# 'FIRED BECAUSE I TOLD TRUTH - SECURITY AID

## Replies to Charges by State Dept.

BY WILLARD EDWARDS  
(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Washington, Oct. 14 (A veteran state department security officer charged today that he was facing dismissal because he told the truth when questioned by Senate investigators. Otepka, chief of the division of evaluations, bureau of security and consular affairs, filed a formal reply to charges accusing him of conduct unbecoming a state department officer.

"I hold that when one is called upon to speak, he must speak the whole truth; he must not attempt to prevent or suppress the truth by concealment, evasion, half-truths, or misleading silence," he said.

### Under No Illusions

In following this code, Otepka said, he did not regard himself as violating any government law or directive and he asked dismissal of the charges against him as unfounded.

Otepka and his attorney Roger Robb, were under no illusion that this plea will be heeded. He expects to be ousted Oct. 23. He will then appeal to the civil service commission for a hearing which must be given him.

In his lengthy reply, Otepka reviewed the entire case which has made him the central figure in a clash between the state department and the Senate judiciary committee. President Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk have been drawn into this controversy which involves an alleged cover-up of lax security in the state department.

### Letter from Rusk

President Kennedy said last week that Rusk was ready to testify. The committee, which has been seeking Rusk as a witness since last July, had just received a letter from him asserting his unwillingness to testify until he was provided with all the evidence, including private papers and memoranda, gathered in an inquiry into security procedures in his department.

Another letter was sent to state and renewing the demand that he appear as a witness.

Rusk presumably was embarrassed by one section of Otepka's defense statement which noted that the secretary of state in 1961 had taken action identical to that for which Otepka now faces discharge.

### Earlier Case Cited

Rusk had permitted Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D., Conn.) vice chairman of the Senate internal security subcommittee, to examine "certain documents in confidence," in connection with the case involving William W. Wieland, a state department officer who had been a strong supporter of Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

If Rusk could disclose documents from Wieland's security file to the internal security subcommittee, why was it improper for Otepka to disclose two comparatively "innocent" memoranda to the same subcommittee? Otepka asked. He was acting, he noted, to give the subcommittee truthful information and to "refute unwarranted and scandalous charges against me and my record."

Otepka noted that he had been a government employe for 27 years and a security officer since 1942. In 1953, he was transferred to the state department. As deputy director of the office of security, in 1960, just before the Kennedy administration took over, he was described by his superiors in these terms:

"He is knowledgeable of communism and of its subversive efforts in the United States. To this, he adds perspective, balance, and good judgment, presenting his recommendations and decisions in clear, well-reasoned, and meticulously drafted documents."

### Testifies in Probe

The new administration "reorganized" the security bureau, demoted Otepka, and installed new procedures for clearance on appointments to the state department and international organizations which Otepka protested.

In November, 1961, and again

in October, 1962, he testified before the Senate subcommittee but his real troubles did not start until February and March 1963, when the subcommittee again called him in an inquiry to determine if its earlier recommendations for tightening up security procedures had been followed.

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT

John F. Reilly, deputy assistant secretary of state for security, also testified. J. G. Sourwine, the subcommittee's chief counsel, informed Otepka that Reilly had contradicted Otepka's testimony.

"After carefully reading the transcripts of Mr. Reilly's testimony, I was both shocked and amazed," Otepka said. "In rebuttal, I prepared a memorandum of 39 double-spaced pages, annotated by exhibits, and furnished a copy to Mr. Sourwine."

### "Disturbed by Statements"

"I was especially disturbed by two statements made by Mr. Reilly in his testimony. First, he testified, concerning eight prospective appointees to the advisory committee on international organizations, that there was no substantial derogatory information respecting any of them, and that the case of only one of them had even been brought to his attention prior to their appointment."

In rebuttal of this testimony Otepka supplied Sourwine with two memoranda, one recommending to Reilly that certain of the appointees not be cleared, and a second by Reilly himself with respect to these cases.

The state department accused Otepka of violating a 1948 directive, forbidding Congress access to vault files, when he submitted these memoranda. Otepka submitted that I had not only the right but the duty to

### Denies Clipping Paper

Otepka flatly denied another state department charge, that he "mutilated" a classified document by cutting off the notation "confidential." "I did not clip the document in question," he asserted. "I do not know who did it, or why."

The clipped document, according to the state department, had been found in Otepka's "burn bag," a receptacle for papers marked for destruction. There were three secretaries and three burn bags at Otepka's office, he noted, and discarded papers were thrown into which ever burn bag was most convenient.

The state department denied Otepka and his attorney permission to examine the contents of the burn bags and placed other restrictions on preparation of his defense, he said. When other state department officers have been accused of much graver charges than those placed against Otepka, he noted, they and their lawyers have been permitted to examine all documents and pa-

FOIAb3b