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# Morrie Says He's Right About Wieland

By Morrie Ryskind

My last column accused the Associated Press of highly questionable omission in its summation of the hearings on the William Wieland case, just released by the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. It reported that Wieland, head of the State Department's Office of Caribbean Affairs when Castro rose to power (and charged with being an active apologist for Fidel), "has been fully cleared and his security case closed."

And it went on—quoting the testimony of a State Department official—"the decision to close the case was made in concurrence with the Justice Department, the FBI, a special personnel advisory board and the then Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy." All of which appeared locally under the headline, "Wieland Fully Cleared for Judgment of Castro."

I wrote — and now repeat—that such a selective presentation gave the average

reader a totally false impression: he would think that "once again a devoted public servant had been pilloried by some self-righteous vigilantes, but had happily emerged victorious against the witch-hunters." And, in rebuttal, I quoted some of the previous testimony and the committee's own evaluation of Wieland, made in the 1962 report and included in the current one.

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The Los Angeles Times, in running my piece, inserted a note signed by the editor, which hinted at my own lack of objectivity in the matter: I had quoted from previous hearings held in 1962, whereas the new report covered the later hearings of 1963, 1964 and 1965.

Now that clearly implies—or I don't understand English at all—that the newer testimony refutes any doubts that may have arisen from the previous hearings and that I was unfair in bringing up the latter at all.

But, as a matter of simple intelligibility, I admit it is impossible to make head or tail out of the new stuff without

referring to the old, to which it alludes often. This is not a brand new book, with a completely different plot and cast of characters: this is just another chapter in the main story.

So I read both reports carefully, and I cannot find one cotton-pickin' sentence in the new material that lessens the damaging evidence offered by five—count 'em, five—former ambassadors against Wieland; or anything to refute the testimony of intelligence officers that he substituted his own judgment of Castro in disregard of FBI, CIA and G-2 reports, all of which he had access to, linking Fidel with communism. If I'm proved wrong on this, I promise to eat the offending column at high noon in the office of either the AP or the L.A. Times. Come one, come all.

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The new report does offer, on the other hand, at least one more instance where Wieland's testimony was of questionable accuracy. For the rest, it is simply a matter of State employes evading committee questioning about how come Wieland is doing all right while Otto Otepka, who was first asked to evaluate the Wieland file and then to forget it—which he didn't—is in the doghouse.

Fully cleared, indeed! State may have cleared Wieland for State—but hardly for the ambassadors and the intelligence officers.

Well, I've faulted the AP; the Los Angeles Times has faulted me; and I in turn fault the Times for not sticking to the nub of the issue. Somebody's wrong. The jury must decide.

I suggest you write the Committee on the Judiciary, 3234 New Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C., for copies of both the 1962 and 1965 reports so you can read under a fair verdict.