

Letters to the Editor

Otepka's Role

CPYRGHT

The Associated Press story on the case of William A. Wieland, carried by *The Washington Post* this morning, creates the false impression that Otto F. Otepka "cleared" Mr. Wieland in January 1962.

Referring to the testimony of Deputy Under Secretary William J. Crockett before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, the story says:

"The deputy under Secretary told the subcommittee the first favorable determination in the Wieland case, in January, 1962, was signed by Otepka, even though he told the subcommittee 18 months later in August 1963, that he questioned Wieland's judgment and integrity."

Apparently the testimony of Mr. Crockett to which the story refers is his statement, at page 99 of the transcript, that the "file indicates that the CSC was notified by letter dated January 29, 1962, that a favorable determination had been made in Wieland's case. This letter was signed by Mr. Otto Otepka."

Contrary to the impression created by your story and by Mr. Crockett's testimony Mr. Otepka did not clear Mr. Wieland in January 1962, or thereafter. Mr. Otepka has testified before the Internal Security Subcommittee that prior to January 29, 1962, he made negative findings with respect to Mr. Wieland's judgment and integrity. In view of these findings he submitted the matter to his superiors for their decision. Thereafter, according to the testimony, a favorable determination in Mr. Wieland's case was made by Mr. Otepka's superiors. The letter to the Civil Service Commission dated January 29, 1962, signed by Mr. Otepka, was merely a formal notification to the Commission of the final determination made by the Department of State. It was not in any sense a statement of Mr. Otepka's views, or a determination or "clearance" by him.