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# Probers Release Transcript Bearing on Otto Otepka Case

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Senate investigators have released transcript of closed hearings on State Department security practices which are expected to be a factor in the department's efforts to fire Otto F. Otepka, one of its top security officers.

The testimony, going back to 1963, deals with the controversial case of William A. Wieland, Latin-American expert in the department, in connection with Fidel Castro's rise to power in Cuba.

The transcript is one of several the Senate Internal Security subcommittee plans to release bearing on the Otepka case.

Otepka, once the department's chief security evaluator, was ordered dismissed for disclosing classified information to the Senate investigators. A departmental hearing, deferred several times pending release of the transcripts, is now scheduled for mid-September.

### Given Renewed Clearance

Highlights of the testimony included:

1. Wieland received renewed clearance last year despite two adverse evaluations, with the second raising the question of security.

2. Otepka accused Wieland of giving false testimony in saying he saw Castro only once on the Cuban leader's 1958 visit to Washington. According to information he obtained, Otepka testified, it was at least six times.

3. Wieland failed to disclose on his personnel form that he once went by the name of Montenegro.

4. The Wieland case was twice referred to the Justice Department for rulings and, in one, Secretary of State Dean Rusk

personally took it up with Robert F. Kennedy, then the attorney general, in 1964. Kennedy indicated then, the testimony showed, that he saw no reason to reopen the case.

5. Otepka flatly contradicted the testimony of John F. Reilly, former head of the department's office of security, that Otepka asked to be taken out of the Wieland case because of his testimony in the Senate hearing. Otepka testified, the transcript reveals, that Reilly brought up the question and that when Otepka was relieved of his duties as chief of the evaluation section, he was effectively taken out of the case.

### Headed Cuban Desk

The Wieland case goes back to the Eisenhower administration and questions raised at that time on Castro's Communist affiliation. Wieland was then head of the State Department's Cuban desk.

In a 1962 report, the subcommittee said a great quantity of intelligence on Castro's Communist connections came to his desk, and then added:

"The committee was unable to document a single instance in which Mr. Wieland passed any of this material up to his superiors or mentioned it as credible in any report or policy paper."

The transcript revealed that subcommittee members repeatedly questioned State Department witnesses on what was described as the unusual course of the Wieland investigation and

how it was finally resolved. It did not reveal who finally ordered the Wieland clearance reaffirmed.

The Justice Department, the transcript revealed, found insufficient grounds for a perjury case growing out of Wieland's testimony regarding his failure to disclose on his application that he had been known as Montenegro.

Otepka has remained on the State Department payroll pending the hearing, but has been given only routine assignments.