

DEC 22 1963

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-RDP7

CPYRGHT

## State Department Denies Rusk Interfered in Ouster of Otepka

CPYRGHT

FOIAb3b

CPYRGHT

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21 (UPI) — The State Department accused Representative William C. Cramer today of issuing "distortions, inaccuracies and misleading references" about its security division and the activities of Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

The department said the Florida Republican had used "distorted information" from irresponsible sources when he charged that Mr. Rusk bypassed proper administrative procedure to secure the recent ouster of Otto F. Otepka, a security officer. Mr. Otepka was charged with passing confidential information to unauthorized persons.

The department also denied Mr. Cramer's assertion that its security officers were engaged in investigating members of the staff of the Senate Internal Security subcommittee. Mr. Otepka is alleged to have given the information to the subcommittee.

The State Department statement said:

"It is regrettable that the Congressman did not come to the department for verification of the information passed to him by a source he has not identified."

### 'Confidential' Memo Cited

On Thursday Mr. Cramer released what he said was a "confidential memorandum" from an "unimpeachable source" describing a meeting on Nov. 19 of security officers with William J. Crockett, deputy under secretary of state for administration.

The meeting took place, the State Department said, but the discussion was not as reported by Mr. Cramer.

The department said the affair "underlines the problem presented when misleading and distorted information is passed by sources acting irresponsibly."

It described as "absolutely false" any suggestion that Mr. Rusk "has interfered in the normal administrative procedures" in the Otepka case.

Mr. Otepka has appealed his dismissal as chief of the division of Evaluations of Security Information. His case may eventually go to Mr. Rusk for review. The Secretary has the authority to reverse the decision of his subordinates.

Mr. Crockett, according to

the memorandum released by Mr. Cramer, told security officers that Mr. Rusk had said "We will sweep the place clean" to rid the department of any employees disloyal to the Secretary. The department said Mr. Crockett "made no reference to sweeping the place clean" nor was there any reference to the Otepka case except "the fact in the normal administrative processes."

### Agency Denies Charges

Ben Thirkield, the department's press officer, said he had been authorized to say that:

Its security office "is not investigating the employes of the Senate Internal Security subcommittee."

"The department is not investigating psychological testing leaks."

"At no time did Mr. Crockett say there is a 'second underground' in the office of security."

All the charges were contained in the memorandum Mr. Cramer said he received.

Mr. Crockett, the department statement said, called together the security officers "for the purpose of expressing to them the Secretary's confidence in the Department's security forces."

"The security chiefs were told that if there were policy problems on which they or their subordinate employes could not get satisfaction from their immediate superiors, Crockett was eager to have such information and would even arrange for meetings with the Secretary to resolve such problems if necessary," the department declared.