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# Otepka Fired by State; Senate Probers Protest



Associated Press

OTTO F. OTEPKA  
... fired by State Dept.

By Vincent J. Burke  
The Los Angeles Times

Otto F. Otepka, 48, one of the State Department's top security officers, was fired yesterday for giving confidential Department information to the Senate subcommittee on internal security.

The decision, presumably made with White House approval, was promptly denounced by Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.), a member of the subcommittee. Dodd said he would ask Sen. James Eastland (D-Miss.) to call an "emergency meeting" of the Senate's Judiciary Committee "to consider the implications." Eastland is chairman of both the subcommittee and its parent, the Judiciary Committee.

Under regular procedures Otepka will continue to collect his \$16,900 a year

salary until the Department disposes of his expected appeal. Otepka could carry the fight for his job to the Civil Service Commission, for which he once worked, and, ultimately, to the courts.

"We'll take every available appeal," Otepka's lawyer, Roger Robb, told a reporter.

Since the first year of the Eisenhower Administration, Otepka has served as chief of the division which evaluates State Department personnel to insure that none are security risks.

The Eastland subcommittee has been critical of the Department's security procedures.

Otepka was charged by the State Department on Sept. 23 with "declassifying" confidential documents and with preparing questions for J. G. Sourwine, the subcommittee's chief counsel, to ask State Department witnesses in a security case before the subcommittee.

In a 12-page reply, Otepka acknowledged that he had supplied the subcommittee with confidential Department information. But he insisted that he had not violated the "spirit" of security regulations.

Otepka's reply added that he prepared a memorandum for Sourwine, including "exhibits" from Department files, after his Department superior John F. Reilly, gave testimony to the subcommittee which "I knew to be incorrect."

Moreover, he said, he met with Sourwine after working hours to discuss alleged "conflicts" in Reilly's testimony relating to the subcommittee's inquiry into the security evaluation of William A. Wieland, another Department employe.

Wieland was accused by the subcommittee last year of lacking "integrity and general suitability" for his role in the intelligence assessment of Cuba's Premier Fidel Castro. Wieland, who is still on the Department payroll, was defended by President Kennedy.

Two weeks ago Secretary of State Dean Rusk was questioned by Eastland's subcommittee at a closed door hearing about the reasons for the Department's actions against Otepka. Eastland said after the hearing that "the powers of Congress are at stake" and that he intended "to protect Otepka by every means at my command."