

ADA Tries to Block Otepka Confirmation

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Americans for Democratic Action attacked Otto Otepka's nomination to the Subversive Activities Control Board yesterday as the first act of a "dangerous" right-wing scenario.

The liberal group urged the Senate to vote down Otepka's confirmation or send the nomination back to the Judiciary Committee for "further hearings on his right-wing activity."

In a letter sent to all 100 Senators, ADA Vice Chairman Joseph L. Rauh Jr. protested that Otepka might well wind up "in charge of investigating all Federal employees."

President Nixon named Otepka to the SACB after the State Department's former chief security evaluator lost a long legal fight for reinstatement. He had been ousted in

1963 after giving classified documents to the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on internal security.

Rauh pointed out that under a bill sponsored by Otepka's staunchest supporters in the Senate, a new Government agency would be set up to check all Federal employes for security risks.

The bill would permit the chairman of the SACB to head the new security agency, and, Rauh said, Mr. Nixon could name Otepka as chairman once the Senate approved his appointment to the SACB.

Recently, Rauh said, Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), an outspoken Otepka supporter, was quoted as saying that with passage of this bill, "Mr. Otepka will once again deal with security evaluation, not only for the State Department, but for the whole of Government."

Alluding to financial support for Otepka by members of the John Birch Society and his attendance at meetings run by Birch leaders, Rauh contended that the Senate, if it confirms Otepka, "would be adopting a double standard a between the extreme right and extreme left."

The Senate, Rauh argued would never consider appointing a man who "has accepted funds from members of the Communist Party" and "has appeared at meetings run by leaders of the Communist Party."

Otepka's supporters, on the other hand, have complained that he has been the victim of a double standard and tainted by liberals with "guilt by association."

The issue is expected to come up on the Senate floor within a few days. Otepka was praised highly Wednesday in a Senate Judiciary Committee majority report as "a fine example of the best type of career civil servant."