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WASHINGTON AP - A Senate hearing on Otto F. Otepka's nomination to be a member of the Subversive Activities Control Board has been set for April 15 before members of a committee that defended him during his recent years of trouble.

A Judiciary Committee spokesman said the hearing will be conducted by a three-member subcommittee headed by Sen. James O. Eastland, D-Miss. The other members are Sens. John L. McClellan, D-Ark., and Roman L. Hruska, R-Neb.

Otepka, a controversial former State Department security officer, was nominated for the \$36,000-a-year post by President Nixon on March 20.

In December 1967, the then secretary of state, Dean Rusk, ordered Otepka demoted, transferred and reprimanded after superiors accused him of unauthorized disclosure of personnel security files to the Senate Internal Security subcommittee.

The subcommittee, a unit of the Judiciary Committee, strongly backed Otepka and maintained the action against him was in reprisal for his criticism of State Department security procedures.

Eastland, chairman of the full committee and its internal security unit, hailed Nixon's nomination of Otepka as an SACB member as "a complete vindication of a man who has performed a vital service to his country." He predicted speedy Senate confirmation.

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