

## Senate Panel Reportedly Favors Confirmation of 'Security Risk'

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 1—The Senate Finance Committee resumed hearings today on the confirmation of Helmut Sonnenfeldt as Under Secretary of the Treasury. Now, after a pause of over four months the committee seems disposed to approve the controversial White House appointment.

During the summer, Mr. Sonnenfeldt, who is 47 years old and a senior official of the National Security Council, was repeatedly described as "a security risk" in testimony before the House Internal Security Committee.

The House hearings, conducted by Representative John M. Ashbrook, Republican of Ohio, were begun independent of the Senate confirmation hearings but were tied to them in terms of Mr. Sonnenfeldt's acceptability as a high Administration official.

The "security risk" charges were renewed today by Stephen A. Koczak and John D. Hemenway, both former Foreign Service Officers, before the Senate panel.

But Senator Russell B. Long rejected the charges as insubstantial, saying he had examined Mr. Sonnenfeldt's record at the Federal Bureau of Investigation concerning his 17-year career at the State Department.

"I just could not find anything to support the allegations and I think we should move along as rapidly as possible to confirmation," the Louisiana Democrat said.

Senator Long, who is the chairman of the panel, said the Sonnenfeldt F.B.I. security file contained only "some pretty far fetched rumors—the kind of thing where you heard this man did that kind of thing only it might have been his brother."

After a testy exchange with Mr. Hemenway, who had rushed up to the chairman's seat shouting that he had a telegram pertaining to the case, Mr. Long ruled that the committee would hear out Mr. Koczak.

The telegram was from Otto F. Otepka, the former State Department security evaluator, who was also present at the hearing. Mr. Otepka, Mr. Hemenway and Mr. Koczak have been campaigning against the Sonnenfeldt appointment with the assistance of Representative Ashbrook.

### Conversation Overheard

Mr. Koczak testified under oath that in 1958, while serving in the State Department's intelligence research bureau along with Mr. Sonnenfeldt he overheard him pass "highly classified U.S. Government information" to an Israeli diplomat at a cocktail party in Washington.

Asked to be more specific, Mr. Koczak said he had heard Mr. Sonnenfeldt tell the Israeli "in great detail" about secret United States negotiations with Lebanon involving the landing of American troops in Lebanon. "All I know is that I observed a very serious violation of security" he said.

Mr. Koczak added that he had reported the incident to his superiors and was later questioned about it by an F.B.I. agent whose name he could not disclose for security rea-



Associated Press

Helmut Sonnenfeldt

sons. He contended that "the F.B.I. had distorted the record" of the case.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt, answering under oath, said "I simply flatly deny it." He testified that the State Department had conducted a thorough investigation of him with a lie detector test and that he had apparently been exonerated because further promotions followed.

### Confirmation Urged

Referring to his examination of the F.B.I. file, Senator Long said he was not very impressed by what Government employees purportedly said at cocktail parties.

Senators Gaylord Nelson, Democrat of Wisconsin, and Walter F. Mondale, Democrat of Minnesota, spoke in behalf of Mr. Sonnenfeldt, urging swift confirmation. Senator Nelson evidently sparked today's hearing by writing Senator Long last week to say he thought there had been an unwarranted delay in the Sonnenfeldt hearings.

The only member of the committee who seemed to remain unsatisfied with the nomination was Senator Harry F. Byrd, the independent conservative from Virginia, although he expressed uninterest in the security aspect.

Senator Byrd interrogated Mr. Sonnenfeldt for nearly an hour on his "qualifications" to take on a post as adviser on economic policy to Treasury Secretary George P. Shultz. And he said he had another hour of questions for him tomorrow. So Mr. Long ordered another session for the morning at which time Mr. Otepka is also scheduled to air his objections to the appointment on security grounds.

Five of the seventeen members of the Senate committee attended today's hearing and it was understood that all the members but Mr. Byrd were ready to vote for confirmation.