

MITCHELL TRIAL DEVELOPING TEST

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24. — The court martial of Col. Billy Mitchell may be turned into a free-speech test.

In a statement issued today, Rep-

resentative Frank R. Reid of Illinois, Mitchell's defense attorney, pointed out that the first amendment to the American constitution guarantees the right of free speech, and prohibits its abridgement.

Then he charged that if Mitchell were convicted, his right to free speech would have been abridged—that free speech would be the basis of Mitchell's defense.

The court martial is based on what Mitchell said about the army and navy in his famous "San An-

tonio statement," issued after the Shenandoah disaster.

Reid denounced the war department for the present condition of the air service, and said that "those in charge" were bringing Mitchell to trial "because they are sensitive to criticism."

"Rome endured as long as there were Romans; American will endure as long as there are Mitchells," he added, praising Mitchell for bringing the air service situation to a crisis.



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