

Court Directs Columnists to Return Documents From Sen. Dodd's Office

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By Frank C. Porter
Washington Post Staff Writer

Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.) has won a court order directing Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson to turn over documents he claims were illegally removed from his office in connection with his \$5 million libel suit against two columnists.

The order, granted by U.S. District Court Judge Alexander Holtzoff on Friday night, also calls for sworn testimony to be taken from nine persons, including Pearson and Anderson, six former employes of Dodd, and a public relations firm, former secretary.

The columnists promptly issued a statement in which they said "we accept Senator Dodd's challenge to spread the evidence of his misconduct on the public record, despite the fact that he has notified us by mimeographed press release rather than by the due process of law."

Conspiracy Accusation

In his suit, Dodd accused Pearson and Anderson of conspiring since 1958 to "injure and destroy" his political career and of libeling him in a series of columns that began Jan. 24.

John F. Sonnett, Dodd's law-

yer, argued the need for prompt depositions, claiming that some or all of Dodd's former employes who furnished the columnists with information may be prompted to leave the city by the action.

Additionally, he said, "there is every indication that unless plaintiff is able to immediately take steps to elicit the true facts, the vendetta will not voluntarily stop."

Sonnett's affidavit further contended that one potential witness, Marilyn T. Homer, the former secretary for a public relations firm whom Dodd contends "witnessed the 'secret and surreptitious reproduction' of his files, has received at least one threatening phone call. Miss Homer has been quoted as saying she must leave Washington immediately," he said.

Senate Inquiry

The Senate Ethics Committee is investigating the columnists' charges that Dodd improperly advanced the career of a foreign agent, Gen. Julius Klein; that he helped businessmen get government contracts after accepting their gifts and hospitality, and that he diverted campaign money to his own use.

In commenting on the court

order yesterday, Pearson and Anderson also said:

"Since he (Dodd) has accused us of quoting certain records out of context, we will be delighted to release the full texts so the press and public can judge for themselves whether we have been telling the truth.

"The witnesses Dodd seeks have already volunteered to testify before the Senate Ethics Committee and will be available to give first-hand testimony of Dodd's improprieties and to answer any questions."

Court Order Outlined

Holtzoff's order directs Pearson and Anderson to turn over to the court any documents or copies thereof obtained from Dodd's files since Jan. 1, 1958; all their files relating to Dodd, and all documents "relating to financial or other transactions between either or both of the defendants and any of the former or present employes of the United States Senate."

The six former employes Dodd was granted leave to interrogate are Rose Marie Robertson, Opal Ginn, Marjorie A. Carpenter, Terry L. Golden, Michael V. O'Hare and James P. Boyd Jr.