

Dodd Sues Columnists, Asks \$5 Million Award

Senator Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.) yesterday sued columnists Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson for \$5 million.

Dodd accused them of conspiring since 1958 to "injure and destroy" his career in politics and of libeling him in a series of columns that began on January 24.

The suit was filed in the Federal District Court here by Dodd's lawyer, John F. Sonnett, a former assistant attorney general.

Pearson said he has been expecting the suit for a month and welcomed the opportunity it would give him and Anderson to subpoena documents relating to Dodd's affairs.

"If the Senate Ethics Committee fails to do a proper job (in its investigation of Dodd)," Pearson said, "with the power of subpoena, we can make up for any Senatorial oversight."

The Committee has been examining in private the Pearson-Anderson charges that Dodd improperly advanced the career of a foreign agent, General Julius Klein, that he diverted large sums of campaign money to his own use, and that he helped businessmen get government contracts after accepting their gifts and hospitality.

The 27-page complaint filed by the Senator said the "conspiracy" by the columnists began at least as early as 1958 and involved the recruitment of employees in Dodd's office to remove and copy the Senator's personal records and correspondence. The manner in which these records were obtained, the Senator's complaint says, was "unlawful and unauthorized."

He charged that Pearson and Anderson "unlawfully" published his income tax returns and published "false, malicious and defamatory" material to the effect that Dodd "is unfit to be a United States Senator."

This has caused him, the Senator asserted, "grievous injury to his personal and pro-

grievous mental pain and financial injury."

The greatest part of his complaint—roughly 15 pages—is devoted to the Pearson-Anderson charges concerning his relationship with General Klein.

The columnists' charges that Dodd helped Klein "hang onto his clients" in West Germany, that he accepted "expensive gifts" from Klein, that he delivered speeches "ghostwritten" by Klein, that he was an "errand boy" for Klein, that he had promoted Klein's "personal business interests," and had "misused his position on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee were all "false," "malicious" and "defamatory," the Senator's complaint alleges.

It is also "false," the complaint says, that Dodd's use of a car supplied free by a government contractor, Dunbar Associates of Connecticut, was in effect a "bribe" to secure Dodd's help in getting government business.

"Dunbar's loan of a car," says the complaint, "was not a bribe and plaintiff never promoted the interests of Dunbar for improper reasons."

The next charge against the columnists was that they had published a "false" malicious and defamatory" story to the effect that the Foreign Relations Committee had considered removing Dodd from membership because he "had unlawfully and improperly conspired with an agent of a foreign government (Klein)."

Dodd also denied in the complaint that he had acted "unethically" in opposing U.S. policy in the Congo in 1961 or that he had been a spokesman for Michael Struelens, a lobbyist for the Katanga government of Moise Tshombe.

On the matter of his personal finances, Dodd denies in the complaint that he diverted—as the columnists charged—campaign contributions to his personal use and failed to report taxable income on his Federal tax returns.

"Contrary to those statements," the complaint says,

"plaintiff believes that the use of all funds contributed to him was proper and lawful and that his federal income tax return fully reflected his taxable income and, in this regard, plaintiff relied on independent legal advice." The complaint claims that Dodd has never "rendered service in his position as a Senator" in exchange for "alleged gifts of various kinds."

The cumulative effect of the Pearson-Anderson charges, the complaint says, was "intended to be understood as meaning that plaintiff is unfit to be a United States Senator."