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Merry-Go-Round**A Dodd's-Eye View
Of 'Stealing' Files****Drew Pearson**

THE STATE DEPARTMENT has finally been smoked out regarding the case of Otto Otepka, who on November 5, 1963, was officially fired for removing confidential files from the State Department and giving them to Senator Tom Dodd, (Dem.-Conn.).

Although officially dismissed, Otepka has remained on the payroll.

The case is interesting because the Senate Ethics Committee has regarded as "reprehensible" the removal of Dodd's files by four of his employees for use against him; yet, at the same time, Dodd has regarded as "patriotic" the removal of State Department files for use by him against the State Department.

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ON NOVEMBER 5, the day Otepka was dismissed, Dodd denounced the the State Department, warning that if Otepka's ouster "is permitted to stand, it will become impossible or exceedingly difficult to elicit any information from employees of the executive branch that bears on . . . wrongdoing by their superiors."

On September 23, 1963, Otepka, then chief of the evidence evaluation division of the State Department's office of security, was charged with violations of 13 regulations by giving confidential information to the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, of which Dodd is the chief sparkplug.

But after Dodd protested, the State Department backtracked in part and decided to keep Otepka on the payroll. Obviously Secretary of State Dean Rusk was nervous about Dodd, who sat on both the Internal

Security and Foreign Relations committees. Otepka has now been drawing salary for three and a half years, yet is not permitted to do the work for which he was hired.

The official explanation as to why Otepka is still on the payroll is that he has not exercised his right of appeal to the Civil Service Commission.

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INQUIRY WAS made last week of Ger-son H. Lush of the State Department's policy and public information affairs office as to how much Otepka was being paid. Lush said he did not know.

We were then referred to the office of George W. French, who, it was said, would know how much Otepka was being paid. Repeated phone calls were made to French's office. No answer.

We explained to the State Department that, since Otepka's salary is being paid by the taxpayers, the public has a right to know how much he is being paid. We got no answer.

The real fact is that the State Department was long fearful of Dodd, who claims that Otepka had a right to give him confidential papers. Yet, at the same time, Dodd protests that his four employees did not have the right to give us his confidential papers.

Finally, just one day after our calls, the State Department announced that a hearing would soon be held regarding Otepka's status.

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