

Ethics Group to Delve Into Dodd's Finances

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The financial affairs of Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.) will be explored in public hearings before the Senate Ethics Committee after the new Congress convenes in January.

The Committee said the hearings will deal with Dodd's receipt and use of hundreds of thousands of dollars in political contributions and with charges that he has cheated on his expense accounts.

The Committee's announcement yesterday ended speculation about its determination to pursue the Dodd ethics case beyond last summer's inquiry into his relationship with foreign lobbyist Julius Klein.

Dodd responded to the Committee's announcement with a prediction that he would be vindicated.

"The record will show," he said, "that there was no misuse of any funds, campaign or testimonial, on my part. If there was any error in the handling of travel expenses this was the work of an incompetent and deceitful employee."

Dodd implied that the charges against him are related in some way to his career in the Senate. "I have made many powerful political enemies," he said, "running all the way from the Communists to the gun gang."

The Committee's staff has been collecting documents and sworn statements dealing with Dodd's money affairs since mid-summer. Sufficient facts have been uncovered, the Committee said yesterday,

"to provide a basis for hearings."

The Dodd investigation was inspired by the allegations of newspaper columnists Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson.

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campaign funds, had abused his expense account privileges, and had been "an errand boy" for lobbyist Klein and others with a stake in government policy.

Records available up to now indicate that the Senator received on the order of \$500,000 in political contributions between 1961 and 1965, of

which at least \$200,000 was classified as "personal gifts" to Dodd.

The Internal Revenue Service began an investigation months ago to determine if these "gifts" were subject to Federal taxation.

Simultaneously, a "painstakingly and unavoidably slow" investigation was instituted by the Ethics Committee, under

the direction of Sen. John Stennis (D-Miss.) and Sen. Wallace F. Bennett (R-Utah).

The two Senators said yesterday they are now prepared to publicly explore "allegations that Senator Dodd improperly diverted campaign funds, accepted improper gifts, and was paid both by the Senate and by private sources for identical travel."