

# 'Doddism' Is Practiced in the Far West

By Drew Pearson

LOS ANGELES—"Doddism" has spread to the Far West. As far as we can establish, "Doddism"—the technique of giving testimonial dinners for politicians' personal benefit—is not prevalent among many U.S. Senators. But in Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty has chalked up an amazing record for Doddism.



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Significantly, Dodd and Yorty are old friends and fellow admirers, but not always fellow Democrats. Yorty's meteoric career has frequently wavered between the Republican and Democratic Parties, and in 1960 he went down the line for Richard Nixon as against John F. Kennedy.

During the last two and a half years of his sometimes vacillating political career, the genial Mayor has held five dinners that raised an estimated net of \$690,000.

And one of the biggest political mysteries is what he did with the money.

Only two of the dinners by any stretch could be tabbed as campaign fund raisers. The three others were testimonial dinners of the type that Sen. Dodd's office says were used to raise money for the Senator's personal expenses.

Yorty's two political dinners were held Jan. 27, 1965, just after Yorty had entered the race for reelection as Mayor, and on March 17, 1966, after the Mayor announced that he would run for Governor in the coming Democratic primary against Gov. Pat Brown.

Last year's dinner for reelection as mayor was called a "gala kickoff jamboree," held in the Hollywood Palladium and netting an estimated \$135,000.

The March 17 dinner this year was tabbed as a "St. Patrick's ball honoring Sam and Betts Yorty," also held at the Palladium. Yorty is of Yugoslav descent but used St. Patrick's day as a good gimmick for raising money. The gimmick worked. Sam netted another estimated \$135,000.

The three other dinners, strictly nonpolitical, were as follows:

On Oct. 1, 1963, Yorty staged an affair at the Palladium billed as a "birthday dinner" for himself. It netted \$48,000. 1963 was not a campaign year.

On July 22, 1964, a big gala was held in Yorty's honor at the Ambassador Hotel. It was billed as a "civil dinner" in Yorty's honor and netted an estimated \$135,000. 1964 was not a city election year, and there was no excuse to raise money for a campaign.

On Nov. 12, 1965, just after Yorty had defeated Jimmy Roosevelt, a big dinner was

held once again at the Hollywood Palladium called "a community tribute" to Yorty. It brought in an estimated \$162,000.

Add to this approximately \$75,000 that Yorty received from advertising in his dinner programs, and the total take for the five dinners was around \$690,000.

## Who Spent the Money

When Yorty was running in 1965 against Rep. James Roosevelt, he officially reported spending \$204,882 for election expenses. His treasurer did not list any Yorty dinners among his sources of income. Altogether Yorty has collected a total of \$900,000 in private funds since becoming Mayor on July 1, 1961, but has spent only around \$400,000 on his two political campaigns.

So the big question is: What happened to the rest of the money? Part of it could be accounted for by reports that Yorty is spending around \$200,000 in his present race for Governor.

When the Mayor has been asked the purpose of raising money through testimonial dinners, he coyly replied, "Voter education."

Yorty has issued some pamphlets on smog, narcotics, and the alleged low caliber of Gov. Brown's judicial appointees. The pamphlets he describes as "voter education." But when newsmen asked the Mayor after his latest dinner

to explain what he meant by voter education, the Mayor laughed and replied, "You'll have to ask the committee."

This refers to the permanent Yorty Dinner Committee. Probably Yorty is the only Mayor in the United States who has such a committee. It maintains headquarters in the Subway Terminal building, owned by the Harvey family of Harvey Aluminum fame, one of whose members, Mrs. Carmine Warschaw, is Democratic State Chairman for Southern California.

So far none of the large number of businessmen, building contractors, city developers, and contractors doing business with the city of Los Angeles have questioned the motive behind the Yorty dinners. The nearest explanation for the dinners was given by Los Angeles attorney G. Bentley Ryan, when he sent out letters Sept. 18, 1963, asking for contributions to the Mayor's "birthday dinner" on Oct. 1 of that year.

Since 1963 was not an election year in Los Angeles, Ryan sent a friendly letter that he signed "Bentley" suggesting that patrons who bought a table of 10 for \$1000 or tickets for \$100 each could "facilitate their interests" at City Hall. Those who got the letter got the message. The Palladium was well-filled when the time came to honor the Mayor.