

Dodd's Use of Campaign Money

By Drew Pearson
and Jack Anderson

This column has made a painstaking search into the financial records of the 1964 campaign of Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.).

Money contributed to help pay his election expenses has been traced to his personal bank accounts. This column has evidence, for example, that Dodd used campaign money to pay off private debts, finance home improvements, and take care of other personal expenses.

His official report to the State of Connecticut, dated Dec. 3, 1964, claimed contributions of \$167,497.67 and expenditures of \$174,159.44. The collections were at least triple the amount reported, and the expenditures were padded.

The largest expenditure he reported was \$110,000, which was supposed to have been paid to the Randall Advertising Agency for radio, television and newspaper advertising. Yet the actual budget submitted by Randall was only \$101,306.31.

Though a few extras were added during the campaign, these were wiped out by economies. Indeed, the agency refunded \$1000 in its final accounting to Dodd.

The Senator also reported two payments to the University Press of Cambridge, Mass., totaling \$10,200, for campaign printing. A company spokesman recalled that University

Press had done absolutely no printing for Dodd in 1964. In fact, the company wrote off as a bad debt a printing bill left over from the Senator's 1956 campaign.

Personal Travel

Dodd charged the entire \$5500 that he ran up on his American Airlines credit card in 1964 as a campaign expense. A breakdown reveals this included personal travel for himself and his family, including a Florida vacation trip.

One of the most puzzling entries was \$1105.22 that was supposed to have been paid to Western Union for campaign telegrams. The actual Western Union bill was one tenth that amount, or \$105.69.

Dodd also lists as campaign expense \$697.50 paid to photographer Vincent Shields, who doesn't recall taking any campaign pictures. He was actually hired to photograph the Dodds' 30th wedding anniversary party.

A small \$187.58 payment to Jersey Airways was also charged to the campaign. This was what it cost the Senator to fly from the Democratic Convention in Atlantic City to Westerly, R.I., the nearest airport to his North Stonington, Conn., home.

Because he had appeared on a preconvention telecast for the Metromedia television stations, however, Metromedia reimbursed him for the flight. Metromedia check No. 13583 for \$187.58, dated Oct. 10, 1964,

was deposited in Dodd's personal account.

The Senator even claimed a \$57 expenditure for an electric heater for campaign headquarters. However, the \$57 heater was installed, not at campaign headquarters, but in his North Stonington home.

Political Swimming

The petty padding also included \$579 to Schneider's for campaign "luncheons" and \$221.75 to the Congressional Country Club for "political meetings." Schneider's is actually a liquor store where Dodd bought booze, and the bills from the Country Club show that the entire \$221.75 was spent by Dodd's family for swimming and snacks.

It is at least an interesting coincidence that Dodd was able to throw a gala wedding party for his daughter, Martha, on Oct. 12, 1963. This came at a time that he was having difficulty raising \$5000 to meet a personal note.

It also came after contributions had started to roll in for Dodd Day, a fund-raising event held in Connecticut on Oct. 26, 1963. No less than Lyndon Johnson, then the Vice President, went to Connecticut on Dodd Day to help raise money for the Senator's Campaign.

Though desperately short of personal funds, Dodd suddenly came up with the money for an extravagant wedding—complete with a pheasant-and-champagne breakfast, a full orchestra, and a wide-open bar

at the fashionable Hartford Club.

Mrs. Dodd explained intimates that she had saved enough out of her grocery money to pay for the extravaganza.

There are other discrepancies in Dodd's financial records which should interest the Senate Ethics Committee. This column has offered to turn over the evidence to the Committee, but the Committee, so far, has seemed more interested in finding out how this column obtained the damning documents. There was no such interest, incidentally, when Dodd's own investigators secured documents from State Department files.

The Ethics Committee was established as an outgrowth of the Bobby Baker scandal, to protect the Senate's good name. Its chairman is John Stennis (D-Miss.) and the other members are Mike Monroney (Okla.) and Eugene McCarthy (Minn.), Democrats, and Wallace Bennett (Utah), John Sherman Cooper (Ky.) and James Pearson (Kan.), Republicans.

This time the man under criticism is no mere Senate aide who can be investigated without implicating Senators, but a member of the inner circle. Under these painful circumstances, it will be interesting to see how the Senate Ethics Committee handles the Dodd investigation.

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