

Greek-American Stirs Hill Questions

By Jack Anderson

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is asking questions about a multimillionaire who shuttles mysteriously between the White House and the inner sanctums of the Greek dictatorship.

He is Tom Pappas, a Greek-American who runs the Esso works in Greece.

Back in 1968, he helped wangle the vice presidential nomination for his fellow Greek-American, Spiro Agnew. Pappas offered to raise millions for the GOP cause from wealthy Greeks if Richard Nixon would take Agnew as his running mate.

Now Pappas has a key, apparently, to the back door of the White House where he was seen most recently at President Nixon's dinner for Yugoslavia's Josip Tito.

Pappas also turned up in Greece last month with Vice President Agnew. Pappas was the man in dark glasses who was seen squeezing out of the U.S. helicopter just behind the Agnews.

Pappas has taken care not to neglect the Democrats in his political wheeling and dealing. The recent House battle to continue military aid to Greece, for example, was led by Rep. Roman Pucinski (D-Ill.). We have uncovered a 1969 letter from Pucinski to Pappas, declaring: "I am grateful to you for your help."

Pucinski has assured us that the "help" was not financial.

He was merely expressing his appreciation, said Pucinski, for Pappas' help in finding jobs for constituents who had returned to Greece.

Meanwhile, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's chief of staff, Carl Marcy, has questioned the State Department about Pappas. Marcy asked specifically about press reports, quoting exiled Greek leader Elias Demetracopoulos, that Pappas and his brother John have used "their considerable political and economic clout in the United States to promote simultaneously their own financial interests as well as the interests of a ruthless military dictatorship."

The State Department replied last weekend that Pappas was neither an official of Greece nor the U.S., then added warily as befits a confidential report on a White House favorite: "While the articles in question imply by indirection that Mr. Pappas has acted improperly, there has never been to our knowledge any direct accusation that he has exceeded the bounds of propriety or legality."

Ruckus at Ruins

A distinguished archaeologist was pulled off a Roman excavation after he refused to pay wages to the pretty, blond assistant of his Smithsonian Institution boss.

The archaeologist is Dr. Alfonso Lengyel of Wayne State University, who in 1968

headed the Smithsonian-backed "dig" to unearth the secrets of Sirmium, a Roman imperial capital in Yugoslavia.

His Smithsonian boss, Kennedy Schmertz, expanded the budget by \$600 so his own pretty assistant, Constance Rogers, could be Lengyel's "administrative consultant."

But Miss Rogers disappeared from the site from time to time. On one occasion, Lengyel asked her point-blank where she had been. She replied, according to his affidavit: "It's none of your business. I'm on a confidential mission."

When she demanded her full pay, Lengyel withheld about half of it.

Lengyel went on with his excavation, often working in the pits with his laborers. But Miss Rogers again disappeared — this time just as the junketeering Schmertz arrived in Yugoslavia. Schmertz now admits he had notified Miss Rogers he was on the way but neglected to inform Lengyel.

When Miss Rogers turned up again at the diggings, Lengyel asked her where she had been.

"Mr. Schmertz arrived in Belgrade and I work for him," she is quoted in the affidavit as replying. Both had registered at Belgrade's posh Hotel Metropole. When Lengyel learned about this, he confronted her with the information.

"A thousand other people

were in the same hotel," she replied, according to Lengyel's sworn statement.

Why, persisted Lengyel, didn't his boss visit the important Sirmium site. Miss Rogers allegedly retorted disdainfully: "He's not interested in your excavation."

Schmertz not only failed to visit the Sirmium site but didn't even bother to telephone Lengyel for a report on the project. Yet Schmertz was supposed to be overseeing it for the Smithsonian.

He told us he had arranged with Miss Rogers to inspect other sites in Yugoslavia. This would explain her absences, he said. He concedes that she was supposed to be working for Lengyel and that he never informed Lengyel of the unusual arrangement.

While Miss Rogers acknowledges she had Schmertz were in Belgrade together, she emphasizes it was all perfectly proper. Their relationship is based, both say, on mutual respect.

Footnote: Lengyel was praised for his work by such famed archaeologists as Princeton's Homer Thompson and Prof. Andre Varagnac, Director of the International Institute of Archaic Civilization in Paris. Yet a Smithsonian panel, through Denison University which was receiving the grant, kicked Lengyel off the project. The Yugoslav archaeologists protested to no avail.