

Nixon's Physician

John Charles Lungren

By ROBERT A. WRIGHT
Special to The New York Times

LONG BEACH, Calif., Sept. 23—Dr. John C. Lungren became the man in the middle today, a key figure in the dispute over access to Richard M. Nixon. Like the former President, whom he has served as personal physician since 1952, Dr. Lungren guards his privacy. He has declined to speak to the press since the announcement last week that he would treat Mr. Nixon for phlebitis at the Memorial Hospital Medical Center here starting today.

The 58-year-old Dr. Lungren, an internist and cardiologist described by friends and associates as a serious, dedicated man, is active in medical societies and at the hospital, with Notre Dame football apparently his primary nonprofessional interest.

With his wife, the former Lorraine Youngberg of Chicago, a former Powers model, he is socially prominent in Long Beach. He worked in Mr. Nixon's campaigns for the Senate in 1950 and in the campaign of Robert H. Finch, former Lieutenant Governor of California and Mr. Nixon's first Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

Dr. Lungren was introduced to Mr. Nixon in 1952 by Jack Drown, a Long Beach businessman. Mr. Drown suggested that Dr. Lungren be appointed campaign physician for Mr. Nixon's Vice-Presidential bid, and the doctor served in that capacity in all of Mr. Nixon's subsequent campaigns through 1968.

In May, 1973, on a visit to his alma mater, the University of Notre Dame, Dr. Lungren told reporters that his medical files on Mr. Nixon had been ransacked.

John Charles Lungren was born April 27, 1916, in Sioux City, Iowa. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from Notre Dame in 1936 and his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in 1942. He was an infantry battalion surgeon in Normandy and other European campaigns in World War II, and was awarded a Purple Heart and four battle stars.

Dr. Lungren took his residency at Los Angeles County Hospital, University of Southern California, and then joined the Memorial Hospital staff.

Active at Notre Dame

Dr. Lungren has been the Finch family physician for 10 years, and Mr. Finch says the families are close.

Mr. Finch described his friend as being "so busy professionally that he doesn't carry a jovial manner." But Mr. Finch said the Lungren family was "extraordinarily warm and close-knit." The Lungrens have three sons and four daughters, from the teens to the 30's in age.

At Notre Dame Dr. Lungren was a member of the Garman Club and manager of the basketball team. He has been active in school affairs as a fund-raiser and



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Guards his privacy

In 1972 was president of the alumni association.

Dr. Lungren interrupted his Long Beach practice to do post-graduate work in cardiology. Since 1955, he has been associated clinical professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Dr. Lungren has been treating Mr. Nixon for phlebitis since his resignation from the Presidency and return to San Clemente, and may be a decisive voice in Mr. Nixon's availability for court appearances in forthcoming Watergate-related trials.

R.J. Munzer, chairman of Petrolane Gas Service, Inc., a neighbor and close friend, describes Dr. Lungren as "thoughtful and scholarly."

"He takes life seriously," Mr. Munzer said. "He is dedicated and tends to see things in black and white. He knows what he believes in."

Correction

An article printed last Tuesday reported incorrectly that Dr. John C. Lungren, former President Nixon's physician, had been active in political campaigns.

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