

SEMINAR

Spiro and Frank

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The Blossoming of a Curious Friendship

PALM SPRINGS — (AP) — After a week of rumors that he might resign, Vice President Agnew is spending the weekend with entertainer Frank Sinatra, underscoring a curious friendship between two well-known and controversial figures.

For almost two years, Agnew and his family have been regular visitors to the Sinatra compound in Rancho Mirage, spending Easter, Thanksgiving, New Year's and other weekends here.

The compound is a collection of buildings on the grounds of the Tamarisk Country Club, hidden from outsiders by huge oleander hedges and protected by pistol packing guards.

Days can be occupied by golf on the Tamarisk course, swimming in the Sinatra pool or using the compound's spa, a converted railway car.

The evenings might involve dinner at Jilly's, the Hungry Tiger, Sorrentino's or The Spa, or perhaps an Italian meal cooked at home by Sinatra or his mother.

The bright names of the show world often make up the company: Dinah Shore and Burt Reynolds, Jack and Mary Benny, Bob and Dolores Hope, Milton and Ruth Berle. Usually Sinatra is accompanied by Barbara Marx, a former Las Vegas show girl who is divorced from Zeppo Marx.

There is little in Sinatra's background to suggest why he and the conservative, Republican Agnew, would become such friends.

Sinatra's mother, a Democratic party worker in New Jersey, catechized her teen-age son in the New Deal doctrine of the 1930s. The young singer lent his

new found fame to Franklin Roosevelt's fourth presidential race in 1944.

Sinatra supported other Democrats during the 1940s and 1950s, then became committed in 1960 to John Kennedy. But there were indications that Robert F. Kennedy disliked the Sinatra connection, because of the Rat Pack's reputation for riotous living, and links between Sinatra and underworld figures.

When Democrat Jesse Urruh ran for governor in 1970, Sinatra made a surprise move, supporting a Republican for the first time — incumbent Ronald Reagan.

"Until that time, Frank had been a dedicated liberal," said a veteran state Democratic leader. "But he was turned off by Urruh because Urruh had been Bobby's manager in California."

Sinatra's support in a campaign is no minor thing, as Reagan discovered. His appearance at a rally can assure an overflow crowd, and he can help raise hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions.

Agnew met Sinatra at a political affair in California in 1971. They hit it off immediately, and Sinatra made appearances for Nixon and Agnew during the 1972 campaign.

The Agnew-Sinatra friendship has shown no signs of diminishing since the vice president's legal troubles have captured headlines. Their association was analyzed by a long-time Sinatra associate:

"It's no wonder they like each other's company. Agnew obviously enjoys the excitement of being close to a superstar, and Sinatra likes the prestige

