

THE FIVE STAR HOTEL WAS ON THE TAYPAYER'S DIME

That five star hotel that Tommy K was staying in in Greece? You and I are paying for it, it looks like.

A federal judge allowed a New York man who has admitted bribing former North County U.S. Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham to remain free on bond, after an Assistant U.S. Attorney said at a hearing this morning that the man's recent trip to Greece was at the direction of federal agents.

U.S. District Judge Larry Alan Burns had called the hearing to learn whether the man, Thomas Kontogiannis, had traveled overseas without permission. Any such trip requires prior approval because Kontogiannis pleaded guilty earlier this year on a money laundering charge.

At today's hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Forge said the trip was made at the government's behest.

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"My understanding is that everything Mr. Kontogiannis did was not just 'with permission,' but at the direction of agents and other representatives of the government," Forge said.

Or maybe the FBI is forcing Tommy K to use his ill-gotten gains on such luxury.

TPMM also notes that Judge Burns is going to give John Michael a peek at what his uncle gave the government in exchange for the plea deal.