

Riddle of the files flown off to Spain

By PETE SAWYER

AN ex-partner in the accountancy firm drawn into the Asil Nadir-Inland Revenue affair sent 33 files to Spain to stop the taxman seeing them.

Graham Snell removed the files about an offshore network of companies during a Revenue probe at his firm's offices.

He then told his secretary to take them to Spain in a padlocked flight bag.

This revelation follows a series of embarrassments to Moores Rowland — one of the 12 largest accountancy firms in the UK.

The files related to David McCormick, the former boss of the failed computer leasing company Atlantic Computers, itself the subject of a Government inquiry.

McCormick was a client of Snell, who left Moores Rowland as a partner in November 1991. Snell had passed a legal document to the

Accountant's action over Revenue fears

Inland Revenue with a forged signature. The signature prompted an Inland Revenue investigation and visits to Moores Rowland's London offices.

At this time, files relating to McCormick were taken to Spain by Snell's secretary, Ruth Creamer, and McCormick's personal accountant.

Nervous

A colleague of Snell said: 'I think the client (McCormick) got very anxious when he heard that the Revenue had taken away a document relating to his files.'

'So Ruth was told to put the files into a large bag and humped them off. She was rather nervous about it.'

The three-inch thick files were taken to McCormick's mansion on the Costa del Sol.

Five related to Atlantic Computers' purchase of McCormick's Dutch computer leasing firm.

Others concerned his web of offshore com-

panies, through which he owned property in England and Spain and shares in the collapsed financial services group British & Commonwealth.

Another of Snell's former clients who has had a brush with the tax authorities is David Shamoon, a former shareholder of the casino group London Clubs International.

Shamoon — a business acquaintance of McCormick — was arrested last month following claims that

Inland Revenue chief investigator Michael Allcock was offered £25,000 to halt inquiries into his tax affairs.

Moores Rowland has strongly rejected Press claims that it was involved in the Polly Peck affair. But it did supply information about the Allcock affair to the Revenue as part of its Snell inquiry.

When at Moores Rowland, Snell worked closely with its top tax expert Nigel Eastaway, who was recently charged with fraudulent trading and conspiracy but remains a Moores Rowland partner.

Snell now works at International Fiscal Services, a company set up by Eastaway.



CLIENT: McCormick