

Disrespect for Law Laid to Agnew

By Jack Anderson

Vice President Agnew, who condemns "disrespect for law" in almost all his speeches, has shown his own disrespect for the laws governing regulatory agencies.

In his eagerness to install his former administrative assistant, C. Stanley Blair, as governor of Maryland, Agnew at least has encouraged illegal conduct. He asked Federal Maritime Commission Chairman Helen Bentley to put the arm on shipping executives for contributions to Blair's campaign. It happens to be against the law for her to solicit favors from the industry she regulates.

Yet in an interview with my associate Brit Hume, as this column reported last weekend, Mrs. Bentley admitted checking the shipping rosters for the names of possible contributors and asking some of them for political donations—all at the Vice President's behest. She also flew to a Blair fund-raising meeting in the New York office of shipping magnate Spyros Skouras.

Agnew Changes Plans

Here are our latest findings:

• Mrs. Bentley invited shipping executives to meet with the Vice President last Thursday at New York City's Metropolitan Club. Agnew also got on the phone himself to urge some executives to attend. Among those who received a

personal call from the Vice President was John Lambros, one of the executives of Bethlehem Steel's Baltimore shipyard. Bethlehem Steel, of course, does a multimillion-dollar business in defense contracts. When Agnew heard we were checking into the shipping solicitations, he abruptly called off the Metropolitan Club meeting. He showed up in New York City on Thursday to talk to other GOP fatcats, but he carefully avoided the shipping executives.

• The Vice President authorized his pal, J. Walter Jones, to solicit contributions in his name for the Blair campaign. Campaign workers, hired by Jones, identified themselves with the Vice President's office in calls to prospective contributors around the country.

• Jones also mailed letters to a blue-chip list, soliciting contributions in the Vice President's name.

Agnew not only approved the use of his name but is personally directing the Blair campaign from behind the scenes. He is still smarting over his failure to deliver his home state in the 1968 presidential election. Therefore, say insiders, he is fiercely determined to restore Republican rule in Maryland.

Nixon's Vacations

President Nixon is perturbed over Democratic criti-

cism of his frequent vacations in California and Florida.

He recalled ruefully to a recent visitor that he had encouraged the late President Kennedy to relax from the awesome burdens of the presidency and had promised to intervene with any Republicans who criticized him.

The truth is that the President usually puts in an arduous day even at his vacation homes in San Clemente and Key Biscayne.

He has carefully divided every 24-hour period into two working days, separated by a rest period. He crowds as much work in each segment as any other executive would expect to complete in a full day. In other words, he literally accomplishes two days' work every day and his staff handles each segment as if it were a separate day.

When he is in Washington, the President sticks rigorously to this double-duty work schedule. But at the seashore, he tries to hold his schedule to one "work day" and one "rest day" every 24 hours.

During each "work day" of the President's two-in-one White House day, he handles a separate set of papers and gives his staff a separate set of instructions. He likes to have problems reduced to writing in "option papers," setting forth every possible course he could take. However, he is

beginning to adopt former President Johnson's old telephone habits.

Fuel Shortage

Industry officials have told Paul McCracken, the President's chief economic adviser, that coal, gas and oil prices should be permitted to rise sharply. Otherwise, they warned that producers would not have enough incentive to prevent fuel shortages across the country this winter.

McCracken heads an interagency task force which is investigating the threat of fuel shortages. This threat has been aggravated by the Middle East crisis and the anti-pollution campaign.

There's pressure upon building owners, for example, to burn low-sulfur fuel oil. The main source is the Middle East where Arab-Israeli tensions have disrupted shipments. Utility companies have also held back construction of fuel plants because of the clamor over pollution.

Meanwhile, our natural gas reserves are dropping low. Gas producers are petitioning the Federal Power Commission for huge price increases, which they claim are necessary to encourage them to explore for more reserves.

A major strike or transportation tieup or severe winter could leave a lot of homes and buildings short of heat during the cold months ahead.