

Nixon Is Reported Upset With Agnew

By Carroll Kilpatrick
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The White House said yesterday that there "is no difference of opinion" between President Nixon and Vice President Agnew on China policy, but it nevertheless became known that the President was displeased with Agnew's criticisms.

In off-the-record meetings in Williamsburg, Va., Monday, Agnew reportedly told a group of newsmen in one meeting and Republican governors in another that he had misgivings about developments in policy toward Communist China.

Mr. Nixon was said to be concerned about the effects the Vice President's criticisms would have on future policy and on the administration's relations both with Peking and with the Chinese nationalist government on Taiwan.

Both White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler and House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich.) sought to play down the Vice President's disagreement with official policy.

However, the President reportedly made known to associates his surprise, concern and displeasure over criticisms of a policy he has worked on for months and takes great pride in.

Ever since taking office, Mr. Nixon has been involved personally in trying to re-establish contacts and to improve relations with mainland China.

He is known to have been highly pleased by the invitation to the American table tennis team and by other signs of thaw in Peking-Washington relations.

Administration officials were puzzled by the Vice President's reportedly vigorous expression of misgivings at the two meetings in Williamsburg and apparently also in other private conversations.

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PRESIDENT, From A1

Late yesterday, in a clear indication that the President is proceeding with his policy, press secretary Ziebler said "we would welcome" the proposed visit of a Chinese team and would "expedite the issuance of visas."

Mr. Nixon will meet today with Graham B. Steenhoven, president of the U.S. Table Tennis Association, to discuss the American team's visit to China and the invitation to the Chinese team.

Last week, the President announced a relaxation of restrictions on trade and travel between the United States and Communist China.

Mr. Nixon was totally surprised by the Vice President's reported criticisms although he knew that Agnew had objected to certain aspects of the policy in recent National Security Council meetings.

There were unconfirmed reports that some other high administration officials had joined Agnew in opposing the President in NSC meetings.

In Williamsburg, according to a variety of reports, Agnew complained about U.S. tennis team's visit and about its press coverage, which he said resulted in a propaganda beating for the United States.

At the State Department, however, press officer Robert

J. McCloskey emphasized the administration's unhappiness over the Agnew comments when he said that Secretary William P. Rogers "has been eminently satisfied" with developments in Washington-Peking relations.

Rogers was one of the first to urge the President to try to "find ways to improve relations with mainland China," McCloskey said.

In response to questions, McCloskey also indicated that Rogers disagreed with Agnew about reporting by American newsmen in China.

McCloskey called the reporting "excellent" and said "the government and the people have benefited."

Ziegler said the Vice President authorized him to say "that there is absolutely no disagreement between the Vice President and the President's decision regarding the initiatives taken in relation to the People's Republic of China."

"The Vice President, as in the case in most councils in which he sits, often raises questions which merit discussion and this happened in this particular case regarding our discussions of further initiatives regarding mainland China."

At another point, Ziegler said that there was "no great difference" of opinion between the President and Vice President in the NSC meetings, and he advised newsmen not to pursue the story any further.

At the same news conference, Rep. Ford said he attended the luncheon for the governors and that Agnew "indicated his affirmative support for the President's new initiatives and our relationships with China."

A number of governors nevertheless told newsmen in Williamsburg that Agnew had expressed reservations