

THE ILL WILL Vice President Spiro T. Agnew had stirred up in six months as the Senate's presiding officer surfaced at the Aug. 5 weekly luncheon meeting of Republican senators when Sen. Len B. Jordan of Idaho took the floor.

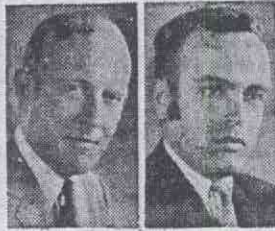
Jordan, a conservative who seldom causes much fuss about anything, delivered a little lecture about how he always has respected separation of governmental powers and still believes in it. Consequently, he had evolved the Jordan rule: Henceforth, when the Vice President lobbies him to vote for something, he will automatically vote against it even if contrary to his principles.

The Jordan rule evoked shouts of "hear, hear!" and no dissent from Republican senators, still irritated by Agnew's unprecedented Senate lobbying for President Nixon's surtax proposal. It was but the tip of the iceberg. Conservative Sen. Peter Dominick of Colorado, for instance, had a run-in with Agnew on the Senate floor when the Vice President solicited his vote.

All this surely has taught Agnew that senators regard him as a member of the executive branch barred from the legislative process. Indeed, at the luncheon where the Jordan rule was expounded, Sen. Gordon Allott of Colorado—chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee—revealed that the Vice President had written him expressing regret for his lobbying activities.

BUT AGNEW'S injudicious activity on the Senate floor fits into the over-all pattern of his vice presidency, carrying into the executive branch and Republican politics. Although it may prove his undoing, Spiro Agnew has begun as the most activist and least cautious Vice President on record.

The expectations had been quite to the contrary. Agnew arrived in Washington new to the federal government, lacking a political base and bearing a reputation for ineptitude in the campaign. It was expected he would discreetly maintain a low silhouette, mak-



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ing friends and learning about government. Given Agnew's passion for golf, some critics felt he would settle into the Throttlebottom image of quiet afternoons at the Burning Tree Club.

Instead, Agnew has displayed a daring that such established political figures as Lyndon B. Johnson and Hubert H. Humphrey never approached in the same job. Early this summer, Treasury officials were flabbergasted to find Agnew urging mayors and governors to lobby against the new tax treatment of state and municipal bonds drafted by the Treasury and approved by the President.

A more significant example of Agnew's freewheeling ways came last week. Even after President Nixon had decided upon a radical reform of the nation's welfare system, Agnew lobbied against it inside the White House—bombarding the President with memoranda and criticizing the plan's increase of the welfare caseload.

Agnew was among the administration's bitter-end foes of the welfare plan, arguing strenuously at the Aug. 6 cabinet meeting at Camp David against the President's decision. Whether or not Agnew realized it, no Vice President since John Nance Garner had so indiscreetly disagreed with a presidential decision.

Nor has he restrained himself in expressing political views. Meeting privately with party leaders recently, Agnew asserted that Republicans had scant hope of making any progress in the cities and shouldn't try too hard. That may well be the opinion of Attorney General John N. Mitchell, the President's political adviser, and perhaps of Mr. Nixon himself. But no-

body, certainly not the President, says it out loud.

The distinctive Agnew style has its admirers. Despite their differences with him over tax-exempt bonds, Treasury officials were grateful for Agnew's aggressive help on the surtax. Conservatives in the administration admire his outspoken advocacy.

BUT AGNEW often undercuts those he attempts to help. His call for a manned landing on Mars, made without any authorization from the White House or NASA, only mobilized antispace sentiment. Congressional friends of the space program angrily informed the administration that a decision about Mars was a decade away and that Agnew's premature promises threatened space appropriations.

On balance, Agnew's active vice presidency—refreshing though it is in an administration typified by caution—is costing him. He has managed to collect new enemies in the Senate, the administration and the Republican Party. They are the reason why purge-Agnew talk has begun in Washington, so far in advance of 1972.

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**Rowland Evans and Robert Novak
Agnew the Activist Irritates Senators
With His One-Man Lobbying Drives**

Real 8-15-69