

GOP Cut Funds for Agnew Residence

By Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson

Spiro Agnew, like most Vice Presidents, continues to get the hairy end of the political lollipop. The House Appropriations Committee has just knocked out \$150,000 of preliminary money to build a permanent residence for the Vice President.

Just before the Committee voted behind closed doors, Rep. Joe Evins (D-Tenn.) joshed Republican members.

"The motion to strike out the \$150,000 comes from the minority side, from Mr. Bow," said Evins. "This is very interesting, because it will affect Vice President Agnew, a Republican, who is now in office. Perhaps our Republican colleagues don't expect him to serve more than this one term."

"Oh, no, we are confident he will be in for two terms," spoke up Rep. Frank Bow of Ohio.

"But this project has been planned for years," said Evins. "Building a home for the Vice President is a good investment for the taxpayers, not a waste of money. The Vice President has a lot of official duties, such as receptions, entertainment and so on. An official home for him will take some burdens off the President."

"Oh, we have a great respect and affection for our Vice President," replied Bow.

"It's just that we love economy more."

This and a slash in Housing and Urban Development funds for slum clearance are the most interesting cuts the Committee made. It was not exactly evenhanded justice, because the Committee trimmed \$150,000 off the Vice President's housing in ritzy Northwest Washington and \$150,000,000 for housing in the slums.

The public didn't know about it, but prior to this Vice President Agnew also had his "transition" funds slashed to the tune of \$50,000 by Mr. Nixon himself.

"Transition" money is voted by Congress for both the outgoing President and the incoming President. It totaled \$375,000 for Mr. Nixon and \$75,000 for Mr. Agnew.

Prior to Inauguration, however, Mr. Nixon had spent \$425,000, not \$375,000 as allotted him by Congress. So the President-elect dipped into the funds of his Vice President by \$50,000 to make up the difference.

King's Tapped Wire

Disclosure in Federal court that the FBI was tapping the wires of Dr. Martin Luther King has created a great deal of flak and many inquiries regarding previous disclosures in this column.

On May 24, 1968, when Sen.

Robert F. Kennedy was running for President and had denied that he ordered or condoned the wide-scale wiretapping or eavesdropping undertaken by the FBI, this column reported in part:

"Attorney General Kennedy first ordered Dr. King bugged on July 18, 1963. His reason was that King was in touch with various Communists and was being influenced by them.

"... The FBI was amazed and opposed it. Courtney Evans, who served as liaison officer between J. Edgar Hoover and Bobby Kennedy, told the Attorney General that King traveled a lot, so a wiretap might not be too effective. Also he said that the wiretap would have a bad reaction among Negroes if discovered. The Attorney General remarked that he was not in the least interested in repercussions.

"He did not press the matter, and so the FBI did not place any taps on King's wire in July, 1963.

"However, in October of that year Bobby Kennedy signed an order for a tap on King's wires, and thereafter King's phone conversations were monitored.

"... The FBI faithfully carried on Kennedy's original instructions and submitted regular reports on King's activities—right up until the time of his death. These dealt in part with a Communist who was

helping to write King's speeches."

Note: Kennedy, a relatively young man when he became Attorney General, matured as a Senator and became a strong champion of individual liberties. He did not get along with J. Edgar Hoover either as Attorney General or as a Senator.

Junk Mail

Postmaster General Winston M. Blount of Alabama and Ernie Petinaud, Negro headwaiter of the House restaurant, have been friends for years.

Blount frequently cites Petinaud when people complain to him about "junk mail" delivered by the Post Office Department. Rep. Silvio Conte (R-Mass.) registered such a complaint the other day at a closed-door hearing of the Appropriations Committee.

"People toss big bundles of this stuff away when it comes third class," said Conte. "Another name for it is 'garbage.'"

"If I might elaborate," replied Blount, "Ernie, the maitre d' of the House restaurant, once put his hand on my shoulder and said, 'General, I want you to stop that junk mail from coming to my house.'"

"Then Ernie added, 'You can include those bills that come on the first of the month also.'"

© 1969, Bell-McClure Syndicate, Inc.