

'Just What Is the Charge?'

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A schoolteacher arrested on a traffic charge after she complained about the driving of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew's Secret Service bodyguards won her case in court yesterday.

Superior Court Judge Nicholas Nunzio acquitted Lois McArdle after police, prosecutors and Secret Service agents failed to agree on the charge against her.

She contended the agents' car sideswiped hers last June 24 at 27th and I Streets NW after she pulled abreast of their car to complain of their

"terrible driving." The agents contended her car hit theirs as they were shadowing the Vice President's limousine.

"Just what is the charge?" Judge Nunzio asked at one point and Joyce Capps, Miss McArdle's attorney replied, "Your honor, that's what I'm trying to find out."

Court records showed Miss McArdle, art department head at Northern Virginia Community College, was supposed to stand trial on a charge of disobeying a signal device, lines painted on a traffic island, when she pulled up to the Secret Service car.

Dut D.C. policeman W. J.

Logan testified that he had charged Miss McArdle with driving in the wrong lane, after investigating the accident.

"I fail to see how the government has established the case," Judge Nunzio said, holding that she could not be prosecuted just because "the Secret Service says the markings are there."

Miss McArdle, who followed the Secret Service agents to the White House after the accident, said she plans a civil suit for false arrest. She said the agents detained her there nearly three hours.