

Nixon Reportedly Pushed For Agnew Resignation

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WASHINGTON (AP) — While maintaining a public posture of support, President Nixon tried through aides to persuade Spiro T. Agnew to resign as vice president in the face of Agnew's possible indictment or

impeachment last fall, according to a new book on the Agnew case.

Eventually, the White House demanded Agnew's resignation, the book says.

The White House maneuvering is detailed in the book "A Heartbeat Away," by Washington Post reporters Richard M. Cohen and Jules Witcover.

Alexander Haig, chief of the White House staff, is said to have served as the chief go-between for Nixon in dealings with Agnew and his attorneys.

Agnew eventually made a deal with the Justice Department, resigned Oct. 10, and pleaded no contest to a single charge of income tax evasion.

Cohen and Witcover describe how the original investigation of political kickbacks in Maryland's Baltimore County led eventually to Agnew and resulted in his becoming the highest-ranking U.S. government of-

ficial ever to resign under threat of criminal charges.

Nixon, according to the authors, was confronted with the problem of how to deal with Agnew in view of the fact that he personally faced possible implication in the Watergate scandal and did not want to set a precedent that could affect his own case.

In particular, the book says, Nixon was worried about Agnew taking what was called the "impeachment track" by taking his case to the House of Representatives.

Haig, on Sept. 10, "despairing that Agnew would ever take the hint" to resign, Haig and presidential counsel J. Fred Buzhardt met with Agnew and one of his lawyers and laid out the case before them, the book says.

Haig, "abandoning the White House's addiction for circumlocution and subtlety . . . let Agnew have it," says the book.