

2 Agnew

Accusers Identified

Construction Officials Listed By Magazine

At least two men being investigated by federal prosecutors in Baltimore have told the prosecutors that Vice President Spiro T. Agnew extorted campaign contributions from state and federal contractors in Maryland. Time magazine reports this week.

The two, according to Time, are Jerome B. Wolff, 55, president of Greiner Environmental Systems, Inc., an affiliate of J. E. Greiner Co., Inc., one of Maryland's biggest construction consulting firms, and Lester Matz, 49, a partner in Matz, Childs and Associates, another Maryland construction consulting firm.

Agnew, as governor of Maryland, appointed Wolff chairman of the State Roads Commission in 1966 and brought him to Washington in 1969 as an assistant to the Vice President on scientific matters. He left Agnew's staff in 1970.

U.S. Attorney George Beall, who is heading the investigation, informed Agnew by letter Aug. 2 that he is under investigation for possible violations of conspiracy, extortion, bribery and tax laws.

Agnew proclaimed his innocence of any wrongdoing last week and voiced confidence in the criminal justice system.

According to sources familiar with the case, the investigation centers on allegations that private engineering and architectural firms were improperly awarded federal contracts during Agnew's term as Vice President and that similar improprieties occurred when Agnew was governor.

The investigation began seven months ago and initially focused on Dale Anderson, Agnew's successor in 1966 as the county executive of Baltimore County and one of Maryland's most powerful Democrats. The Baltimore County

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aspects of the investigation was into allegations that cash kickbacks were passed from contractors and engineering firms to Baltimore County officials during Anderson's administrations, according to sources.

At some point in the investigation, the focus shifted to Agnew.

The prosecutors have subpoenaed records involving Agnew's political campaigns, his activities as governor and federal and state highway projects. Beall has asked Agnew to turn over his personal financial records, a request his lawyers are studying.

Wolff and Matz are known to have negotiated with the prosecutors for immunity from prosecution in return for information they may supply on Agnew.

It also was learned in Washington that Joel Kline, the one-time Montgomery County land and stock speculator with both GOP and Democratic associations, has been cooperating with the federal investigators. His exact role in the investigation has not been learned, however.

Time said sources close to Beall's investigation say that some of the rakeoff methods were quite sophisticated, "including one plan in which contractors favored with government business awarded fake bonuses to employees in the know, always being careful to deduct the proper withholding taxes, and then scooped them back for secret donations to politicians."

The details of the Time story could not be confirmed yesterday.