

The Men Who Are After Agnew

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BALTIMORE — At first glance, the prosecution of Vice President Spiro Agnew falls under the category Lyndon Johnson like to call, "spittin' in the soup." Isn't that a Republican, U.S. Attorney George Beall, hot on the heels of a Republican vice president? Beall is brother of J. Glenn Beall, current GOP senator from Maryland. Both men are sons of J. Glenn Beall, another GOP senator.

Nothing upset the late President Johnson more than a party member making trouble for a political brother.

Young Democrats

But pressing the charges is a band of youthful Democrats for the most part. Young men that fit the category Agnew once attacked as "impudent, effete snobs."

In Baltimore legal circles, Beall, 36, a handsome blond Princeton graduate, is an "inexperienced" prosecutor with a tiger by the tail.

The man who unleashed that tiger and created history in Washington, is an even younger — 35 — Boston Jew who cut his teeth in indigent cases, viewed the Vietnam war as obscene and was a member of the presidential campaign staff of Sen. Edmund Muskie, (D-Me.), in 1972.

That man is Barney D. Skolnik, who, despite his years, has bagged political game beyond the limit of most federal district courts.

His term as assistant U.S. attorney started under the Democrats.

Skolnik has taken part in the criminal court convictions of A. Gordon Boone, Democratic speaker of the Maryland Legislature; Daniel Brewster, Democratic U.S. Senator; Rep. John Dowdy. (D-Tex.) and Rep. Thomas Johnson, a Republican from the state's eastern shore.

All cases involved money and political corruption, the identical ingredients of evidence against Agnew arising from an investigation of kickbacks by Maryland construction industry officials to state politicians.

"Barney has the experience, he knows how to do the job," said one Baltimore lawyer. "He confronted Beall with the case and said, 'I assume you aren't going to stop this.' Beall probably smiled nervously and said, 'Oh, No'."

That is not to say that Beall doesn't have guts. He knows what this means to the Republican Party in the state and nation," said a GOP lawyer. "He just doesn't care."

Democrats or Republicans, it appears to make little difference to Beall and Skolnik when it comes to political corruption.

Even tougher is Russell T. Baker Jr., a 28 year old assistant U.S. attorney who, like Skolnik, is a cum laude

graduate of Harvard Law School.

Baker keeps his coat off, tie down and tongue sharp. "He's another Bobby Kennedy," said one court official. "You know, 'The law is the law and that's a violation and I will brook no interference'."

Not the First Time.

Beall, Skolnik and Baker have exerted so much pressure on the Justice Department and White House that Agnew aides feel that "they're going after us, full blast."

It isn't the first time Beall felt heat from the nation's capitol. He pressured for prosecution of Sen. Russell B. Long (D-La.), chairman of the Senate Finance Committee in connection with a capitol construction job.

There is no doubt that Beall is a close member of the state's Republican family. He was appointed to two state jobs by a Republican governor — Spiro T. Agnew.