

Most Agnew Aides Placed in U.S. Jobs

By Donald Smith
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The Nixon administration has rehired almost all of former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew's staff after a thorough job relocation effort, overseen by White House chief of staff Alexander M. Haig Jr.

"The Agnew people are all employed," says Maj. Gen. John M. Dunn, who was Agnew's chief military aide and assistant for administration. Dunn, who ran the relocation program, was one of the few who kept his old job under Agnew's successor, Gerald R. Ford.

"I think this administration treated the Agnew staff with great courtesy and consideration," Dunn said. "Every single one of them was given job opportunities or given a job. Most of them took something, and they've been pretty well situated. That's been one of the things that has been done with a certain amount of gentility."

Dunn said Haig took a "personal interest" in seeing that Agnew staffers found jobs after the former Vice President resigned last Oct. 10 and pleaded nolo contendere to a charge of tax evasion. The relocation effort "clearly" was sponsored by President Nixon, Dunn added.

The search for jobs included the entire Agnew staff, from senior aides to secretaries and messengers.

John M. Damgard, Agnew's scheduling and appointments assistant, has become the deputy assistant secretary for marketing and consumer services in the Department of Agriculture.

One of Agnew's political assistants, Peter J. Malatesta, landed a job as an assistant for bicentennial affairs in the Department of Commerce.

Thomas J. Manger Jr. was Agnew's office manager in the White House. He is now a planning specialist in the Social Security Administration's Bureau of Supplemental Security Income.

J. Marsh Thomson, Agnew's press secretary, took a job as assistant to the director of the Peace Corps. Thomson plans to leave government service to become executive vice president of the National Oil Jobbers Council, a Washington-based trade association of wholesalers and distributors of petroleum products.

Another principal Agnew assistant, C. B. Ward, turned down government offers to take an as yet unannounced job in private industry. In the interim he is completing a study of the Nixon administration's New Federalism program as a consultant to the Office of Management and Budget.



VICE PRESIDENT FORD

KENNETH E. BELIEU

... Ford and recently appointed legislative assistant

David A. Keene, Agnew's principal political assistant, also left the administration to become executive assistant to Sen. James L. Buckley (Cons.-N.Y.). Keene is a former chairman of the Young Americans for Freedom.

Another Agnew staffer who stayed to work for Ford is Capitol Hill veteran staffer Walter L. Mote, administrative assistant to the President of the Senate—an office the Vice President holds ex officio.

The only key staff member who has not yet taken a job elsewhere is Agnew's longtime aide and former White House administrative assistant, Arthur J. Sohmer. Sohmer, 47, is still working in Agnew's transitional office near the White House helping the former Vice President go through his official papers.

All of the former staffers contacted by Congressional Quarterly had high praise for the treatment they received from the White House.

"One couldn't have asked for much more," said Ward. "They have been noted not to be that considerate of personnel matters in other things. Obviously this had high-level attention, because they really came through."

"The White House personnel office was quite helpful," according to Manger. "I'm very pleased with what I'm doing."

Most said they did not feel they had been stigmatized or that their careers had been harmed by having worked for Agnew.

"In fact, I think it's just the

opposite," said Ward. "Several of them are onto things of more responsibility than they had with the Vice President. I think it's indicative that the administration has no such problems with them."

"I haven't felt adverse reaction at all," said Malatesta. "You hear all kinds of things in Washington about being in grace or power or whatever,

but to the contrary, I've received more invitations from diplomatic circles, political circles and my own social circles in Washington than ever."

"I should be realistic," Damgard reflected. "There probably will be occasions down the line, people who would be put off. But they might be put off by the fact that I worked for Spiro Agnew anyway."