

Agnew Sought Aid Of U.S. Embassies

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Former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew asked American embassies in the Middle East to help cancel appointments and make travel arrangements when a recent business trip was curtailed by his wife's illness, the State Department confirmed yesterday.

Agnew's requests were contained in a secret cable from the American Embassy in Kuwait to embassies in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, which asked that appointment be cancelled, a hotel room be booked and a car and driver meet him at the airport in Lebanon.

A State Department spokesman said embassies normally cancel appointments for American businessmen, but do not provide such services as having a car and driver meet

the plane at the airport. The Department could not say if all of Agnew's requests were met and emphasized that it played no role in arranging his appointments with foreign heads of state.

A copy of the cable, labeled "confidential" and dated May 25, was obtained by The Washington Post. It was signed by the acting American ambassador in Kuwait, Walter M. McClelland, and was sent on a rush basis. It refers to Agnew as a VIP.

It directs the Embassy in Amman, Jordan, to "convey Mr. Agnew's sincere regrets to King and all others concerned" and asks the embassy in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, to cancel an appointment Agnew had with King Faisal.

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The last part of the telegram alerts the embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, to Agnew's imminent arrival. "He requests embassy obtain reservation for him at Phoenicia Hotel and send car and driver to meet him at airport."

Agnew, who resigned last Oct. 10 after pleading no contest to income tax evasion, has been trying to establish himself as a middleman or broker between foreign governments and American industry, according to informed sources. He notified the State Department last April that he would be travelling on business to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Portugal, Singapore, Korea, Morocco, Greece, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines.

On April 27, the State Department informed the embassies of all the nations on Agnew's itinerary of his plans, a Department spokesman said. He said that the cable told the embassies that Agnew should be accorded "appropriate courtesies" due any American businessman, but not such honors as an escort, a car or security.

The spokesman said Agnew was informed of the content of the cable.

Agnew apparently learned of his wife's hospitalization while in Kuwait. The cable says, "Mr. Agnew has just informed embassy that he has received word his wife has

been taken to hospital and is seriously ill. He is therefore cancelling remainder of trip and returning at once to Washington. He hopes to reschedule missing portion of trip as soon as possible."

After resigning, Agnew continued to receive Secret Service protection and work out of a government office here. His protection was terminated last February after members of Congress and the General Service Administration complained, in some cases saying it was illegal. Since then, Agnew has moved to an office in Crofton, Md., apparently to write a novel and work as a international middleman.

Judy Agnew, the former Vice President's wife, entered the hospital about May 2 for a hysterectomy and was hospitalized again later in the month because of complications. She since has recovered from the surgery, a source in contact with the family said.

Agnew, according to sources, has been trying to develop his business as a middleman since resigning the vice presidency. He is attempting, these sources said, to capitalize on his entry to the presidential palaces of various foreign governments where he is still viewed with respect and admiration. One person familiar with Agnew's new business described it as a simple attempt to represent American businesses abroad.

Agnew was disbarred as a lawyer in Maryland following his nolo contendere plea to the tax charge and the Justice Department's release of a 40-page document that detailed the charges against him. In it, the government charges that Agnew took kickbacks from Maryland contractors while executive of Baltimore County, governor of Maryland and Vice President. Agnew denied all but the tax charge. He was fined \$10,000 and placed on unsupervised probation.

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