

Agnew Tells How He'd Act As President

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Vice President Spiro T.

Agnew has said he would continue President Nixon's foreign policy if the chief executive resigns because of the Watergate affair, but would probably try "some different things" in the domestic area, Time magazine reported yesterday.

Agnew said in an interview with a Time reporter that he had "total confidence" that the President was not involved in Watergate and that he could only imagine himself becoming President if he decided to run and was elected in 1976.

However, Agnew went on to discuss the Watergate scandal, the President's reaction to it, and what he would do if he became President.

Agnew suggested that setting up the Committee for the Re-Election of the President was a mistake, and thought that the President should submit to a press interview. The Vice President said also that he opposed bugging personal conversations.

The Vice President's comments came as the Senate Watergate Committee is preparing to hear its most potentially explosive witness, former White House counsel John W. Dean III.

Dean is scheduled to take the witness stand at 10 a.m. today and testify that the President was aware of the Watergate cover-up.

When asked about the President's role in Watergate, Agnew said in the Time interview that he would "assume that if (President Nixon) is human and fallible like the rest of us, he's made some mistakes. But I think they have been very minimal . . .

"Watergate does show one thing. In a job as big as the Presidency, you can't watch everything. You're at the mercy of people carrying out your instructions.

"When you stimulate initi-

ative, you bring about the situation where sometimes people make a misjudgment based on their analysis and not yours. There isn't any other way."

While not suggesting that

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President Nixon submit to a full-scale press conference—which Agnew said might become an "inquisition with people screaming and yelling" — the Vice President recommended that Nixon hold a session with some of the "giants" of the news profession in relation to Watergate.

They could conduct "a proper kind of interview," Agnew said. That would be one in which "you could screen out the matters that are highly improper under the circumstances and concentrate strictly on information concerning the President's position."

As for the President's past statements on Watergate, Vice President Agnew said, "I think he has said everything he can possibly say as of this moment . . . given the fact that these matters are pending in the court."

When asked about bugging, the Vice President

said, "The entire idea of bugging I find personally repulsive."

He said that "wiretapping under court surveillance for specified matters of national security and against organized crime is a tactic that has led to some very good results, which could not have been obtained otherwise. But surreptitious wiretapping for political reasons is offensive to me."

While saying that he thought the President's foreign policy adjustments have been "really superior," Agnew said that "domestic policy . . . requires a great many more frequent fine tunings and adjustments."

In other Watergate-related developments yesterday:

Newsweek magazine reported that Dean will testify to a series of tense conversations with President Nixon last spring specifically about the Watergate affair.

At one of the meetings, Dean is said to have bluntly

suggested to Nixon that he could be impeached. At another, Newsweek reported Dean as saying, the President heatedly defended what Dean and others had done on the ground that they had "protected the Presidency."

• Herbert G. Klein, outgoing director of communications for the White House, said that one reason for the

Watergate scandal was that too many inexperienced people had too much responsibility. Klein, appearing on NBC's Meet the Press, did not name any names.

Klein predicted that the President would hold a news conference soon but would not fully answer all Watergate questions because of ongoing investigations. The President's last

news conference was on March 15.

• Sen. Charles Percy (R-Ill.), in a speech prepared for delivery to the Senate today, warned against efforts to force the President to testify before the Senate Watergate committee or grand jury and criticized a recent proposal that would compel him to resign.

"The Congress," said

Percy, "cannot dictate to the President the way to handle Watergate. We can only offer advice and apply pressure, both public and private, to reach the desired result. That is our prerogative and duty.

"But to suggest that, because of the exigencies of the times, we can force the President to take the witness stand in the Senate

Caucus Room is once again to say that the end justifies the means. We should have had our fill of that type of thinking by now."

Percy also rejected the suggestion of special prosecutor Archibald Cox that Nixon might be subpoenaed before a grand jury, on grounds it would subordinate the Presidency to the Congress and the courts.

Percy criticized a plan proposed by former Democratic presidential advisor Clark Clifford under which Vice President Agnew would resign, Congress would then offer several choices of an Agnew successor to President Nixon, one of which he would select, then resign himself. Percy said that plan violates the spirit of the Constitution.