

Agnew Bids Student Quit Panel, But White House Rejects Move

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DETROIT, June 16 — Vice President Agnew called today for the resignation of the only student member of a new Presidential commission on campus unrest, but he was rebuffed by both the student and the White House.

Mr. Agnew said that Joseph Rhodes Jr., a 22-year-old junior fellow at Harvard University, had demonstrated he did not "possess the maturity, the objectivity and the judgment" to serve on the nine-member commission because of remarks Mr. Rhodes made in an interview with The New York Times, published yesterday.

The Vice President was sharply critical of statements made by Mr. Rhodes, including his avowed aim of seeking to discover whether the

deaths of six students on American campuses this spring could be linked to criticism of students by President Nixon and Mr. Agnew.

Mr. Rhodes told reporters in Cambridge, Mass., this afternoon that he did not believe the President wanted a "white wash" report from the commission and that he would not

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resign unless asked to by Mr. Nixon.

In Washington, the White House press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, said after a meeting with the President that there were no plans to change the make-up of the panel, which was appointed Saturday.

"We want a wide range of views—a diversity of views—represented on the commission," Mr. Ziegler said.

There were indications, however, that the White House had been surprised both by the remarks Mr. Rhodes made in the interview and by the Vice President's statement.

Mr. Rhodes said in the interview that he wanted to know if public statements made by Mr. Nixon and Mr. Agnew "are killing people." He charged that Gov. Ronald Reagan of California was "bent on killing people for his own political gain."

Support for Brewster

Administration sources professed surprise at the remarks, which they said were in conflict with Mr. Rhodes's background. The student, who is of Negro, Filipino and Chinese extraction, has been criticized by some fellow students for working with the Nixon Administration.

During the "People's Park" demonstrations last year in Berkeley, Calif., Mr. Rhodes kept the White House posted on developments. He has been acquainted with John D. Ehrlichman, executive director of the President's Domestic Council since he was student president at the California Institute of Technology in 1969.

Mr. Agnew said that the published comments of Mr. Rhodes showed "a transparent bias that will make him counterproductive to the work of the commission."

The Vice President asserted that Mr. Rhodes had misused "a relationship of mutual trust" with Mr. Ehrlichman and "is no longer entitled to the cloak of dignity that a Presidential appointment would throw around him."

Support for Brewster

Mr. Agnew said that panels such as the one on campus violence "can bear no fruit where the investigators, acting with a limited Presidential mandate, enter the field of their inquiry with preconceptions and the kind of verbal posturing that Mr. Rhodes reveals so clearly in his statements."

The Vice President, who came here for a Republican fund-raising dinner last night, read his statement to newsmen.

The last time Mr. Agnew demanded someone's resignation was in April, when he said that

Kingman Brewster Jr., president of Yale University, should step down because of his expressed view that black revolutionaries might not be able to get a fair trial in the United States.

On that occasion, Yale students and faculty members rallied to the defense of Mr. Brewster.

It appeared possible that Mr. Agnew's request for the resignation of Mr. Rhodes would solidify the student's position, too, and, in the process, make it possible for the White House to overcome what some regard as a political problem associated with the campus panel.

The Administration is said to be hopeful that it can head off another year of campus unrest by quickly implementing the recommendations the panel is to present by Oct. 1. But some observers have said that the commission could have difficulty establishing credibility among students — a problem which Mr. Rhodes's remarks and the Vice President's objections might now help to diminish.

Declines to Resign

Special to The New York Times

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., June 16

Mr. Rhodes said today that he had "no intention of resigning" from the commission in the wake of Mr. Agnew's comments.

"I must presume that the President appointed me to this commission because of my strong views, including the fact that I do not necessarily agree with much of Administration policy," he told a news conference at Adams House at Harvard University. "I must presume that the President does not want a whitewash. I must also presume he wants us to find the facts, unpleasant though these may be to the Vice President."

Looking at ease and confident, he added, "the Vice President is given to making such comments about a lot of people — we have to tolerate it."

In response to questions, he confirmed the accuracy of the interview with The New York Times, and he repeated some of his comments.

He said in the interview that "grave charges" that the Nixon Administration has provoked campus violence should be fully investigated. But he said that he had an open mind about the killing of students at Kent State University and Jackson State college, not yet having seen any of the official information.

Asked if he had been appointed to the commission as the "house dissident," Mr. Rhodes said he had not got that impression from those who appointed him. "I don't think I'm being used," he said.