

# Finch Says Dispute Will Help Campus Study Panel

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WASHINGTON, June 18 — The Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Robert H. Finch, said today that Vice President Agnew's recent attack on a young member of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest had given the commission greater "legitimacy and visibility than it had before."

On Wednesday, Mr. Agnew called for the resignation from the commission of Joseph Rhodes Jr. following publication of an interview with the 22-year-old Harvard graduate student in The New York Times. Mr. Rhodes had said that he hoped the commission would investigate possible links between statements made by President Nixon and Mr. Agnew and the fatal shootings of six students on American campuses this spring.

Mr. Agnew said that such a remark displayed "transparent bias" against the Administration and called for Mr. Rhodes' resignation from the nine-member panel, which is led by William W. Scranton, former Pennsylvania Governor.

But the White House quickly reaffirmed its faith in Mr. Rhodes and today, at a news conference, both Mr. Finch and Mr. Scranton did the same. The thrust of their remarks was that Mr. Rhodes added a necessary element of diversity to the commission and Mr. Agnew had been in error to criticize him.

## Finch Explains Gain

Mr. Finch suggested that the Vice President's criticisms coupled with Mr. Nixon's quick reaffirmation of his original selections to the commission had improved the panel's credibility.

"If I were sitting where you are, I would say it might perhaps have given it more legitimacy and visibility than it might have had before. It was very clear that the President stood by the committee as originally appointed."

Mr. Scranton said: "I don't



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**William W. Scranton, head of panel on campus unrest, after talk with Mr. Nixon.**

have any comment on the Vice President's comments about Mr. Rhodes or vice versa. I am not interested in personal comments one way or the other."

Mr. Finch, who will soon join the White House as counselor to the President and serve as liaison with the Scranton panel, and Mr. Scranton, making his first appearance before the press since his appointment, spoke about the commission's plan after a meeting with the President.

Mr. Scranton said he had received firm assurances from the President that the panel would be "utterly independent . . ." that he does not want it run

from the White House or by the Administration."

The former Pennsylvania Governor and one-time Republican Presidential hopeful said he had not raised the subject of Mr. Agnew with the President because Mr. Nixon had instantly rendered such discussion "unnecessary."

"The very first thing he said to me," Mr. Scranton reported, "practically as I entered the door, was that he wanted me to know that he wanted this to be an independent group and that he was glad that it was widely diverse and with different kinds of backgrounds."

Implicitly, too, Mr. Scranton repudiated Mr. Agnew's assertion that Mr. Rhodes did not have "the maturity, the objectivity and the judgment" to serve. Mr. Scranton said he had talked to Mr. Rhodes by telephone and added:

"I think he, too, feels very strongly that we should go into this with open minds. I think one of the reasons he made some of the statements he did was that he was very fearful that that might not be the case."

Mr. Nixon named the panel last Saturday and asked for a report by Aug. 31. He instructed it to investigate campus unrest and to seek ways of avoiding a repetition of the kind of violence that occurred at Kent State University and Jackson State College.

Mr. Scranton said his objective was not to conduct a criminal investigation of the incidents—a task best left, he said, to the Justice Department—but rather to examine the causes and "come up with recommendations so that kind of thing would not happen again."

Mr. Finch's appearance in the White House press room was his third since the announcement two weeks ago that he was leaving H.E.W., suggesting that the White House was taking pains to give him some visibility and credibility of his own in his new post. He had appeared at a briefing given by the emergency relief team named by Mr. Nixon after the earthquakes in Peru and at a briefing on proposed revisions in the welfare laws.