

Information Agency Film on Agnew Presents Him

By ROBERT M. SMITH
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 6—The film starts with a slow pan of an airplane. It looks as if it's going to be a movie about airplanes—one of those shiny documentaries that trace flight backward in color from a sparking jet lumbering out of its hanger to Icarus's wax wings.

The music becomes tense, and the roar of a jet is spliced in. The drama crests with the first three lines of John Wayne's husky narration:

"His father came to the United States as an immigrant from Greece. His mother was born in the United States. His name—Spiro Agnew."

The United States Information Agency's 15-minute documentary, meant to "introduce the Vice President cinematically to the world," features a split screen, flashbacks, color, actuality, program music and a compilation of Mr. Agnew's attacks on the liberal press and the Eastern establishment.

It was shown at a press preview here today.

Criticism Not Shown

While the film, which cost \$80,000, acknowledges at one point that Mr. Agnew's voice is "sometimes a voice of controversy," it presents none of the counterattacks made on him by intellectuals, liberals or the media.

Bruce Herschensohn, director of motion pictures for U.S.I.A., said that none of the agency's films include that kind of criticism of their subjects. "In the Kennedy film, we said the Bay of Pigs was a setback—that's about all," he explained.

Mr. Herschensohn said that in the film—called simply "Agnew"—the Vice President "comes across as a strong man with firm convictions."

The movie makes three points at least twice:

¶Mr. Agnew is well-known. In one scene, Mr. Wayne says, "The country knew of him now." In another, "He is hardly a stranger to any crowd."

¶Mr. Agnew is against racial discrimination. In one scene, Mr. Wayne says, "Elected to his first public office, he fought for a series of laws against racial discrimination." In another, "Spiro Agnew demands the end of discrimination."

¶Mr. Agnew is forthright. In one scene, Mr. Wayne characterizes Mr. Agnew, when he was Governor of Maryland, as "a man who spoke his mind." In another, he says: "His voice is heard throughout the country—sometimes a voice of controversy—praised by some, denounced by others. But on one point, there is common agreement: He is still a man who speaks his mind."

The film begins with a huge Air Force plane being slowly trundled out of a hangar—and ends with its equally solemn return to the hangar—because the film-makers used the Vice

President's recent trip to Asia as a continuity device.

Mr. Agnew's political career in Maryland winds back and forth through his Asian tour. Black-and-white scenes of his inauguration as Governor are juxtaposed with color shots of Asian temples, dancers and political leaders.

Mr. Wayne—one of America's best-known heroes in both cowboy and war movies—sets the mood for the film near the out-

set. "Destination," he intones, "Asia. Eleven nations, 37,000 miles—a journey of friendship."

Mr. Wayne, who is known to have conservative political views, received no fee. Mr. Herschensohn said he knew that that actor "felt strongly about the Vice President" and he asked him to do the film.

The movie was produced under U.S.I.A. supervision by Miller-Fenwick, a Baltimore film maker.

Excerpts in the film from Mr. Agnew's speeches include his comments on "an effete corps of impudent snobs who characterize themselves as intellectuals" and on the concentration of television power "in the hands of a tiny enclosed fraternity of privileged men elected by no one and enjoying a monopoly sanctioned and licensed by the Government."

Starting in about two weeks, "Agnew" will be shown to

TUESDAY, JULY 7, 1970

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foreign people at American embassies around the world. The information agency—is prohibited from showing its films or distributing other propaganda material in this country.

Mr. Herschensohn explained that when and where else the film might be shown would depend on how popular it becomes. It will be shown free. It could also be shown on television.

Among other persons who

have been the subject of information agency films are Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Truman; Louis Armstrong, the musician; John Steinbeck, the writer; and Vice President Humphrey, while on an African tour. The agency is showing overseas a film on President Nixon made by the Republican National Committee.

Mr. Herschensohn said that part of the reason the picture cost \$80,000 was that fancy op-

of Racial Discrimination

tical effects, such as the split-screen technique, were used.

The \$80,000 contrasts with \$25,000 spent for the Eisenhower film and \$5,000 on the Steinbeck film.

The agency said that the cost of the films should not be compared because a great deal depended on the amount of footage already available as opposed to what must be shot for the film. In the case of Mr.

Agnew, the agency said, there was very little footage available.

It also pointed out that the Eisenhower film—in the nature of an obituary—was done in black-and-white.

Asked why the special effects were used in the Agnew film, Mr. Herschensohn said, "It takes a quality film to compete for the screens of the world."