

New Rumors and Denials on Agnew

Washington

The White House denied yesterday that President Nixon or anyone in authority in the White House is applying pressure to persuade Vice President Spiro Agnew to resign.

But even as the White House moved beyond its original "no comment" reply to questions about Agnew's future, a well informed Eastern Republican said he had been told by a responsible White House aide that Agnew is "going to go in the next few weeks."

The Republican, who declined to be quoted by name, told the Washington Post that the White House aide said to him within the last few days that the departure of Agnew would give the President "an opportunity to set a whole new tone for the administration."

The beleaguered vice president is under investigation by a federal grand jury in Baltimore in connection with allegations that he received kickbacks or other illegal payments from businessmen.

Deputy White House press

Back Page Col. 1

From Page 1

secretary Gerald L. Warren, who on Tuesday refused to comment in any way on reports the vice president is considering resigning, said yesterday that it is inappropriate to comment because "the situation is still being weighed" by Attorney General Elliot P. Richardson.

Nevertheless, Warren branded as "false" stories which report that "there is a disposition on the part of the White House, or people in the White House, to force the vice president to resign or that the White House is applying pressure on the vice president to resign, or that the White House is the source of the stories which say that the vice president will resign."

"Now beyond that," Warren added, "I will not have any further comment until the attorney general completes his assessment of this situation and addresses this matter."

Under questioning, Warren did say that Mr. Nixon stood by his September 5 press conference statement expressing confidence in Ag-

new's "integrity during the period that he has served as vice president."

Some of Agnew's strongest supporters continued to express the view that the vice president is being undermined by the White House.

Victor Gold, the vice president's former press secretary and one of his most outspoken defenders, cited the "no comments" of Warren to questions Tuesday about whether Mr. Nixon still supported Agnew.

"This is calculated by the White House to keep the Agnew story alive," Gold said. "I blame the staff at the highest level, by which I mean Melvin Laird and General (Alexander M.) Haig."

Laird, the president's domestic counselor, phoned Gold to deny that he was in any way involved in spreading stories that Agnew might resign.

TENSION

Agnew's present press secretary, J. Marsh Thomson, did not accuse the White House of spreading the story that Agnew would quit. But Thomson's own statement reflected the

growing tension between the President and the vice president.

"We don't see what is going on as a conscious concoction of the White House," Thomson said.

Asked whether it was "an unconscious concoction," Thomson replied: "We don't have unanimity on that around here but we regard it as unworthy to suggest in any way that Messrs. Laird and Haig want him to resign."

IMPEACH

Senator Barry Goldwater said he believes Agnew would consider resigning if he were indicted, rather than put the country and himself through long impeachment proceedings.

The Arizona Republican and 1964 presidential nominee predicted at a news conference that an impeachment proceeding would follow any indictment and would "take a full year."

Another top Republican, John B. Connally, refused repeatedly to answer any questions about Agnew, his legal problems or his future.

Goldwater said that his preference for an Agnew replacement would be Governor Ronald Reagan. But, he added that Reagan is not interested.

"He's told me a number of times he does not want any more elective office," said Goldwater.

The 64-year-old Arizonian said that either Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York or Connally would be acceptable to him as a vice presidential appointee.

Washington Post