

A Friendly Crowd as Agnew Dedicates a Dam

By Jules Witcover
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Littleton, Colo.

Vice President Spiro Agnew, in his first public speaking appearance since disclosure that he is under federal investigation in connection with a contractors' kickback scandal in Maryland, received a warm and enthusiastic crowd response yesterday as he dedicated a new dam site outside Denver.

The crowd of more than a thousand cheered and applauded when Agnew arrived and, after his ten-minute speech on flood control, surged around him as he shook hands with wellwishers.

A few anti-Agnew placards were held aloft from the makeshift stands by teenagers but most were out of Agnew's view. A youth holding a sign that said "Watergate—the Spiro of '76?" carried it to a point in the crowd where it was in Agnew's view. But the Vice President gave no indication

of recognition.

There were about as many pro-Agnew as anti-Agnew signs, but the crowd generally had a nonpolitical flavor. The occasion was the damming of the South Platte river eight miles south of Denver. The river has flooded more than 20 times over the last 130 years.

The Vice President, looking tanned, relaxed and in good humor, made no reference to the Federal investigation in Maryland.

Wendell Meadows, formerly of Silver Spring, Md., and now manager of the Mile High Circle Savings and Loan Association in Littleton, pumped Agnew's hand and told him:

"I voted for you three times and I'll vote a fourth time."

Meadows said he had voted for Agnew when he ran for Governor of Maryland in 1966 and in his vice presidential races in 1968 and 1972.

Asked what he thought of

the Federal investigation of Agnew, Meadows said:

"If I went out and robbed a bank I could go to the judge and say, 'Give me immunity and I'll accuse the Governor of Colorado of anything.'

"I don't think he's guilty and I like the way he's come out fighting."

Others in the crowd also expressed confidence in Agnew during his current political crisis:

The Vice President, in his remarks, sent President Nixon's apologies for not being able to attend the ceremony himself. Agnew did not say what business was keeping the President away, but it was his preparations for his nationally televised talk on Watergate Wednesday night.