

Jury Gets Agnew Financial Records

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BALTIMORE, Aug. 17—Attorneys for Vice President Spiro T. Agnew today handed over the Vice President's personal financial records to federal agents from the U. S. attorney's office here who are conducting a widespread probe into alleged kickbacks to politicians from Maryland businessmen.

Agents from the Internal Revenue Service picked up copies of the Vice President's records in Washington at one of the two law firms representing Agnew in connection with the federal probe.

Agnew was told Aug. 2 by George Beall, the U. S. attorney for Maryland, that he is under investigation by Beall's office for possible violations of bribery, extortion, conspiracy and tax laws. The Vice President has denied any wrongdoing and pledged to cooperate with the Maryland investigation.

The financial records, which had been requested but not subpoenaed by Beall, were made available under the provisions of a letter sent Tuesday from the Vice President to Beall.

In that letter, Agnew said he had ordered his staff to make the documents available at his office and that he was prepared to meet with Beall and his investigating staff to answer any questions they might have.

Beall refused to comment today on whether he and his staff were preparing to interview Agnew or whether the Vice President would be called before a special grand jury that has been conducting the probe since last December.

In his letter to Beall, Agnew said that in making the records available he was not conceding the right of a grand jury to investigate a Vice President while he is in office.

Beall said that Agnew's records were delivered by IRS agents to Baltimore but that he and his staff had not yet looked through them and did not know how many records were turned over. A spokesman for the Vice President's office said the records covered everything sought by Beall, including income tax returns, checking account statements and savings account records.

Since the investigation began, Beall's staff has gathered a massive amount of records from Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties, the Maryland State Highway Administration, and from nearly 100 engineering and architectural firms.

The investigators are looking into allegations that engineering, architectural and contracting firms paid off politicians in order to get work in Baltimore County, at the state level and, in at

least one instance, for a favor from Agnew after he became Vice President.

Lester Matz, a member of the Baltimore County consulting engineering firm of Matz, Childs, Associates, has told the federal investigators that he personally gave the Vice President \$2,500 in return for a favor in 1971, according to sources.

Both Matz and Jerome Wolff, president of another Baltimore County consulting engineering firm, have been given limited immunity by the investigators in return for their cooperation in the probe, sources have said. Matz and a number of other Maryland businessmen reportedly have told the federal prosecutors that they personally have turned over money to Agnew in return for work.

Meanwhile, in Annapolis today, the majority leader of the Maryland Senate, George Snyder (D-Western Maryland), said that two young engineers have told him that they were unable to get state contracts without seeing two of Gov. Marvin Mandel's close friends and political fund raisers.

"They (the engineers) told me they understood how the game is played and that they were willing to make political contributions," Snyder said.

Snyder, who refused to divulge the names of the engineers, said there was no action by the state after the two men had written to Transportation Secretary Harry R. Hughes requesting to be considered for state consulting engineering contracts. Snyder said the two engineers told him that they had learned they would have to see W. Dale Hess and Harry W. Rodgers III, both friends of the governor, before they were granted state contracts.

Hess, a former majority leader of the Maryland House of Delegates and Rodgers are officials of Tidewater Insurance Co. The firm owns Zollman Associates, one of the engineering firms whose records have been subpoenaed by federal prosecutors investigating political corruption in Maryland.

Hess denied Snyder's charge, as did Frank A. DeFilippo, Mandel's press secretary. Rodgers was not available for comment.

Snyder and Mandel have been open foes for more than a year, beginning with the governor's decision last summer not to support Snyder's bid to become president of the Senate. Since then, Snyder has freely criticized Mandel and once before had alleged that political contributions were necessary to win state contracts.