

SFChronicle
**'Salute to
Agnew' Plea
--Innocent**

AUG 30 1973

Annapolis, Md.

A representative of the "Salute to Ted Agnew night" committee entered an innocent plea yesterday to four counts of conspiracy to violate state election laws.

Both Alexander Lankler, the committee member, and William G. Hundley, his lawyer, indicated they doubted the case would go to trial.

They refused to say why they believe the case might not reach the courtroom, although neither denied suggestions that this indicated the plea might be changed.

Arraignment of the committee before Circuit Court Judge George Sachse took only about five minutes.

The committee, but not its individual members, was indicted by a grand jury looking into the misreporting of a \$49,900 loan from President Nixon's finance committee to the Agnew salute.

Lankler has said the money was listed at first as contributions from individual donors to make the affair look more successful as a fundraiser than it was.

Blagden H. Wharton, treasurer for the salute, was indicted earlier by the grand jury.

The Agnew salute was held in Baltimore in May 1972.

There has been nothing to indicate that Agnew had any connection with it other than to allow use of his name and to appear at the affair.

Lankler, state chairman of Maryland's Republican party, ducked questions about whether the committee had done what the indictment charged.

"I will say it was one of the dumbest things a group of people ever did," he said. "I'm sure if we had it to do over again, we would act differently."

Associated Press