

## Mood of Crisis

# Nixon, Agnew to Meet Today on Maryland Probe

### San Clemente

President Nixon will meet with Vice President Spiro Agnew in Washington today to discuss the continuing federal investigation into possible criminal violations involving Agnew's finances.

Gerald L. Warren, Mr. Nixon's spokesman, said the meeting was requested by the vice president and will be held in the White House this morning.

Although neither Mr. Nixon's nor Agnew's associates would discuss the specific purpose of the meeting, there was an atmosphere of crisis building both here and in Washington.

In announcing the meeting, Warren said he specifically wanted to put down rumors that the vice president was on the verge of resigning. Spokesmen for Agnew also said his resignation was not contemplated.

### URGENCY

But there were indications of urgency and confirmations that the future of the vice president, who has steadfastly maintained his innocence, would be at the center of the discussion.

After conferring with Agnew and Melvin R. Laird, his chief adviser on domestic affairs, Mr. Nixon is to go to Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland, to spend the remainder of the holiday weekend with his family.

Mr. Nixon arrived at San Clemente 11 days ago and was to remain there through Labor Day.

He decided a few days ago to return to Washington early.

Although the President's spokesmen insisted that his return had nothing to do

with the Agnew meeting, other sources said he was returning early specifically to meet with the vice president.

### REQUEST

Agnew's request to see the President was reported to have been made early this week, even though Warren said he did not know when

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the request was made.

In Washington, the vice president's office and among his close associates, the mood was one of solemn expectation.

"I know that the vice president is not intending to have a resignation be part of their discussion," said J. Marsh Thompson, Agnew's press secretary. "What they are talking about is the vice president's situation, the allegations and the investigations thereof. I don't know what either gentleman would have that's new. It's in the legal area and I don't get involved in that."

### DISCUSS

In San Clemente, Mr. Nixon was reported to have discussed the Agnew situation by telephone or in person with some of his political associates. These included former Secretary of the Treasury John B. Connally and Herbert Brownell Jr., who was attorney general in the Eisenhower administration.

One of the questions that some sources believe is cru-

cial at this time is whether the White House, in the event of Agnew being indicted, would insist that the vice president take the same position that President Nixon has taken in his refusal to turn over to the courts tape recordings involving aspects of the Watergate case.

The President's position is that he cannot be prosecuted, that the legal recourse provided in the Constitution is impeachment.

Mr. Nixon is being advised along these lines by Charles Allen Wright, a constitutional lawyer and authority.

Several lawyers involved in the investigation of Agnew have hinted that Wright's influence in the case could be crucial to any agreement between the President and vice president on what course Agnew should take.

According to Warren, Mr. Nixon has not talked to Agnew since August 22, after his news conference in which he said his confidence in the vice president had not diminished since the investigation began.

Warren said the two officials had a "friendly" discussion. Prior to that, they last talked on August 7, when the two officials met in Washington after the existence of the investigation had been made public.

Mr. Nixon was reported to have expressed some displeasure at the revelation.

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