

NIXON RETURNING FROM THE COAST FOR AGNEW TALK

Meeting, Requested by the Vice President, Will Take Up the Inquiry Into His Finances

By JOHN HERBERS
Special to The New York Times

LAGUNA BEACH, Calif., Aug. 31—President Nixon will meet with Vice President Agnew in Washington tomorrow to discuss the continuing Federal investigation into possible criminal violations involving Mr. Agnew's finances.

Gerald L. Warren, Mr. Nixon's spokesman, said the meeting had been requested by the Vice President and would be held in the White House some time during the morning.

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

Mood of Expectation

In the capital, in 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 Thomson, Mr. 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."

Also in Washington, the chief counsel to the Senate Watergate investigating committee, Samuel Dash, disclosed that committee staff members were in touch with the Justice Department to determine whether kickback allegations involving Mr. Agnew fell within the scope of the committee's inquiry. [Details on Page 8.]

In announcing tomorrow's meeting, Mr. Warren said he specifically wanted to squelch

rumors that the vice President was on the verge of resigning. Spokesmen for Mr. Agnew also said his resignation was not contemplated.

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 White House discussion.

Mr. Nixon, after flying back to Washington, will confer with Mr. Agnew and Melvin R. Laird, his chief adviser on domestic affairs, in the White House. Later in the morning, he is scheduled to go to Camp David, the Presidential retreat in Maryland, to spend the remainder of the holiday weekend with his family.

When the President arrived here 11 days ago, he was scheduled to remain through Labor Day. He decided a few days ago to return a few days early. Although his spokesmen insisted that his return had nothing to do with the Agnew meeting, other sources said he

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was returning early specifically to meet with the Vice President.

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

In San Clemente, President Nixon was reported to have discussed the Agnew situation by telephone, or in person, with some of his long-time political associates. These included former Secretary of the Treasury John B. Connally and Herbert Brownell Jr., who was Attorney General in the Eisenhower Administration. Mr. Brownell met

with Mr. Nixon yesterday on other business.

Similar Stance Hinted

One of the questions that some sources believe is crucial at this time is whether the Nixon White House, in the event of an Agnew indictment, would insist that the Vice President should 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 Prof. Charles Alan Wright, a constitutional lawyer and authority. Several lawyers involved in the investigation of Mr. Agnew have hinted that Professor Wright's influence in the case could be crucial to any agree-

ment between the President and Vice President on what course Mr. Agnew should take.

Leaks in the investigation, which both Mr. Nixon and Mr. Agnew have condemned, have indicated that a number of former Agnew associates have been talking about kickbacks from Maryland contractors. Mr. Agnew has been officially advised that he was being investigated on possible charges of bribery, extortion and income tax fraud.

Immunity Sought

Earlier this week, it was disclosed that I. H. Hammerman 2d, one of Mr. Agnew's closest friends in Baltimore, was negotiating with United States attorneys for limited immunity in return for his testimony involving Mr. Agnew and a number of other officials. Mr. Hammerman also had been under investigation.

The Vice President returned to Washington today after what Mr. Thomson, his spokesman, called "private meetings" in New York City. Mr. Agnew is represented in the case by the New York law firm of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton and Garrison.

Mr. Thomson said it was "entirely possible" that Mr. Agnew was meeting with his lawyers. In New York, Martin London, a member of the firm, seemed surprised when told about the Nixon-Agnew meeting tomorrow and said he did not know of any meetings.

One long-time Agnew confidant suggested that the Vice President's purpose in asking for the meeting with Mr. Nixon was to "rule out for all time" any thought that he might be prepared to resign under fire.