

Four Friends From the Old

By Peter A. Jay

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I. H. (Bud) Hammerman knew Spiro T. Agnew in the sixth grade. J. Walter Jones introduced him to golf. Harry A. Dundore Sr. hunted and fished with him. George White was his personal lawyer.

These four men have formed the Agnew inner circle for years, since before their politically mobile associate made himself well known in the state of Maryland, let alone the nation. They remain the closest of his old friends, closer than the many new ones he has acquired since becoming Vice President of the United States.

Hammerman and Jones have been notified that they are under investigation by the same federal grand jury in Baltimore that is looking into allegations of government corruption involving Agnew. Hammerman has been reportedly seeking to cooperate with the federal prosecutors in exchange for immunity from prosecution or for some other special consideration.

Dundore has been questioned by federal investigators on the same matter, according to informed sources. White's name has not been mentioned in connection with the investigation.

The implication of Hammerman and Jones in the investigation—which already has resulted in the indictment of Dale Anderson, who succeeded Agnew as Baltimore County Executive in 1967 after Agnew was elected governor—has come as a shock to many in Maryland's overlapping business and political circles.

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I. H. HAMMERMAN



J. WALTER JONES



HARRY A. DUNDORE SR.

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merman and that he was dealing for immunity, I knew that was the ball game," one highly placed Maryland Republican said. "Obviously they have something."

Unlike some of their Democratic counterparts in Maryland, notably the well-heeled money-raising intimates of Gov. Marvin Mandel, Hammerman and Jones are not widely known in the state or in their own party.

Hammerman, 53, is probably the better known because he is a mortgage banker, a man who finds money for real estate and other ventures, with a national reputation for being shrewd and able in this field.

His company, the S. L. Hammerman Organization Inc., of which he is the president and chairman of the board, was started by his father. It now sells millions of dollars worth of real estate in the Baltimore area every year. The father, "Sam Hammerman, who began his

working life as a bricklayer, was active in Baltimore civic affairs for many years, and his son has followed in his footsteps.

Both Hammermans have headed Baltimore's Advertising Club, a lunch-and-good-causes organization of businessmen that hasn't much to do with advertising.

"Bud" Hammerman is a trim, athletic-looking man, who lives in Pikesville just outside Baltimore city line. He is married, has four children, and belongs to the Suburban Club—an exclusive country club of mostly Jewish members.

"The Hammermans are members of Baltimore's Jewish elite. They are the city's real aristocracy in the very best sense," said a Democratic politician who knows the family while that gets done around here gets done because Bud and people like him backed it."

Three years ago, the American Cancer Society gave a \$100-a-plate testimonial dinner for Hammerman in recognition of his efforts on behalf of the charity. Both Agnew and Mandel attended.

Like many Baltimoreans with money—and some without—Hammerman has dabbled in horse racing. He has owned several horses in partnership with William J. Muth, an Army acquaintance of his who is a Baltimore public relations man with broad contacts in the Baltimore and Baltimore County business communities.

"I'd give up my religion before I'd believe Bud's done

anything wrong," Muth said recently. "Nobody's ever going to convince me about Bud Hammerman."

Others aren't quite so friendly. Hammerman serves as one of the directors of the Maryland State Fair and Agricultural Society, a private group that operates the state fair and half-mile racetrack at Timonium in Baltimore County.

"He could be damn tough and persistent about pushing ideas," said one of the other directors. "I tell you, it bothered a lot of us having him and Fornoff stay on the board after all this stuff broke. I don't like it all."

(William Fornoff, another member of the fair's board of directors, was the top administrative assistant to both Agnew and Anderson in Baltimore County when they were the elected heads of the local government. He testified freely before the federal grand jury in Baltimore, and his testimony is believed to have been instrumental in the indictment of Anderson on 39 counts involving bribery and extortion charges. Fornoff himself pleaded guilty to a minor tax charge.)

Hammerman was the chairman of Agnew's 1966 gubernatorial campaign, in which Agnew won a surprise victory after the Democrats, in a bloody four-way primary, nominated a weak statewide candidate, George Mahoney.

In 1968, indulging what has been a continuing fancy for jetting off to far places for tropical vacations, Agnew went with Hammerman for a 10-day stay at the Sheraton-Kauai Hotel in Hawaii. Hammerman had been a mortgage

Days Form Agnew's Inner Circle



GEORGE WHITE

his election

consultant to the Sheraton chain and arranged financing for the hotel. The chain paid Agnew's plane fare and that of his wife, as well as part of their expenses.

J. Walter Jones, in the opinion of some Maryland Republicans, may be closer to the Vice President than even more elusive.

"It used to be you could call Walter Jones up on the telephone like a normal person," said one Maryland legislator, a Republican. "Now you have to go through the marine operator and try and get him on his boat, if you can get him at all. He stays pretty well hidden."

Jones is 50. He has known Agnew for about 20 years, and has stayed close to him since — smotheringly, coattail clutchingly close, in the opinion of some of Agnew's less intimate friends.

It was Jones who, in Agnew's early days as county executive, persuaded him to take up golf—a game he has since continued to play, with gusto if not finesse, in company with Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra and others.

Jones's considerable fortune rests primarily on real estate, though he was also a founder of the Chesapeake National Bank, a Towson institution that has flourished over the years.

His real estate firm is J. Walter Jones & Co. It was doing a good business in the 1950s, but it was in the 1960s, with a little help from Agnew, that the firm's value soared.

Jones and some associates bought a 205-acre tract of land in Baltimore County

just west of Interstate 83 in 1959. The land was rezoned for industrial use: the Baltimore County Board of Zoning Appeals, upon which Agnew then served, upheld the rezoning. Three years later, the Jones group sold 40 acres of the land for more than \$10,000 an acre—four times what they had paid for it—for an industrial park.

In subsequent years, Jones became a major political fund-raiser for Agnew, as well as a contributor in his own right.

In 1965, the year before Agnew was elected governor, Agnew, Jones, Dundore and six others bought 107 acres of land in Anne Arundel County near the projected second Bay Bridge site.

Agnew and Jones sold their shares of the property after their ownership of it became public knowledge and accusations of conflict of interest were made. At the time, Agnew said, somewhat indignantly, that because he bought the land in another county from the one in which he served as county executive, and before he became a candidate for governor, no conflict of interest existed.

Agnew also bought stock in Jones Chesapeake National Bank and served as a director there.

Jones has been described by one Maryland Republican as "a flamboyant, white-loafer type," but his life of late has been one of private affluence rather than public pretension. He lives with his second wife on an estate near Annapolis now, where he maintains a yacht and, according to some accounts, a magnificent wine cellar.

He has publicly acknowledged that he is under investigation by the grand jury in connection with alleged kickbacks to public officials—including Agnew—from engineering contractors.

Jones has firmly denied that he has done anything illegal, and has defended the Vice President with equal vigor. "I am not aware of any kickbacks on the part of the Vice President," Jones said in a prepared statement issued last August when news of the investigation first broke. "He just isn't that type of man."

The other two members of the Agnew inner circle, Dundore and White, have also shunned the public eye.

Dundore started a Baltimore County firm called Diecraft that made precision parts for scientific equipment, and sold it recently to Bausch & Lomb Inc. He has been an Agnew friend for many years, and was appointed by Agnew to the chairmanship of the Baltimore County Planning Board when Agnew was county executive. He has also raised money for Agnew, gone hunting and fishing with him, and invited him to his home last Labor Day weekend. Agnew stayed at Dundore's Ocean City (Md.) summer home.

White, like Agnew, is a

lawyer. He has been an adviser to Agnew for a number of years, and traveled with him extensively during his first campaign for the vice presidency in 1968. Since then, he has been involved in a number of building and real estate speculation ventures in Baltimore and Hartford counties.

White, unlike others close to Agnew, has dealt from time to time with Democratic political figures. He has, for example, served as an attorney for W. Dale Hess, one of Marvin Mandel's lieutenants and fund-raisers, and has been involved in land transactions with him.