

Head of the G.S.A. Says Agnew's Office Recommended

3 CONCERNS CITED BY AGENCY CHIEF

Administrator Says That It Isn't Unusual for Politicians to Pass Along Requests

By DENNY WALSH

Special to The New York Times
 WASHINGTON, Oct. 10.—Arthur F. Sampson, administrator of the General Services Administration, said today that Vice President Agnew's office, on a number of occasions, had urged his agency to select certain companies for Government contracts.

Although he recalled few specifics about these occasions, the head of the procurement and maintenance agency, when pressed for details, told a group of newsmen that the Vice President's office had approached G.S.A. on behalf of Gaudreau, Inc., a Baltimore architectural company; Greiner Environmental Systems, Inc., a Baltimore consulting engineering company, and Planners, Inc., a Washington urban planning company.

Shortly after Mr. Sampson's remarks, and after Mr. Agnew's resignation was announced, Richard Q. Vawter, G.S.A. information director, telephoned The New York Times and said that Mr. Sampson had "misspoke" concerning Gaudreau.



The Agnews in a family portrait made in December, 1969. Daughters Ann, Mrs. Agnew held Michelle, daughter of Randy, who stands at cen-

ter. Picture was taken when Mr. Agnew was about 11 months in office.

United Press International

Companies for Contradts

Mr. Vawter said there was no indication that Mr. Agnew's office had recommended Gaudreau for a contract, but the Vice President's office "may have" recommended the company's president, Paul L. Gaudreau, for his spot on a G.S.A. regional advisory panel of architects and engineers.

News Conference

Mr. Sampson's remarks came at a news conference in his office at which he announced that publicity linking the Gaudreau concern to the Federal investigation of kickbacks to Maryland politicians, including Mr. Agnew, led him to decide to dispense with the company's services in connection with designing new buildings for the Social Security Administration in the Baltimore area.

Under questioning by newsmen, Mr. Sampson said a Vice-Presidential staff member had telephoned his agency in 1969 or 1970 on behalf of Gaudreau in connection with a contract for Justice Department modernization plans.

In December, 1971, G.S.A.

awarded Gaudreau a contract to design renovations of the main Justice Department building in Washington, which were never undertaken because of the high cost estimates. The company was paid \$16,000 to prepare three alternative plans for the renovation.

Mr. Sampson said today that examination of records and questioning of G.S.A. personnel had failed to identify either party to the call between Mr. Agnew's office and the agency.

The administrator stressed that it was not unusual for politicians at all levels of government—Federal, state and local—to recommend companies to the agency for contracts. Public officeholders are often asked for help by friends and constituents, and these requests are routinely passed on to the appropriate agency or office, Mr. Sampson said.

"G.S.A., as a procurer of materials and services, has an over-abundance of them," he observed.

In a statement today to the Federal court in Baltimore with jurisdiction over the investigation of his official conduct, Mr. Agnew contended that he had not handled his duties as Vice President "in a manner harmful to the nation."

Gaudreau is one of eight

companies named in the recent Federal indictment of Baltimore County Executive N. Dale Anderson. The indictment alleges that the company paid nearly \$24,000 to Mr. Anderson in connection with a Baltimore County contract.

The indictment does not name the company as a defendant, and Mr. Gaudreau has been granted immunity from prosecution in the case and has been cooperating with Federal prosecutors. The same team of prosecutors has been investigating Mr. Agnew.

The Gaudreau company was selected last year to design a nearly \$200-million expansion of the Social Security Administration headquarters at Woodlawn in Baltimore County. In choosing Gaudreau, Mr. Sampson overruled the recommendations of the Social Security Administration and the G.S.A.'s own advisory panel of architects and engineers in private practice.

Mr. Sampson explained today that Mr. Gaudreau, in cooperation with three other companies, had nearly completed a feasibility study of the Social Security project, for which it will receive approximately \$318,000. The concern will not be allowed to proceed to the second phase of the design job,

which would have yielded an estimated fee of \$5.1-million. Gaudreau would have split the fee with two other companies.

"I want to make clear the meaning of this decision," Mr. Sampson said. "It in no way reflects on the competence of the Gaudreau firm. It in no way impugns Mr. Gaudreau's professional integrity. It in no way implies any judgment concerning the recent investigations in Maryland.

"It is unfortunate, but the widespread publicity surrounding the firm, in my view, makes the Gaudreau selection for this project inadvisable. Selection of the firm—or any other firm with extensive publicity of this nature—would be detrimental to public faith in the integrity of the G.S.A. architect/engineer selection system.

"It is my obligation to protect that system which led to today's announcement."

The two other companies mentioned by Mr. Sampson today as having been recommended to G.S.A. by Mr. Agnew's office—Grenier Environmental Systems, Inc., and Planners, Inc.—have also been linked in publicity during the last two months to the Federal investigation of the Vice President's affairs.