

Richardson calls sentence 'fair'

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NEW YORK — U.S. Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson says the sentence imposed on former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew for income tax evasion was "just, fair and honorable."

Defending his handling of the case, Richardson denied yesterday that the government had promised immunity or freedom from a jail term to witnesses in return for their testimony against Agnew.

"No one was given a promise of immunity from prosecution and no one was promised that he would be

spared a jail sentence," he said.

Richardson said the evidence would have justified going to a grand jury and obtaining an indictment, then presenting the evidence to Congress for possible impeachment.

Agnew was sentenced to a \$10,000 fine and three years' probation after pleading no contest to one count of income tax evasion.

"I've seen some criticism in regard to the lenience of the sentence, and some expressions of sympathy by friends of Mr. Agnew," Richardson commented in an interview.