

# Agnew's Plea--Don't Disbar Me

Annapolis, Md.

Former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew asked the courts yesterday to suspend rather than disbar him as a lawyer and he pledged never

to bring discredit to the legal profession.

Alfred L. Scanlan, lawyer for the Maryland Bar Association, told a three-judge panel, which will make recommendations in the discipli-

nary proceedings, that Agnew's no contest plea to federal tax evasion charges justified his disbarment.

"There really are no extenuating circumstances in this case," Scanlan said.

But Agnew, in a 12-minute appeal on his own behalf told the judges the question they should answer was "How I would practice law

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## AGNEW'S PLEA

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in the future and how I have practiced law in the past."

"Should I be permitted to resume my practice, I would conduct myself in a way that would not bring discredit to the law, the legal profession or the courts," he said.

Agnew asked that the judges recommend a suitable suspension.

"That's a reasonable solution to the problem. It's a reasonable protection for the courts and the bar," he said.

But Scanlan disagreed, saying, "This is not a lawyer who worked hard, got some fees and didn't report it."

Scanlan said Agnew acknowledged in federal court in Baltimore last October that he accepted contributions from contractors who were doing business with the state, used the money himself and did not list it as income on his tax returns.

"The payments here were suspicious payments," he said.

Judge Shirley B. Jones of Baltimore, chief of the

panel, promised the judges would reach a decision "as expeditiously as possible."

The recommendation of the three circuit court judges will go to the state Court of Appeals, which will make the final determination on whether Agnew should be suspended or disbarred.

There was agreement among the lawyers and Agnew that his no contest plea on tax evasion charges amounted to conviction of a crime of moral turpitude, which is a cause for disciplinary action against lawyers. But there was sharp disagreement over what discipline had been meted out in similar cases in the past.

Disbarment proceedings were started by the bar association after Agnew resigned as Vice President and pleaded no contest to the tax charge last October 10.

Agnew told the judges he had "very good reasons for pleading the way I did."

"Some reasons must remain for the foreseeable future locked within me," he added.

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