

Agnew, Sorting His Papers, Gets the Bad News by Phone

By Charles A. Krause
Washington Post Staff Writer

Spiro T. Agnew, who now spends quiet days sorting through the records of his turbulent past, received the bad news about his future yesterday morning while working in the government-owned Jackson Place town house he has occupied since resigning the vice presidency last Oct. 10.

The former Vice President, perhaps the most famous graduate of the University of Baltimore Law School, was told of the special three-judge panel's recommendation that he be disbarred by Leon H. Pierson, a Baltimore attorney.

Pierson is one of two lawyers Agnew hired to represent him in the disbarment proceedings brought last November by the Maryland Bar Association after Agnew pleaded no contest to a single count of income tax evasion and resigned as Vice President.

Asked if Agnew seemed disappointed by the panel's decision, Pierson said: "I frankly didn't sense anything" about the former Vice President's reaction. Pierson said the telephone conversation was very brief, only long enough for Pierson to tell Agnew of the panel's recommendation and for Agnew to authorize Pierson to appeal the adverse ruling.

E. Dale Adkins, Agnew's other attorney, said he would not talk about the

former Vice President's mood "but I think you can judge how strongly he felt (about not being disbarred) from his remarks" before the panel during a special hearing in Annapolis last Dec. 18.

At that time, Agnew told the court that "the practice of law means quite a bit to me. If it didn't, I wouldn't be here."

A reporter who attempted to interview Agnew at his office was told that "Mr. Agnew isn't making any comments" on the decision or his probable disbarment, which will be decided ultimately by the Maryland Court of Appeals.

A glimpse into the Agnew office at 716 Jackson Pl. NW was provided yesterday by an aide, Susan Sittnick, who said "we have no titles over here as such" but who was once special assistant for administration when Agnew was Vice President.

Mrs. Sittnick said Agnew's staff of 57 has been reduced to six, that the franking privilege for free mail given the former Vice President by Congress after Agnew's resignation has now expired, and that the remaining employees are paid by the government.

"Right now, we're working with hundreds of boxes (of Agnew's vice presidential papers) trying to put them in order," Mrs. Sittnick said.

Many of these papers will ultimately end up in the National Archives—although Mrs. Sittnick said none has

been sent there yet and the staff expects to work at Jackson Place for another two to three months.

A Secret Service spokesman said yesterday that Agnew still is guarded by a detachment of Secret Service agents and is provided a government car for his personal use.

The spokesman speculated that the Secret Service protection will end in another three months—that is, six months after Agnew's resignation.

Because Agnew has refused to grant interviews since leaving office, the former Vice President's personal life and feelings about his ordeal are a mystery, his comings and goings unknown except for the few times he has been spotted having dinner in a favorite Baltimore restaurant—Sapatino's—or meeting with his good friend, singer Frank Sinatra.

Also, because he is no longer a public servant on the federal payroll, Agnew has no press secretary to answer questions. Several of Agnew's friends from the days when he was Baltimore County executive said yesterday that they have seen him, but refused to discuss any aspect of his personal life.

George W. White, a Towson lawyer who remains close to Agnew, said "I'm not going to discuss anybody's personal affairs; that's up to them. I wouldn't do it in a million years."