

Magazine Reportedly Pays Over \$1 00,000 to Serialize Agnew Novel

By ERIC PACE

The Ladies Home Journal has agreed to serialize Spiro F. Agnew's first novel with the initial excerpt appearing in the May issue, publishing industry informants reported yesterday.

The former Vice President was said to have been working on the book for about four hours a day, alternately dictating and writing in pencil on yellow legal pads.

There were indications that the magazine was paying more than \$100,000 for the serial rights to the book, although it is not yet completed and there was no indication of when succeeding installments are to appear. The first excerpt, a sort of preview, is to be less than 5,000 words long, it was understood.

An outline of the entire book, a sample chapter, and some

character sketches have been submitted to several hard-cover book publishers in the last few days, the sources added, and Mr. Agnew has hired Scott Meredith, a prominent literary agent whose clients include Norman Mailer.

Varied opinions of Mr. Agnew's literary skills were expressed in publishing circles yesterday, but he was described as being a brisk writer, free of writer's blocks, fascinated by dialogue and plotting techniques, and hoping to write more books in the future.

Last month Random House turned down Mr. Agnew's proposal for publishing an untitled suspense novel about a Vice President with Presidential ambitions. Robert L. Bernstein, president of the publishing house said "it was not suitable for the Random House list" of published books.

But yesterday a prominent publishing figure who had seen the outline and other material submitted by Mr. Agnew said, "He's astonishingly good; it's going to be a fine professional novel." Another publishing executive said, "It's not a first-class manuscript that lives in your memory."

At least three women characters figure in the novel, in which a vice president is deceived by militant Iranian nationalists who wish to force a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, the sources said.

They are the fictional Vice President's secretary, who is having a romance with the head of his Secret Service guard; the fictional Vice President's wife, a society figure who spends much time in Philadelphia; and a woman who is Secretary of Health, Education and

Welfare. One editor said that the outline hinted that she was having a love affair with the fictional Vice President.

No comment on the reports was available yesterday from the former Vice President's Washington office, where he was reported to be writing the novel. The office staff has repeatedly declined to comment on Mr. Agnew's literary activities, which he began after the resigned in October following his pleading of no contest to a charge of income-tax evasion. Editors at the Ladies Home Journal could not be reached for comment late yesterday.

Executives at Mr. Meredith's Fifth Avenue office were unavailable for comment, and none was forthcoming from the heads of the publishing houses to which the novel proposal was submitted in recent days, without any specific minimum bid being required.

The concerns were understood to include Holt, Rinehart and Winston; Simon & Schuster; William Morrow & Co.; and Atheneum.

At least one of the publishers was said to have decided not to bid on the novel, but others were reportedly contemplating substantial offers.

Beauty and the Red Tape

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. (AP) — Miss Universe for 1973, Maris in New York. But customs officials waived regulations and allowed her to enter Canada for a 90-minute visit.