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AGNEW ON COAST FOR BENNY FETE

Moss Challenges His Right
to Secret Service Escort

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13 (AP)

— Former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew is in California, reportedly to attend the 80th birthday celebration of Jack Beeny, the comedian; this weekend and to spend some time with Frank Sinatra, the singer, in Palm Springs.

Mr. Agnew left yesterday, escorted by a Secret Service detail. Two weeks ago the General Accounting Office questioned the legality of the Secret Service protection to the former Vice President. The round-the-clock guard was provided at President Nixon's order.

The cost of the protection from Oct. 10, when Mr. Agnew resigned, through Dec. 15 was \$89,222, the G.A.O. said.

Representative John E. Moss, Democrat of California, who has challenged Mr. Agnew's right to maintain a Secret Service escort, called the Palm Springs trip "an affront to every taxpayer in America."

Mr. Moss said in a House speech that Mr. Agnew was accompanied by from 12 to 21 agents. He said he was unable to find out the precise number of agents because the Secret Service said national security was involved.

Mr. Moss called Mr. Agnew's trip "an eight-day vacation and a possible writing period on his book."

He said Controller General Elmer B. Staats believes the Treasury Department's position that Mr. Agnew is entitled to Secret service protection is untenable.

At his request, Mr. Mossoo said, Mr. Staats is looking into ways the expenditure of funds for the Secret Service escort might be halted and the amount spent since Mr. Agnew left office recovered.

Mr. Moss was praised by Representative H. R. Gross, Republican of Iowa, for "his persistent effort to divorce the Secret Service from Spiro Agnew."

Book Bids Studied

An executive of the Scott Meredith Literary Agency, which represents Mr. Agnew, said here yesterday that the agency would soon announce which hard-cover publishing company will bring out the suspense novel, about a Vice President with Presidential ambitions, that Mr. Agnew has been writing.

"We've received several bids for the book, all of which are being seriously considered," the executive said, adding, "it's a matter of considering the best interest of our client and the best house for him."

No details about the sums of money involved were disclosed, but it was understood that the hard-cover publisher that contracts to publish Mr. Agnew's novel in the United States also control the United States paperback book rights.

Installments from the novel are to appear in the Ladies Home Journal.