

Women Begin to Emerge From Agnew's

By ERIC PACE

She is a successful career woman at the top of her field, but it's her perfume and her shapely legs that first endear her to the fictional vice president who is the hero of Spiro T. Agnew's forthcoming political novel, and romance rears its head.

The fictional career woman is Meredith Lord, the first woman secretary of Health, Education and Welfare—one of three women characters whose tangled personal lives are described in the novel, tentatively titled, "A Very Special Relationship."

Scott Meredith, the New York literary agent, announced yesterday that the novel is to be published in hardcover by Playboy Press, which, he said, has bought rights to it for between \$50,000 and \$250,000.

Discuss the Romance

The publishing house is a division of Playboy Enterprises, Inc., which also puts out Playboy magazine, a publication not noted for reticence about relations between the sexes.

But in discussing the novel's plot and the characters, Mr. Meredith and Edward Kuhn Jr., the publisher's editorial director, insisted that the romance would be tastefully described.

"Meredith Lord is very strong-willed and she's a very good-looking dame," Mr. Meredith said at a news conference held at his Fifth Avenue offices. He said the fictional vice president, Porter Newton Canfield, was "angry at her toughness and attracted to her physically."

Mr. Kuhn said that Mr. Agnew has written only a few dozen pages of the book, which is to be over 300 pages long. He added that the female characters loom large in the preliminary character

sketches Mr. Agnew has prepared, and in the section he has been writing recently. This describes a Cabinet meeting, and it is to be the first part of the novel published in the Ladies Home Journal, which has bought serial rights.

Mr. Kuhn and Mr. Meredith declined, to answer questions

that could provide much in the way of details about the fictional Miss Lord, and the other two main women characters—the Vice President's secretary, and his aristocratic wife.

"I think Mr. Agnew has always been interesting to women and to women readers," Mr. Kuhn said. "He's a

big, attractive, outspoken kind of guy and I think the author's view of women as it shows up in the novel will be of interest."

From details made available by other publishing figures, the following profiles of Mr. Agnew's three fictional women were assembled:

¶Miss Lord is intelligent as

Novel-in-Progress

well as tough and handsome, and she has a Ph.D. in psychology. She is a vigorous administrator and at the age of 34 laughingly refers to herself as middle-aged.

In Mr. Agnew's account of the Cabinet meeting, Miss Lord's gentleness and good looks are emphasized. She wears her brown hair softly

arranged; her eyes are warm and friendly. But as the meeting progresses she shows her toughness in an argument about budgetary matters.

The truth to say, she speaks in rather long sentences, and the President, feeling somewhat fatigued, asks her to meet separately with the Vice President to settle the dispute.

Acts as His Hostess

Miss Lord plays down her charms while buttering up the 48-year-old Vice President. But in the end it is not her wit or ability that starts stirring the fictional Vice President's emotions—but her figure. And that perfume.

Not surprising, the two form a close friendship, and Miss Lord occasionally serves as hostess for the Vice President a liberal who wants to be President.

¶Amy DeVrees Webster Canfield, the Vice President's wife, lacks Meredith's charm. She is a high-born Philadelphian whose father's law firm hired Canfield when he left the Navy—and before he was elected to Congress.

She is independent-minded, luxury-loving and an indefatigable clubwoman who is often away from Washington.

¶Katharine Ann Dryden, the fictional Vice President's secretary, is romantically entangled with Steven Mark Galdari, a divorced man who is the special agent in charge of the Vice President's Secret Service guard.

At 28, Miss Dryden is serious-minded, works long hours, and has become a skilled office politician. She and Galdari play important roles in the denouement.

Just how long the non-fictional former Vice President will take to finish the book is not clear, but Mr. Kuhn said Playboy hoped to publish it by the end of the year.