

The Resignation of Spiro Agnew

Washington

Even if the Watergate scandal had not come along, the presidency of Richard M. Nixon would have been stained in history by the resignation in disgrace of his vice president, Spiro T. Agnew.

As it was, Agnew's downfall because of alleged acceptance of payoffs from contractors became just one more crack in a crumbling administration structure.

Agnew joined the Mitchells, Deans, Colsons, Halde-mans, Ehrlichmans as symbols of Mr. Nixon's proclivity for selection associates whose removal would become unavoidable. More than any of the others, though, Agnew personified the Nixon administration. He was its cutting edge.

Then, on Oct. 10, 1973, adhering to a carefully negotiated script that allowed him to avoid prison, erect as always, his hands quivering slightly, he stood in a Baltimore court and read a statement in which he pleaded nolo contendere—no contest—to a federal charge of failing to report \$29,500 in income in 1967.

"I hereby resign the office of Vice President of the United States, effective immediately," he said in a note delivered to Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger.

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