

Another Look At Agnew Case

Washington

U.S. District Judge June L. Green ordered the Justice Department yesterday to let her see the evidence that led Spiro Agnew to resign the vice presidency so she can decide whether to make it public.

She acted in a freedom of information suit brought by Bruce Feder, 25, Phoenix, Ariz. and Roy Baldwin, 24, Lincoln, Neb., both students at George Washington University's law center, who told reporters the American people are entitled to know the details of the case against the only vice president ever forced to resign.

"After six months, finally we're getting some responses out of the United States government," said Baldwin after the ruling.

Agnew pleaded no contest to a single charge of income tax evasion on October 10, 1973, received a suspended prison sentence and left office.

A 40-page summary of the evidence released by the Justice Department at the time said he solicited and received bribes from engineering firms doing business with Maryland and he continued taking cash payments even in the vice president's office.

The Justice Department resisted making the evidence public on grounds its release could hamper the continuing investigation into Maryland corruption that led to the recent indictment of Maryland Governor Marvin Mandel.

Judge Green said she would review the material in her chambers and decide whether some could be released, possibly with deletions to protect the innocent or future defendants. She had ordered release of the material October 8, but the department filed new objections.

The judge noted that years might pass before the material is released if she waited for the completion of the Maryland corruption trials before acting. Her order must be put in writing before the department must comply.

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