

An Inquiry About Pardon for Agnew

Washington

An attorney called the White House recently to inquire about a possible pardon for former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew and was routinely referred to the Justice Department, a White House spokesman said yesterday.

Press Secretary Ron Nessen said he did not know whether the lawyer represented Agnew or whether he was just making a personal inquiry or suggestion. Nessen noted that Agnew has denied he sought a pardon from President Ford.

Columnist Jack Anderson reported last week that an attorney for Agnew had called White House counsel Philip W. Buchen in October to discuss the possibility of a pardon. Agnew's denial followed publication of the column.

Nessen said the call was not made to Buchen but to deputy White House counsel Ed Schmults, and that Schmults referred the caller to the pardon attorney at the Justice Department.

The press secretary said he had no other details and did not even know the precise date nor the name of the caller.

Agnew resigned as vice president on Oct. 10, 1973, and then pleaded no contest to a charge of income tax evasion. His sentence of three years' probation expired last October 10. The Anderson column said the call to the White House was made shortly after that date.

Associated Press