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[Back to previous page](#)

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## Judy Agnew, wife of vice president and Maryland governor, dies at 91

**By Bart Barnes, Published: June 28**

Judy Agnew, 91, the widow of former vice president Spiro T. Agnew, who resigned in 1973 after being charged with income-tax evasion, died June 20 in Rancho Mirage, Calif. The cause of death was not reported.

Her death was announced by her family in a death notice in the Desert Sun newspaper in Palm Springs, Calif.

Mrs. Agnew was a suburban housewife until 1966, when her husband was elected governor of Maryland, defeating Democrat George P. Mahoney.

“Judy is the kind of woman who serenely accepts and rarely, if ever, doubts,” then-Federal Maritime Commission Chair Helen Delich Bentley said at a 1972 banquet honoring Mrs. Agnew. “What you have in Ted and Judy Agnew are Mr. and Mrs. Middle America.”

If Mrs. Agnew’s persona was by nature peaceful and unquestioning, the same could not be said of her husband, who for nearly five years used the vice presidency as a pulpit to build a national reputation as a sharp-tongued and hard-hitting spokesman for his president, Richard M. Nixon.

As vice president, Agnew won over the hearts and minds of what he called “the silent majority” by speaking out against protesters against the war in Vietnam, civil rights activists and campus radicals.

“A spirit of national masochism prevails, encouraged by an effete corps of impudent snobs who characterize themselves as intellectuals,” he said in one speech.

Another time, he memorably declared that the country was being unfairly maligned by “nattering nabobs of negativism.”

On Oct. 10, 1973, Agnew resigned as vice president after an extensive federal investigation into allegations of bribery and extortion over a 10-year period, including his terms as Baltimore County’s top executive and governor of Maryland. After plea-bargaining sessions, Agnew was fined \$10,000 and sentenced to three years of unsupervised probation for

evading payment of \$13,551 in income taxes for 1967.

In return for a no-contest plea, the government agreed not to prosecute Agnew for bribery and extortion. Almost immediately, Agnew and his wife stepped off the public stage.

Elinor Isabel “Judy” Judefind was born April 23, 1921, in Baltimore. Her father, who had a doctorate in chemistry, said he believed that college education for women was a waste of money.

She was working as a file clerk for a Baltimore insurance company when she met the young Ted Agnew, as he was commonly known. They were married in 1942.

Survivors include their four children, Pamela DeHaven, Susan Sagle, Kimberly Fisher and James Rand Agnew; six grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. Spiro Agnew died in 1996.

While raising four children in the suburbs of Baltimore County, Mrs. Agnew was a Girl Scout leader and a board member of the Kiwanis Club women’s auxiliary. She loved to cook. She sometimes attended Baltimore Colts football games with her husband.

While her husband was serving as governor from 1967 to 1969, Mrs. Agnew was known for serving cocktails in peanut-butter jars. Once, when they were invited to a White House reception, Mrs. Agnew was said to have whispered in her husband’s ear, “When are we going home?”

When Agnew was vice president, the vice presidential residence had not yet been established on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Observatory. The Agnews lived in the Kenwood section of Montgomery County near Chevy Chase. They later retired to lives of relative obscurity in Ocean City and Rancho Mirage.

After Agnew resigned as vice president, the two Navy stewards assigned to the household were removed. That December, Mrs. Agnew smoothly transitioned to her earlier role as a housewife and cooked Christmas dinner for 17 relatives.

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