

Sammy Lee Offered Support by Nixon

By SAM FOGG

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20. — (INS)—Vice President Richard M. Nixon came to the support today of Maj. Sammy Lee, two time Olympic diving champion, who ran into racial barriers when he sought to buy a home in a California community.

Nixon said that on learning that Lee, an American of Korean descent, was turned down by two Garden City (Calif.) real estate agents, he telephoned California and received assurance that Lee would be allowed to buy a home in the area. Nixon said:

"I would be proud to have Sammy Lee as my neighbor. He is a man who represents American citizenship at its best."

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Earlier, the Garden City Chamber of Commerce wired the 35 year old Olympic star that it would give him whole hearted co-operation in buying a home in the community.

Lee, who captured the Olympic diving titles in 1948 and 1952 for the United States, is presently stationed at Ft. Carlson, Colo. He is a graduate of Occidental College and has a medical degree from the University of Southern California. He is an ear, nose and throat specialist with twelve years' service in the Army.

Nixon, after learning of the episode from newspapers, told newsmen:

"I made several calls to

California this morning and was happy to learn that the people of my State are rallying to his support and that he and his family will now find several suitable homes available for purchase in the area in which he desires to live."

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In addition to his Olympic honors, Lee won the Sullivan Award in 1953 as the Nation's outstanding amateur athlete and as the person who contributed the most to sportsmanship for the year.

Lee disclosed Friday that two real estate agents had refused to sell him a home in Garden Grove, near Santa Ana, Calif. He said he wants to move there after he leaves the Army.

When the telegram from J. C. (Bud) Reed, president of the Garden City Chamber of Commerce, reached him, Lee commented:

"My belief in the American people is substantiated."