

Ford Is Not Expected To Press Flanigan Post

By Lou Cannon
Washington Post Staff Writer

10-11-74

Senate Minority Whip Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.) said yesterday that he believes the nomination of former White House aide Peter M. Flanigan as ambassador to Spain will not be resubmitted to the Senate by President Ford.

"It was an unfortunate nomination," said Griffin, a close ally and friend of the President. "Without trying to judge the charges which have been raised about Mr. Flanigan, it was unfortunate from the standpoint of the Ford administration, which has enough problems."

Senate critics of the nomination, led by Thomas F. Easleton (D-Mo.), opposed the choice of Flanigan on grounds that he allegedly sold an ambassadorship to a major contributor to President Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign. Flanigan's participation in a controversial antitrust case involving International Telephone and Telegraph Corp. that was settled in September, 1971, by the White House at Mr. Nixon's orders also has been questioned in the Senate.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which Griffin is a member, virtually killed the Flanigan nomination on Tuesday by failing to act on it.

Under Senate rules, the committee's failure to act means that the President would have to resubmit the nomination if Congress, as expected, recesses for more than 30 days for the November elections. The President has given no official indication of whether he will resubmit the nomination.

Republicans close to Mr. Ford have been privately critical that the President failed to consult with the Senate in advance before submitting the Flanigan nomination, which has been in trouble from the start.

Flanigan apparently was suggested for the post by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and by Alexander M.

Haig Jr., the former White House chief of staff.

At a breakfast meeting with reporters Griffin also said he shared President Ford's high opinion of the Secretary of State. Mr. Ford said at a Wednesday news conference that he had "tremendous admiration and respect" for Kissinger and that he did not think the Secretary of State had been damaged by recent congressional criticism.

"Whatever damage may have been done to his reputation in recent weeks, he still enjoys tremendous respect throughout the world," Griffin said.