

# Senate Unit Acts to Bar Title 'Sale'

6/8/73

By Spencer Rich

Washington Post Staff Writer

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is moving to block the "sale" of U.S. ambassadorships to wealthy political contributors lacking diplomatic qualifications.

Under a proposed set of ground rules, anyone who contributed more than \$5,000 to a political candidate would automatically be rejected by the committee for an ambassador post, unless he had special qualifications.

Drafting of the proposed ground rules was spurred by the recent appointment of Dr. Ruth Farkas, sociologist and wife of the head of Alexander's Department Stores in New York, as ambassador to Luxembourg. She contributed \$300,000 to the GOP.

The committee, at the re-

quest of Sen. Gale W. McGee (D-Wyo.), initially blocked action on her nomination, but ultimately approved it. McGee told reporters he had concluded that, for a political appointee, she was a "pretty classy lady." However, the incident led to a determination to study the whole question of appointing big campaign contributors to diplomatic posts—a common practice over the years.

Chairman J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) directed that a preliminary set of "ground rules" be drafted and circulated to committee members for comment before any formal action.

The draft states that Secretary of State William P. Rogers had told the committee April 30 that the President "agrees" the subject is of concern.

Under the draft, anyone contributing more than \$5,000 to political candidates in the campaign year prior to his appointment would simply be rejected by the committee unless he has prior diplomatic experience or special training in the affairs of the country to which he is being named.

"Ambassadorial nominations should not be for sale" to political big-givers who covet the prestige and social standing of an ambassadorship, the draft says.