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Senate whip warns Nixon to play ball

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Washington — Senate Republican whip Robert Griffin sent President Nixon an apparent nudge toward resignation yesterday, warning that impeachment is inevitable and that Griffin would vote to convict if Nixon withheld subpoenaed evidence.

In a letter carried by messenger to the White House, Griffin, regarded as a Senate bellwether and a canny headcounter, told the President that the Senate would probably subpoena the same White House tapes sought unsuccessfully by the House Judiciary Committee.

"I want you to know that if you should defy such a

subpoena, I shall regard that as an impeachable offense and shall vote accordingly," Griffin warned in his

frostily worded letter.

Griffin has been agonizing privately over whether he should call for the President to resign. He has said Nixon should very seriously consider stepping down if the House votes to impeach.