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Senators meeting yesterday to discuss action on the forthcoming nomination of a Vice President. In foreground are Mike Mansfield of Montana, center, Democratic leader, and Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, Republican leader.

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 11—Senate leaders failed to reach agreement today on procedures to confirm a successor to former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, but they did suggest holding joint hearings with the House to screen President Nixon's nominee.

After a telephone call to House Speaker Carl Albert, the Senate majority leader, Mike Mansfield, told reporters that Mr. Albert "seemed to be personally approving" the idea of joint Senate-House hearings but wanted time to discuss the matter with other house members.

However, a number of Representatives have said, that they wanted the House to conduct separate hearings on a Vice-Presidential nominee, and Mr. Albert, an Oklahoma Democrat, indicated earlier in the day that the House would act separately from the Senate in considering Mr. Nixon's choice.

The question of whether to have joint or separate hearings illustrated the problems facing Congress, which for the first time was confronted with the task of having to approve a new Vice President under the 25th Amendment to the Constitution.

The amendment, which was approved in 1967, says only that "whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office

upon confirmation by a majority vote of both houses of Congress."

The problem of what procedures to follow in confirming the nomination did not appear to be too great in the House. Mr. Albert said that the leadership there had tentatively decided to refer the nomination, when it came from the President, to the Judiciary Committee, which is headed by Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., Democrat of New Jersey.

Difficulty Encountered

But in the Senate, where lines of jurisdiction are jealously guarded, the Democratic and Republican leadership encountered difficulty in reaching agreement on how to proceed.

Mr. Mansfield, a Montana Democrat, said that under the Senate rules, matters involving the election of the President and Vice President apparently fell under the jurisdiction of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, which is headed by Senator Howard W. Cannon, Democrat of Nevada.

However, several members of the Judiciary Committee reportedly want to participate in any committee consideration of a Vice-Presidential nominee. At least one Judiciary Committee member, Senator Birch Bayh, Democrat of Indiana, has been urging the Senate leadership to create a separate select committee to consider the nomination.

Democratic and Republican leaders plus the senior members of the Rules and Judiciary Committee met for an hour and a half this afternoon in Mr. Mansfield's office in an effort to resolve the jurisdictional question.

"We arrived at no hard and fast conclusion," Mansfield said afterward. He said that the Democratic and Republican Senators would meet in separate party conferences tomorrow to discuss the problem.

Mansfield Calls Albert

Mr. Mansfield called Mr. Albert during the meeting to discuss the possibility of joint hearings. Mr. Mansfield said that except for one Senator, whom he did not identify, all the Senators at the meeting generally favored the idea of joint hearings.

This would avert, he said, the possibility that the Vice-Presidential nominee would have to undergo separate—and perhaps long hearings in each house before the nomination would be brought up for a floor vote.

Although there are several joint committees of the two houses, such as one on atomic energy, some House members complain that they tend to get upstaged when they participate in joint activities with Senators.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Mansfield told reporters that he thought that any hearings on a Vice - Presidential nominee "should take some time."

Before the Senate leaders met, Senator Lawton Chiles, Democrat of Florida, introduced a resolution that would bypass the committee and have the Vice-Presidential nomination considered by the full Senate. Mr. Chiles asked unanimous consent for the Senate to consider his proposal immediately, but the majority whip, Senator Robert C. Byrd, Democrat of West Virginia, objected, thus blocking immediate action.

Mr. Byrd said that Senator Cannon had asked him yesterday to object to immediate consideration of any resolution that would bypass his Rules Committee, of which Mr. Byrd is a member.

The nine-member Rules and Administration Committee is not generally regarded as one of the Senate's major committees. Although it has jurisdiction over matters relating to the election of the President, Vice President and members of Congress and has been involved in election reform legislation, the committee also has more mundane duties.

Among them are matters involving the Library of Congress and the Senate Library, statuary and pictures, acceptance or purchase of works of art for the Capitol, erection of monuments to the memory of individuals and supervision of the Senate restaurant and Senate office space.