

Embattled Potential Diplomat

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Peter Magnus Flanigan

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 2—After the Watergate dam broke in the spring of 1973, Peter M. Flanigan was one of the few top-level aides of President Richard M. Nixon who was regarded almost from the beginning as having been "clean." Except for a 1972 allegation that he had been involved in the settlement of an antitrust action against the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation, he lacked the taint of Watergate when he submitted his resignation from the Administration last summer.

But Mr. Flanigan had barely stepped from the White House door before President Ford called him back to be the Ambassador to Spain.

With the nomination, Mr. Ford continued his pattern of awarding high-level diplomatic posts to former Nixon men.

Mr. Flanigan, who was questioned today by the Senate Foreign Relations rejects any notion that his assignment to Spain would be on-the-job training on the ground that he is short of experience in foreign diplomacy. He points to the two years he spent as a Foreign Service officer in London and to his work in the White House as executive director of the Council of International Economic Policy.

"After all," Mr. Flanigan said recently, "when a problem reaches the White House level its solution is both economic and diplomatic."

"We could not have made those economic decisions

without some knowledge and understanding of State Department operations," Mr. Flanigan added.

Mr. Flanigan's association with the former President whom he staunchly supported, goes back to Mr. Nixon's first Presidential campaign.

"He's one of the oldest of the old Nixon men," a friend and associate said. "He headed New Yorkers for Nixon in 1960 and then came to Washington to handle the entire volunteer operation for the campaign."

Mr. Flanigan was Mr. Nixon's deputy campaign manager in the successful 1968 race.

In 1969 he joined the White House staff as a consultant on high-level appointments. His influence in the Administration grew as his recruits moved into top positions. As Mr. Nixon's chief talent scout, Mr. Flanigan brought more than 300 senior officers to the Nixon team.

Mr. Flanigan is generally considered confident, articulate and intelligent. His admirers call him a "brilliant problem solver," but his critics see him as a "manipulating fixer."

Peter Magnus Flanigan was born in New York City on June 21, 1923. His father, Horace C. Flanigan, was chairman of the Manufactur-

ers Trust Company, now the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company.

Peter served in World War II as an aircraft carrier pilot in the Navy. He was graduated with honors from Princeton University in 1947 and joined the investment banking concern of Dillon Read & Co., Inc., the same year.

By the time he left Dillon Read in 1969 for the Nixon White House, he had become a partner and vice president.

Tall, personable and fashionably dressed, Mr. Flanigan says he dabbles a bit in every sport.

"I sail, ski, ride, golf, fish and shoot," he said matter-of-factly.

But if pressed, he will admit that he favors skiing.

Married 20 Years

He has been married to Brigid Snow since 1954. They have five children: Brigid, 19 years old; Sheila, 17; Timothy, 16; Megan, 13, and Robert, 10.

During his White House years, he and his wife were known for giving "excellent dinner parties."

"Of all the Nixon Administration wives, his was one of the best entertainers," a former White House staffer said.

Mr. Flanigan says he and his family are looking forward to moving.

"I think that it's a great time to be going to Spain," he said.