

Ford Oath Ceremony Is Still to Be Decided

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When Gerald R. Ford is confirmed as Vice President, he not only will be the first Vice President in history nominated by a President and confirmed by Congress but he will set a precedent by the manner in which he is inaugurated.

Ford has given the matter considerable thought, as has the White House, and the most likely setting for the swearing-in is a Joint Session of the House and Senate.

While no final decision has been made, Ford be-

lieves that since Vice Presidents traditionally have been sworn in at the Capitol and since he is particularly a product of Congress, he should take the oath on Capitol Hill.

The President originally favored a ceremony in the East Room of the White House, where on Oct. 12 he dramatically announced that he was nominating Ford to succeed former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew.

Ford is known to believe, however, that he should take the oath at the Capitol and that it should be neither

an ostentatious nor an expensive ceremony.

Ford also believes, along with other officials, that the oath should be taken as expeditiously as possible after the House votes final confirmation. On Tuesday, the Senate voted for confirmation 92 to 3.

Since the House vote is expected by next Thursday, Ford plans to confer within the next few days with Speaker of the House Carl Albert (D-Okla.) and with Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.) on when

and how the oath should be administered.

If Ford has his way, the House would recess briefly after the confirmation vote is taken and reconvene as soon as the senators could march across the Capitol for a joint session.

He would then take the oath, make a brief speech and return to the Senate as its presiding officer. There is a general expectation that Mr. Nixon would attend.

Suggestions also have been made that Ford take the oath on the steps of the East Front of the Capitol,

where Presidents and Vice Presidents traditionally are inaugurated, or in the Senate chamber. But these are now considered unlikely choices.

The Constitution gives support to the proposal that the oath should be taken without delay after the confirmation vote.

"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 25th Amendment says.