

Rockefeller Endorsed by House Panel

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The House Judiciary Committee yesterday endorsed Nelson A. Rockefeller for Vice President, 26 to 12, and the House is expected to complete the confirmation process late next week.

All opposition votes were cast by liberal Democrats. Most of them argued that the merger of Rockefeller wealth with federal political power would pose a dangerous conflict of interest and discard a "fundamental principle" of the American system—that political power is used to restrain economic power.

The majority contended, on the other hand, that Rockefeller's record during 15 years as New York's governor displayed no evidence of using political power to enhance his private interests.

Some members who might otherwise have been inclined to vote against him because of political philosophy or conflict of interest spoke of the need for Rockefeller's strong leadership qualities to bolster a faltering administration in time of economic trouble.

Committee Chairman Peter W. Rodino Jr. (D-N.J.) said he will ask the House Rules Committee to schedule eight hours of debate next Thursday or

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CONFIRM, From A1

Friday. Rockefeller is expected to be confirmed with not more than 100 votes cast against him. The Senate approved his nomination Tuesday, 90 to 7. Rockefeller could be sworn in immediately after House approval.

The nation will then for the first time in history have both a President and Vice President who were not elected.

Spiro T. Agnew resigned as Vice President on Oct. 10, 1973, after pleading no contest to a charge of federal income tax evasion. He was replaced

with Gerald R. Ford, then minority leader of the House, who became President when Richard M. Nixon resigned on Aug. 9 while under threat of impeachment for the Watergate cover-up.

Committee votes against Rockefeller were cast by Democrats Robert W. Kastenmeier (Wis.), Don Edwards (Calif.), John Conyers (Mich.), Joshua Eilberg (Pa.), Jerome Waldie (Calif.), Paul S. Sarbanes (Md.), John F. Seiberling (Ohio), George E. Danielson (Calif.), Robert F. Drinan (Mass.), Elizabeth Holtzman (N.Y.), Wayne Owens (Utah) and Edward Mezvinsky (Iowa).

While the three black members of the committee had voted against Mr. Ford's appointment as Vice President a year ago, in large part because of his votes against civil rights legislation, two of them—Democrats Charles Rangel (N.Y.) and Barbara Jordan (Tex.)—voted for Rockefeller, who has been a strong supporter of civil rights.

Rangel said he voted yes because President Ford "has failed to provide the leadership needed in this time of cri-

sis" and Rockefeller, having strong leadership qualities, may be able to get the administration going. Rangel called the nomination Mr. Ford's "most intelligent request of Congress."

Rep. Jordan said she believed Rockefeller's potential conflict of interest was a "risk we can afford to take as standards for the American people." She said the President needs help and that Rockefeller can attract high-caliber people to government.

Conyers, the third black member, opposed Rockefeller on issues, and said "this great merger of wealth and power is more than we can tolerate."

Sarbanes, arguing against the nomination, said it would be a major change in the rules of the American system, in which political power provides a restraint on economic power.

"We are talking about the greatest concentration of economic power in the United States," said Sarbanes. Should Rockefeller become President, he said, "this would make the captain of the team, the umpire of the game."

Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Tex.)

said Rockefeller was as acceptable to him as any other Republican would be, and as qualified as anyone Mr. Ford could be expected to choose. The administration desperately needs an experienced man like Rockefeller, Brooks said.

Besides his experience as governor, Rockefeller has also served as assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs and under secretary of health, education and welfare.

Edwards said that if Rockefeller became President (most opposition was based on this possibility) almost every decision that reached his desk would affect the Rockefeller empire.

Rep. Charles Sandman (R-N.J.) replied that, "If someone who had been governor of a big state for 15 years had done something wrong, we'd have heard of it. Instead, we get hypothetical questions."

Waldie voiced strongest opposition to the family's gifts of \$20 million to Rockefeller's political career and his won "huge gifts made secretly to public figures to enhance his political power." The biggest of these was \$625,000 to Wil-

liam H. Ronan, a long-time associate.

The gifts and his involvement in the financing of an unflattering book on Arthur J. Goldberg, his 1970 gubernatorial opponent, were generally deplored as showing poor judgment. But several members observed that the errors cited were few for such a long career.

Reps. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and Carlos Moorhead (R-Calif.) both very conservative, had started out opposed to Rockefeller because of his big-government ideas, but came around to support him.

Owens, on the other hand, strongly favored Rockefeller at first but finally opposed him because of the gifts, the book and polls that show he has no popular majority.

Rep. M. Caldwell Butler (Va.) enthusiastically supported Rockefeller as a remarkable man of great energy and ability. Rep. Lawrence Hogan (R-Md.), who strongly criticized Rockefeller's role in the Goldberg book, voted for him, saying the country has been too long without a Vice President.

