

# Questions Raised On Ford Reports

## Washington

On the eve of Senate hearings into the vice presidential nomination of Gerald R. Ford, the chairman of the Senate Rules Committee said yesterday an FBI investigation has raised questions about Ford's past which must be answered.

Among the allegations about Ford are some that he traded political favors in exchange for political contributions. Senator Howard W. Cannon (Dem-Nev.) told reporters at the conclusion of a two-hour briefing for members of his committee on what 350 FBI agents had learned.

"I have seen things that will certainly raise questions that we will bring out with Mr. Ford," Cannon said.

However Cannon said, nothing indicated that Ford's nomination faces particularly rough sailing.

Cannon promised thorough and fair hearings. They open today and will be televised nationally.

"You can't look at this as

if he were only a nominee for vice president." Cannon said. "You have to assume we may be confirming a president."

Senator Marlow W. Cook of Kentucky, the ranking Republican on the committee, said he found nothing in the FBI reports about Ford that he would not want to read about himself.

"I wouldn't think so," Cook said when he was asked if the reports contained information "embarrassing" to Ford.

Cannon declined to answer the same question. Nor would he say whether he was ready to vote to confirm Ford.

Ford, 60, the House Republican leader and a veteran of 25 years in Congress, was chosen by President Nixon to succeed Spiro T. Agnew, the first vice president ever to resign under duress.

Cannon and Cook said the FBI reports ran to 1700 typewritten pages.

Involved in what Cook called the most exhaustive

investigation of an individual in history were 350 FBI agents in 33 district offices, 1000 FBI interviews and further investigations by the General Accounting Office, the IRS, and the staffs of the Senate rules and government operations committees.

Cannon said the allegations that Ford traded favors for cash came from persons other than Robert Winter-Berger, a Washington lobbyist who has sworn in an affidavit that Ford never repaid \$15,000 in loans of \$50 to \$250 made over a three-year period.

Cannon said Ford would be questioned about his role in "laundering" so as to disguise the source of campaign contributions for fellow House Republicans.

*Associated Press*