

Ford OKd

By Senate
Committee

Washington

The nomination of Gerald R. Ford to be Vice President won unanimous 9 to 0 approval of the Senate Rules Committee yesterday and headed for a Senate floor vote next Tuesday.

The committee endorsement of Ford came after what Rules chairman Howard W. Cannon (Dem-Nev.) described as "the most exhaustive investigation of a nominee ever undertaken by a Senate committee."

It came just one month and eight days after President Nixon on October 12 named Ford, Republican leader of the House and 25-year House member from Grand Rapids, Mich., to replace Spiro T. Agnew as vice president.

Agnew resigned from the office after being placed on probation and receiving a \$10,000 fine for tax evasion from a federal court. Ford was the first man ever nominated under the provisions of the 25th amendment to the Constitution, which became effective in 1967.

The amendment calls for the President to nominate a new vice president when the office becomes vacant, with the nominee required to be approved by a majority vote in the Senate and a majority in the House before he is confirmed.

The House Judiciary Committee, which has also been

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holding hearings on Ford, continued them yesterday.

Chairman Peter W. Rodino Jr. (Dem-N.J.) told reporters the House committee will send the Ford nomination to the House floor by the middle of the week of December 3. Both the House and Senate are expected to approve Ford overwhelmingly.

So far, the only senator who has publicly stated he will oppose Ford is William D. Hathaway (Dem-Maine), who favors calling a special election to fill the presidency should it become vacant, and therefore wants to hold up Ford until the machinery for such an election is in place.

At the beginning of the Ford hearings, Cannon had stated that the committee in considering Ford might well be acting not merely on a

Vice President but on a possible President, and he said again yesterday, "I think that's a very strong likelihood."

In two long days before the Senate Rules Committee and subsequent testimony before the House Judiciary Committee, Ford gave the impression of a man of considerable stability, moderate personal habits, good nature, patience and basic decency, and he won the endorsement of many of his House colleagues on both sides of the aisle as a person of integrity and trustworthiness.

A self-described "conservative in fiscal affairs, moderate in domestic affairs and internationalist in foreign affairs," he gave answers to a long line of questions which bore out that description.

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