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**Senate Unit Backs Ford, 9 to 0;  
Approval on Floor Is Expected**

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 20— The Senate Rules Committee unanimously approved today the nomination of Gerald R. Ford as Vice President of the United States.

The committee's action came nearly six weeks after the resignation of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew and the nomination of Mr. Ford as his successor.

Mr. Agnew resigned Oct. 10, just before pleading no contest to a Federal income tax charge. President Nixon nominated Mr. Ford as Vice President two days later in a White House ceremony attended by key members of Congress and other political leaders.

Mr. Ford's nomination now goes to the Senate floor, where

a vote is scheduled for next Tuesday. Today's committee action by the five Democrats and four Republicans was seen as an indication that the nominee would win approval on the Senate floor.

In opening the Senate hearings on Nov. 1, Senator Howard W. Cannon, Democrat of Nevada, chairman of the committee, suggested that the panel might be passing on the next President of the United States.

Asked today if he still felt that was a possibility — that is, that Mr. Nixon might not complete his term of office — Mr. Cannon replied, "I think that's a very strong likelihood."

Meanwhile, the House Judiciary

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ary Committee continued questioning witnesses today as it neared completion of hearings into Mr. Ford's fitness to become Vice President.

The House committee may complete its hearings tomorrow but will not vote on the nomination until next week. Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr. of New Jersey, chairman of the committee, said that floor action in the House on the nomination was tentatively scheduled for Dec. 6.

Approval by both houses of Congress is required under the 25th Amendment to the Constitution, which outlines Presidential and Vice-Presidential succession. This is the first time that the amendment — adopted by Congress in 1965 and ratified by the states in 1967 — has been used.

### A House Member 25 Years

Mr. Ford, 60 years old, is now Republican leader of the House. He first entered the House nearly 25 years ago and represents a district embracing Grand Rapids, Mich.

Some Republicans have protested what they view as a long delay in confirming the nominee. But both the Senate and House committees have seemingly been intent on a

thorough examination of Mr. Ford to avoid any suggestion that they were giving only cursory attention to one of their own, a member of Congress.

The committees also seemed to feel that they were writing history and setting the guidelines for any future nominees selected under the succession procedure.

Throughout the hearings, too, there have been strong suggestions by at least some members that they were passing on not just a Vice President, but also possibly the next President.

Before the Senate and House hearings, nearly 500 agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and committee staff investigators delved into all aspects of the nominee's personal and political life. The raw data gathered by the F.B.I. filled more than 1,700 typewritten pages.

Mr. Ford was questioned for a day and a half by the Senate committee and for two days by the House committee. He is scheduled for a third day of questioning by the House committee tomorrow.

Several members of Congress have testified in his behalf before both committees. The principal opposition has come from Americans for Democratic Action, which charged that he

had tried to cripple civil rights legislation and had opposed social welfare legislation.

Other witnesses have contended that Congress should not pass on Mr. Ford's nomination until the House decides whether to impeach President Nixon on charges surrounding the Watergate affair.

The principal suggestions of possible wrongdoing by Mr. Ford were raised by Robert N. Winter-Berger, a onetime Washington lobbyist and author of "Washington Payoff."

### Questioned in House

Mr. Winter-Berger, in his book and in testimony before the Senate committee, asserted that Mr. Ford had received campaign contributions in return for political favors. Mr. Winter-Berger also said that he had made a \$15,000 unpaid loan to Mr. Ford.

Mr. Ford has denied all of Mr. Winter-Berger's allegations. The Senate Rules Committee voted last week to ask the Justice Department to determine whether Mr. Winter-Berger had perjured himself before the committee.

The House Judiciary Committee, too, questioned Mr. Winter-Berger in closed session today. Members said later that the witness did not appear to have any hard facts to back up his

allegations against Mr. Ford.

Asked if the Winter-Berger testimony was credible, Representative Jerome R. Waldie, Democrat of California, replied, "It was incredible." Representative Robert W. Kastenmeier, Democrat of Wisconsin, said, "He was about as credible as the White House."

The House committee also heard from Dr. Arnold A. Hutschnecker, a Psychotherapist from New York who denied Mr. Winter-Berger's allegation that the doctor had treated Mr. Ford for more than a year.

Mr. Ford and Dr. Hutschnecker both say that Mr. Ford visited the doctor's Park Avenue office just once, for a social conversation, at the insistence of Mr. Winter-Berger.

Another Winter-Berger allegation—that he had paid Mrs. Alice Boter Weston Schowalter \$1,000 for an introduction to Mr. Ford in the mid-nineteen-sixties — was denied today by Mrs. Schowalter in a closed session of the committee. She and her brother, Peter Boter, are old friends of the Ford family.

Mr. Rodino said today that he was satisfied that both Dr. Hutschnecker and Mrs. Schowalter were telling the truth in denying Mr. Winter-Berger's allegations.