

FORD SWORN AS VICE PRESIDENT

DEC 7 1973

DENT AFTER HOUSE APPROVES,

387-35; HE VOWS EQUAL

JUSTICE FOR ALL

LOYALTY TO NIXON

1,500 Hear Ford Give His Full Support to President

By MARJORIE HUNTER
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6 — Gerald R. Ford, pledging "equal justice for all Americans," took office just after dusk tonight as the 40th Vice President of the United States.

With President Nixon standing right behind him, he was sworn into office in the 116-

Transcript of the ceremony will be found on Page 27; a page of pictures, 26.

year-old House chamber, which has been his political home for the last 25 years.

Only an hour earlier, the House completed action on his nomination by voting 387 to 35 for confirmation. He was confirmed Nov. 27 by the Senate by a vote of 92 to 3.

Mr. Ford, 60 years old, resigned his House seat before assuming the Vice-Presidency. He has been minority leader of the House since 1965.

The historic ceremony ended a Vice-Presidential vacancy that had existed since the resignation on Oct. 10 of Spiro T. Agnew just before he pleaded no contest to a charge of income tax evasion.

Nominee Did Not Vote

Mr. Ford heard none of today's five hours of House debate, nor did he vote. He arrived in the chamber just minutes after the final vote had been cast and was greeted by thunderous cheers and applause—the first of many such ovations that he received today.

He then went to the White House to inform President Nixon of the vote, and the two men returned to the Capitol an

hour later for the official swearing-in.

They were greeted by tumultuous applause as they entered the House chamber together.

A capacity crowd of 1,500 persons—Senators, Representatives, members of the Cabinet and of the Supreme Court, ambassadors and other foreign dignitaries and visitors—witnessed the brief ceremony.

Bids Colleagues Good-by

Mrs. Nixon, accompanied by White House aides, sat with the four Ford children in the executive gallery.

As Chief Justice Warren E. Burger administered the oath, Mr. Ford rested his left hand on a bible held by his wife, who wore a tangerine wool crepe dress. The bible was purchased for the occasion by their son Michael, a theological student.

Later, in a brief speech, Mr. Ford drew a burst of applause from the Republicans as he pledged his full "support and loyalty" to the President. He

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also bade a "fond good-by" to his colleagues in the House.

"I am a Ford, not a Lincoln," he said, smiling. "My addresses will never be as eloquent as Lincoln's. But I will do my best to equal his brevity and plain speaking."

Mr. Ford pledged his dedication "to the rule of law and equal justice for all Americans" and declared, "I am not discouraged."

Later, he led the Senators across the Capitol to the Senate chamber where he will serve in the one job given to a Vice President under the Constitution—president of the Senate.

This is the first time that a Vice President was chosen under the 25th Amendment to the Constitution. The amendment, ratified by the states in 1967, provides for Presidential succession and for filling Vice-Presidential vacancies.

The 25th Amendment was adopted to deal with situations such as that which existed following the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963. At that time, the Vice-Presidency stood vacant 13 months after

Vice President Johnson succeeded to the Presidency.

The Vice-Presidency has been vacant 17 times in this nation's history, due to death, resignation or succession to the Presidency.

It was just 57 days ago that a stunned nation learned of the abrupt resignation of Vice President Agnew. Two days later, on Oct. 12, President Nixon announced to Congressional leaders and others assembled in the East Room of the White House for a gala evening of champagne and laughter that he had chosen his old friend and fellow Republican, Mr. Ford, to be Vice President.

Unexpected Development

Earlier, there had been few surprises during the long hours of floor debate over the nomination. Democratic liberals, as expected, accused the nominee of lacking the qualities of leadership. Other Democrats and Republicans, also as expected, praised him as a man of honor, honesty, dedication and integrity.

The only unexpected development came as Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr. of New Jersey, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, which

handled the Ford hearings, announced that he would vote against confirmation.

"During the weeks that I spent reviewing Jerry's public and private life, I have only grown to respect his character and integrity more," Mr. Rodino told the hushed House.

However, asserting that his Newark district "typifies the plight which the cities of our nation face today," and accusing the Nixon Administration of failing to meet the needs of the poor and disadvantaged, Mr. Rodino said:

"I vote, not against Gerald Ford's worth as a man of great integrity, but in dissent with the present Administration's indifference to the plight of so many Americans."

In mid-afternoon, as the debate dragged on, Representative B. F. Sisk, Democrat of California, broke into the proceedings to announce that the National League owners had voted to transfer the San Diego Padres baseball team to Washington.

Mr. Sisk and Representative Frank Horton, Republican of upstate New York, who together had led a Congressional effort to secure a new baseball franchise for Washington, paid

tribute to Mr. Ford, a onetime football star and still a sports enthusiast, for his support of their effort.

Weeks of Hearings

Mr. Ford's nomination reached the House floor this morning after weeks of hearings and exhaustive investigations by both the Senate and the House. The Federal Bureau of Investigation alone had detailed 359 agents to dig into his background, and the F.B.I. data covered 1,700 typewritten pages.

The nominee's tax records, personal finances, family connections, political campaigns and voting record were examined in detail.

Today, praising the thoroughness of the investigations and hearings, Representative Jack Brooks, Democrat of Texas, told his colleagues, "We know more about Jerry Ford than I ever wanted to know."

While all other blacks present voted against the nomination, Representative Andrew Young, Democrat of Georgia, said shortly before the five hours of debate ended that he would support the nominee.

Mr. Young said that he was troubled by Mr. Ford's efforts

to weaken civil rights legislation but added that he also had doubts about the civil rights voting records of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. He expressed hope that Mr. Ford would rise to his new job.

The debate was low key, even on the part of the nominee's severest critics, who had known from the start that they could not block the confirmation.

But the drama of the day was heightened by the realization of those present that with Mr. Ford installed as Vice President, sentiment for impeachment of Mr. Nixon—or pressure on him to resign—would intensify.

Many Democrats have openly called for impeachment, but until now most Republicans have spoken of it guardedly and usually only among themselves. Yet there are strong indications that many Republicans are becoming increasingly concerned over the tarnished image of their party because of the Watergate scandals, the Agnew affair and allegations of various political campaign misdeeds by the Nixon Administration.

The possibility that Mr. Nixon might not serve out his term

was raised repeatedly by both Democrats and Republicans during the debate.

Representative Clarence D. Long, Democrat of Maryland, suggested that the Republicans would do well to take his advice by moving swiftly to make Mr. Ford the next President.

Declaring that the Republicans would have to take the lead in forcing Mr. Nixon out of office, he said:

"Any partisan Democrat would have to be out of his mind to take that millstone off the back of you Republicans. If you keep the present incumbent in for three more years, the Democrats could win with the Boston strangler."

This was greeted by cheers and laughters from the Democrats and good-natured roars from the Republicans.

Representative Jerome H. Waldie, Democrat of California, spoke of "the shambles that the Nixon Presidency has become" and said that the situation would become worse as it proceeded "to its inevitable result — either impeachment or resignation.

Critical of Mr. Ford's attempts three years ago to impeach Associate Justice William

O. Douglas "for strictly political reasons," Mr. Waldie said, "Is the rule of law supreme? When Gerald Ford is President, I trust he will ask that question himself."

Representative John B. Anderson, Republican of Illinois, also appeared to be suggesting that Mr. Ford might succeed to the Presidency when he quoted the nation's first Vice President, John Adams, as having said, when asked what it meant to be Vice President, "I am nothing, but I may be everything."



The emotion of her father's swearing-in ceremony brought tears to eyes of Susan Ford, who sat with Mrs. Nixon in House gallery. With her are brothers, from left,

Steven, John and Michael. At right is Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., President's chief of staff, and, at far right, is William E. Timmons, Presidential aide.

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