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Demos Accuse Ford Of Double Standard

By The Associated Press
Several Democratic congressmen accused President Ford on Sunday of setting a double standard of justice by granting former President Nixon a full pardon. Republicans generally felt Nixon had suffered enough from Watergate and said Ford's action was justified.

An exception to the GOP support of Ford was Sen. Edward Brooke of Massachusetts who was the first Republican senator to urge Nixon's resignation. "President Ford's blanket

pardon — without Mr. Nixon's full confession of his involvement in Watergate — is, in my judgement, a serious mistake," Brooke said.

Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, D-Mont., said Ford told him of his plans an hour before the public announcement. "It would be easy for me to criticize the President's judgement," Mansfield said. "I will not do so."

Assistant majority leader Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., said Ford's action, "sets a double standard: one standard for the former President of the United States and another standard for everybody else."

Sen. George McGovern of South Dakota, the 1972 Democratic presidential nominee whom Nixon defeated, said: "It has seemed to me that the central lesson of Watergate should be that no one stands above the rule of law. It is difficult to understand granting immunity to Mr. Nixon while committing his subordinates to prison."

Sen. Edmund S. Muskie, D-Maine, said that pardons normally are not granted "until the accused is in jeopardy of punishment."

Muskie, a lawyer, was interviewed on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press" and was asked whether he agreed with Ford's statement that it would be a long time before Nixon would be able to get a fair court trial.

President's Power To Grant Pardon

WASHINGTON (AP) — The presidential power to grant pardons is expressed in the Constitution in 20 words contained in Article II, Section 2.

The provision says:

"He shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment."

Article II itself delineates the power of the President, and includes both the oath to "faithfully execute the Office" and the admonition that "he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed."