

Varied Opinions From Foley Square

By PAUL L. MONTGOMERY

A few hours after President Ford's pardon of his predecessor was announced yesterday, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Wainwright of Olean, N.Y., were strolling in Foley Square in lower Manhattan, looking at the public buildings.

"It's going to make a lot of people mad, but I can see why he did it," Mr. Wainwright said. "It wouldn't look right to the rest of the world to have a President of the United States in jail."

Mr. Wainwright, here on a late-summer vacation, was asked if he had any doubts about former President Richard M. Nixon's guilt.

"None that I can see," his wife Judy replied. "I guess

some people would say it would have been better to pardon him after the courts decided."

Nearby, at 100 Centre Street, the afternoon session of the arraignment part of Criminal Court was about to begin. In the dingy, crowded room, lawyers and policemen, and defendants and their families lounged on the oak benches, waiting for the judge to return from lunch.

Hal Mayerson and Peter Davis of the Legal Aid Society, which represents indigent defendants, had been discussing the pardon during the break.

"It's a bit unseemly to pardon someone before they're prosecuted," Mr. Davis said.

"It doesn't do much for the

concept of equal justice under law."

"How about all the young men who refused to serve in an illegal, immoral and vicious war?" Mr. Mayerson asked. "Is he going to pardon them, too? It's like Peter was saying, maybe they should give Nixon a pardon if he does 18 months of alternate service."

Mr. Mayerson looked around the room.

"Seriously, though, it's outrageous," he continued. "You get a lady here who's going to jail for stealing a blouse, or some guy in on assault because he got tired of living with the rats and hit somebody. And here's one of the biggest plun-

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derers in the history of the world going free."

In the front rows of the courtroom, policemen waiting to testify about their weekend cases groused bitterly about the familiar delays or joked about the defendants being led from the detention cells.

"It's a good thing," a plainclothesman said of the pardon. "There's no reason to bust his chops any more. The guy has suffered enough."

"More power to him," Officer Jack Burton of Midtown North said of the former President while his companions nodded in agreement. "He deserves it. I think he did what a boss is supposed to do—his men made a mistake and he stuck up for them."

Farther back of the room, a Bensonhurst man named Jim slumped on a bench, tenderly touching his fingertips to a bandage over his eye. He and a friend had got into a fight in a bar on Eighth Avenue, and he was waiting to see how the friend's arraignment went.

The man said he had not heard of the pardon, but was not surprised.

"What did you expect?" he asked. "It's like everything else—people take care of their own."

A mother waiting for her 18-year-old son to be brought up on a charge of jostling in the subway reacted angrily to the news.

"That's a crime," she said. "How do they expect me to tell my children to obey the law when this man is enjoying himself in some big house out by the ocean?"