

Spout
9-11-74

An Abuse Of Power?

President Gerald Ford's full pardon of former President Richard Nixon and the possibility that he may pardon the other Watergate defendants, have brought up some serious questions about such action.

Speaker of the House Carl Albert said that such pardons "would be viewed as an abuse of presidential power."

Albert asked a logical question that may well stir even the average man on the street who was inclined to go along with Nixon's pardon, and that question is, if the Watergaters are all pardoned, "Where would we stop?"

A Baltimore TV commentator quipped that he heard they were opening the gates of the prisons to let everyone out. Several judges in the Midwest have pardoned a number of persons since Ford's action on Nixon.

There is a clamor for President Ford to grant full amnesty to all Vietnam-era deserters and slackers, now that he has "freed" Richard Nixon.

U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-W. Va.) sees the new pardons, if granted, as completing "the cover-up of the cover-up," referring to Nixon's admitted attempt to cover-up the Watergate scandal.

Senator James Buckley (R-N.Y.) said after President Ford's

confirmation that he is studying the possibility of pardoning all those convicted or accused of Watergate-related crimes, and that "I certainly think it's appropriate for these cases to be reviewed." But he adds, "I haven't thought it through."

In view of the surprise Sunday announcement by President Ford of his decision to grant a full pardon to Mr. Nixon, followed now by the possibility of pardoning all Watergaters, it is appropriate, indeed, for all Americans to "think it through."

It is also appropriate for every American to ask, "Where would we stop?"

And it is not out of the question to wonder if in such action, there is some "abuse of presidential power."

It is also time for the Congress to return to the drawing table to make the designs necessary for returning to the people the full power to elect their President. . . that is, to call for an election of a president if and when it should ever occur again that a non-elected president accedes to this powerful office.

There are serious questions before the American people today.

Nevertheless, "at this point in time," surely sensible people will not echo those shallow, thoughtless words shouted into that chasm of absurdity, "Impeach Ford."