

Nixon's Pardon Ill-Timed

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By The Associated Press

The chief state legal officers say President Ford's unconditional pardon of former President Nixon was ill-timed and out of line with the American ideal of equal justice for all. Twenty-three of the state attorneys general said flatly that they disapproved of the move and only seven said they were in favor of it.

The Associated Press attempted to contact all 50 state attorneys general; six were unreachable. Of the 44 who responded, 18 Democrats and five Republicans disapproved of the pardon; six Republicans and one Democrat approved; five had no comment; and nine said they had mixed emotions.

Among those who disapproved was Robert Woodahl, a Republican, of Montana. "No president or former president should be above the laws or the Constitution," he said.

Colorado Atty. Gen. John P. Moore, also a Republican, said he disapproved of the action announced on Sunday "because of the unusual precedent of granting pardon prior to the filing of charges."

Several attorneys general said the pardon jeopardized the future of pending legal actions against former Nixon aides. "It will have an effect on pending Watergate-related cases without the judicial process ever having taken its course," said John Hill, the Democratic attorney general of Texas.

Those who supported the par-

don generally said they believed the former president had suffered enough and would not have been able to get a fair court trial anyway. They also said pardoning Nixon would enable the country to put Watergate behind it and turn to other problems.

"I have felt Mr. Nixon has been punished sufficiently," said North Carolina Atty. Gen. James Carson, a Republican. "I do not think it's in the national interest to prosecute him further."

Robert H. Quinn, a Democrat from Massachusetts, and Warren B. Rudman, a Republican from New Hampshire, the president and president-elect of the National Association of Attorneys General both expressed disapproval. Quinn said the action "presumes ... Mr. Nixon's guilt" and is without precedent.

Indiana Atty. Gen. Theodore L. Sendak, a Republican, was among those with mixed feelings. "I think he (Ford) made a mistake in his timing, not in his good intentions," Sendak said.

The Democratic attorneys general who disapprove of the pardon are from Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. Republicans disapproving are from California, Colorado, Montana, New Hampshire and Vermont.

Republicans approving are from Arizona, Maine, North Carolina, North Dakota, Washington and Wyoming. Atty. Gen. A.F. Summer of Mississippi was the only Democrat approving the pardon.

Attorneys general from Alaska, Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Minnesota, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and Indiana had mixed feelings; those from Georgia, Hawaii, Nebraska, Tennessee and Wisconsin declined comment; and those from Illinois, Iowa, Nevada, Oklahoma, Utah and Missouri were unreachable.