# Nixon Aide Wanted All Pardoned

H. R. Haldeman, President Nixon's closest aide in the White House, believes Nixon made a "tragic mistake" just before his resignation by failing to grant blanket pardons for every person connected with the Watergate scandal and all Vietnam draft evaders.

Haldeman, in memoirs published yesterday in The Washington Star and other newspapers, also said Nixon and his top aides mishandled the Watergate case from the outset because they were "afriad" the investigation would lead to top administration officials.

"There were constant errors in judgment from the beginning . . . Our greatest mistake was in not getting ahead of the game at the outset, finding out who were culpable, and bringing them to justice. The President and I, together with John Ehrlichman, never quite made enough tough moves.

"We were all afraid to find out. Afraid that what we suspected might be the case, would, in fact, turn out to be the case—that it went very high up, to Jeb Magruder and even to John Mitchell . . ."

Haldeman, the former White House chief of staff, was convicted in the Watergate cover-up and sentenced to 2½ to 8 years in prison, a sentence he is appealing.

Haldeman said he urged Nixon to issue the pardons for Watergate defendants and draft evaders during a telephone conversation Aug. 7, 1974, one day before Nixon announced to the nation he was leaving the White House because of Watergate. He said Nixon called him in Newport Beach, Calif., to tell him he had decided to resign.

"'If you're going to leave office,' I told Nixon 'you should take all the traumas of Watergate and Vietnam with you. President Ford would then have a chance to start with a clean slate. With the horrors behind him.'"

Haldeman said Nixon replied, "I'll give it some thought. I appreciate your recommendation, Bob."

"I think it was a tragic mistake for the political good of the nation as well as for myself and all the others involved that the blanket pardons I recommended were not given," Haldeman said.