

ACLU's Lobby

Pardon or not, the American Civil Liberties Union announced yesterday it would continue to lobby Congress to impeach former President Nixon.

Jay A. Miller, executive director of the Northern California ACLU, told a press conference there was "legal precedent for the impeachment process to continue even after resignation."

Miller said William W. Belknap resigned at secretary of war in 1876 but was impeached nonetheless, and later acquitted by the Senate.

"The precedent also has strong roots in English and colonial impeachment theory," Miller said. "John Adams thought himself impeachable for past misbehavior in public office 'so long as I have the breath of life in my body.'"

Miller said it would also serve to disclose "facts related to the abuses of power of the Nixon administration," whereas the pardon "only perpetuates the cover-up."

"President Ford's pardon of Richard Nixon," Miller said, "could shackle us with a frightening precedent. What is to prevent a future President from allowing his subordinates to employ any means necessary to secure his re-election and then granting them pardons to avoid full disclosure of any of these activities?"

At another press conference at ACLU offices, Howard DeNike of the Bay Area military law panel of the National Lawyers Guild and others expressed concern that Mr. Ford's conditional amnesty proposal for draft evaders might be a public relations gesture to gain "political support of liberals."

"We feel that the only valid and meaningful amnesty is a universal and unconditional one," they said.

DeNike said some 1800 administrative discharges — "undesirable discharges," without a court martial — are being processed annual-

ly at Fort Ord, many involving men who had deserted in protest against the Vietnam War.