

The Watergate Losers-- Bitter-Sweet Reaction

Washington

The reaction of convicted Watergate defendants or their attorneys to Richard M. Nixon's pardon yesterday ranged from outright anger to serene acceptance. Some said they would appeal for reduction of their sentences.

James W. McCord Jr., who helped expose the cover-up last year after he was convicted in the Watergate break-in, called President Ford's action "a corruption and perversion of the criminal justice system." He said it looked like an extension of the cover-up.

But Bernard L. Barker, who was convicted in both the Watergate and Ellsberg

break-in cases, termed the pardon for Mr. Nixon a "decent thing." The attorney for jailed defendant Jeb Stuart Magruder praised Mr. Ford for showing "political courage."

McCord, who seemed the angriest of those speaking out, said in an interview:

"Ford bypassed the whole system by taking the law in his own hands. It looks like a continuation of the cover-up. This pardon is no more appropriate than it was for the White House to offer me clemency during my trial."

He was referring to Senate Watergate committee testimony that then White House aide Jack Caulfield ap-

proached him in January, 1973, with an offer of executive clemency if he would remain silent about the involvement of higher officials in the Watergate affair.

McCord, who is free pending appeal of his conviction on conspiracy, bugging and burglary charges, said the presidential pardon "obviously has an effect on those of us who stood trial." He said he is considering filing additional arguments taking note of "inequalities" resulting from the pardon.

Attorneys for Herbert W. Kalmbach, Mr. Nixon's former personal lawyer, said they would file a reduction-of-sentence motion later this month that will take note of the Nixon pardon.

Kalmbach's co-counsel, Charles A. McNelis, said:

"President Ford remarked that Mr. Nixon had already suffered enough. What defendant or his family doesn't suffer? It may well be that everyone in the federal prisons ought to inundate the White House with letters saying, 'My wife and family have suffered enough.'"

Mrs. John W. Dean III called for Mr. Ford to demonstrate the same compassion for her husband that Mr. Ford showed Mr. Nixon.

In her first public statement on the Watergate case, Maureen Dean urged Mr. Ford not to overlook those who are "suffering because they told the truth."

Her husband, who was Mr. Nixon's prime accuser in the Watergate scandal, entered prison last week to begin serving a one-to-four-year term following his confession to a charge of obstruction of justice.

Dean was fired as Mr. Nixon's White House counsel in 1973 after he began to cooperate with prosecutors investigating the Watergate cover-up.

In her statement, Mrs. Dean said: "I am gratified by the President's spirit of forgiveness but dismayed by the apparent limitations he has applied to it."

"Mr. Nixon and his family are not the only ones who have suffered enough because of Watergate. Since the President has adopted this posture, I pray he will not overlook those who have fully cooperated with the government in getting out the truth of Watergate to the American people."

"These individuals are also suffering because they told the truth — which is something we have yet to hear from Mr. Nixon. Why didn't Mr. Nixon have to pay at least the price of truth for his pardon?"

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