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WALTER SCOTT'S Personality Parade

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Q. *Since President Ford was so quick to give Richard Nixon a full and complete pardon for all the crimes he may have committed, including income tax evasion, obstruction of justice, telling lies to the American people, masterminding the Watergate coverup, and who knows what else—why won't Ford give the same sort of pardon to Nixon's fellow conspirators: John N. Mitchell, Bob Haldeman, John Ehrlichman, and Robert Mardian?—F. G., Phoenix, Ariz.*

A. President Ford's reasoning is as follows: Mr. Nixon is the only President in U.S. history who was forced to resign from office. The pardon for him was intended to end the national focus on Watergate and to put the bitterness and divisiveness surrounding Watergate behind us so that the nation could focus on its difficult problems. Ford contends that these circumstances do not apply to Mitchell, Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Mardian and that these convicted men must pursue the normal judicial processes. This is specious reasoning, of course, having little to do with equal justice under law and pointing up the proclivity of relating prior pardon to high office. But according to White House spokesmen this is what President Ford contends.

