

SEP 17 1974

SFChronicle
Congress'

Reaction to Clemency

Washington

President Ford's clemency program for Vietnam war deserters and draft resisters was received with general calm throughout Congress yesterday, with most key leaders endorsing the plan.

Some saw the decision as particularly fitting in light of Mr. Ford's earlier pardon for former President Nixon. A few members protested, but indicated little willingness for a legislative fight.

House Majority Whip John J. McFall (Dem-Calif.) declared "I think it's time" for such clemency. "When he pardoned Mr. Nixon, the President made this in order," he said.

Speaker Carl Albert (Dem-Okla.) also accepted the decision, *

But Senator Barry Goldwater (Rep-Ariz.) called the clemency decision a "travesty on justice" and an "insult to every man who ever wore a military uniform." He said it would also comfort "every traitor living in our midst."

"I think a man who will men does not deserve to be not serve beside his fellow called an American citizen," Goldwater told the Senate.

House Armed Services Chairman F. Edward Hebert (Dem-La.) reaffirmed his longstanding opposition to "any form of amnesty" but said he would prompt no legislative action aimed at sidetracking the program.

Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (Dem-Mont.) said Mr. Ford has "my full support . . . it is opening the door to a problem that has to be faced up to sometime."

House Republican Leader John J. Rhodes (Rep-Ariz.) said the program was fair to those who resisted service while guaranteeing that those who fought "are not penalized for having done so."

Two congressmen who previously had introduced amnesty bills said the President should go further.

Representative Edward I. Koch (Dem-N.Y.) whose bill would have set up a similar conditional amnesty, said that program no longer is generous enough after Ford's pardon for Richard Nixon.

Associated Press