

NYTimes *FORD AD* SEP 17 1974

Ford Offer Greeted Coolly By U.S. Exiles in Canada

By WILLIAM BORDERS

MONTREAL, Sept. 16—President Ford's offer of conditional amnesty was coolly received today by American draft evaders and deserters in Canada, the country that attracted the largest number of them over the years.

Some of the young exiles said that they would consider Mr. Ford's offer of "earned re-entry." But others, in interviews across Canada, reiterated opposition to any kind of involuntary service carrying implications that they have something to atone for.

"The American people have come to accept the judgment that we made about the Vietnam war when we refused to fight in it," said Stanley J. Pietlock a 31-year-old draft evader who now lives in Toronto. "The

only thing we were guilty of was premature morality."

Urging that the clemency program be boycotted, the editors of Amex Canada, an American exile magazine in Toronto, declared: "It is too much to ask that we accept punishment for our justified resistance to the legal and immoral United States war in Indochina."

Moreover, to many of the exiles, the contrast between the

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Exiles in Canada Cool to Ford Offer

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conditional amnesty that President Ford offered them today and the pardon that he gave last week to former President Richard M. Nixon was "insulting," as George Mantor, a 26-year-old draft evader in Alberta, called it.

Some of the young men also said that it was unrealistic for President Ford to expect them to interrupt careers here with service in the United States when all they want is the right to visit there occasionally without fear of arrest.

"If it were an unconditional amnesty, I'd accept it, just so I could go see my parents in Cleveland from time to time," said Harvey Sachs, a 28-year-old draft evader who now conducts a symphony orchestra in Ontario. "But I've been here seven years. I've become a Canadian, and it's absurd to sug-

gest that I take two years off for a period of penal servitude in the States."

In contrast to the image of the exile as a forlorn hippie yearning to come home, many of the draft evaders and deserters in this country have become fully integrated into Canada's middle class—a doctor in Vancouver, an advertising copywriter in Toronto, a popular radio broadcaster in Montreal.

"Made A Home Here"

"I certainly feel more Canadian than American," John M. Pope said, but he added that there was a chance of his accepting the clemency offer. Mr. Pope, a former Army specialist fourth class, has spent only 24 hours in the United States since the bleak October day in 1969 deserting from Fort Monmouth, N. J.

"In those years, we've made friends here," he said. "We

bought a house and adopted a child. We've gotten established and made a home here."

Disputing the image of a closed "exile community" in Canada, Mr. Pope, who is a teacher in a Montreal suburb, pointed out that there were no draft evaders or deserters among his friends here.

Although he said that he would like to be able to visit his parents in Moodus, Conn., Mr. Pope plans to live permanently in Canada, and he and his wife expect to become citizens this fall, when the mandatory five-year waiting period ends.

Because it was just five years ago that the trickle of young immigrants north across the border swelled to a flood, many of the American exiles are now becoming eligible for Canadian citizenship and a number of them have accepted it. But Canadian Government statistics are not broken down in any way that would show exactly how

many.

Total Not Known

Similarly, no one knows the total number of draft evaders and deserters living in this country, since Ottawa consistently took the position that an immigrant's military status at home was irrelevant here. Estimates of the total generally range upward from 7,000.

For all of them, the clemency offer from Washington today marked the end of a long period of uncertainty. But in some cases, it was regarded as a sad finality. Mr. Sachs, who is under indictment in Cleveland, explained why:

"It looks like this is it. Ford's making this limited offer now tremendously reduces the chance of an unconditional amnesty some time in the future. And that makes it all the more unlikely that I'll ever be going back."