

## WORLD COMMENT ON PARDON MIXED

Some Papers Back Ford—  
Others Question Halting  
of Judicial Process

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LONDON, Sept. 9—News of the Presidential pardon for Richard M. Nixon was printed on front pages around the world today, but comment was relatively sparse and mixed.

Some government spokesmen, asked for reaction, declined to give any. Officials here, in Paris and in Bonn described the action of President Ford as an internal United States affair.

Editorial support for Mr. Ford was voiced by two of Western Europe's major conservative newspapers—Le Figaro of Paris and The Financial Times of London—both of which described the pardon as an act of valor and compassion.

Asserting that Mr. Ford had acted "with a serenity and a dignity that give a new dimension to his personality," Le Figaro added:

"We were perhaps too quick to affirm that President Ford was not a man of great decisions."

The Financial Times, with some reservations, spoke of pressures on Mr. Nixon's health, said he had "suffered enough" and termed Mr. Ford's action the right one.

There was criticism from The Daily Telegraph of London, a conservative paper that sympathized with Mr. Nixon until just before his resignation.

"Whether Mr. Ford has acted wisely is open to debate," it said and added:

"The granting of pardon to Mr. Nixon could set as terrifying a precedent as his exposure and sacking has set a good one. To override the rule of law, even with the best of intentions, is always hazardous."

The Times of London, which in the early stages of Watergate had defended Mr. Nixon and wondered what the fuss was all about, said that, with the advent of President Ford, the United States needed a period of reconciliation.

"To this extent," it said, "President Ford's political instinct is right." But it went on to contend that the judicial process should not have been cut short by Mr. Ford.

"He is wrong," the Times said, "when he says that the book of Watergate should be not only closed but sealed. Even if the last chapter is missing it still needs to be read or it will have been written in vain."

In Italy, the Communist party daily, L'Unita, spoke with a sense of almost personal betrayal. Unlike the Soviet press, which restricted its reporting of President Nixon's resignation to terse news items—and did the same today—L'Unita had described the resignation as proof of the strength of American institutions.

But today it said: "The image of America as a free country in which even the President, if guilty, must pay for his deeds has sunk, re-emerging the foreground as a country in which a guilty person, if 'important,' always ends up making himself respected."

Le Monde, France's most prestigious daily, said Mr. Nixon had suffered "a new humiliation" on the ground that the pardon had rescued him but had not saved face for him. The editorial added:

"The most powerful democracy in the world, the United States, where it is not unusual to find a certain commiseration for the poor Europeans who have not yet liquidated the consequences of feudalism, has given us a magisterial lesson in princely absolutism."