

WXPost FEB 24 1975

# Nixon Dines With Sinatra, Hope During Visit to Annenberg Estate

From News Dispatches

PALM SPRINGS, Calif., Feb. 23—Former President Nixon greeted some old friends, including entertainers Frank Sinatra and Bob Hope, for dinner Saturday at the desert estate of Walter Annenberg. (Feb 23)

The event, on Nixon's first long trip since his phlebitis surgery last fall, was described as "a quiet gathering of old friends" by Annenberg, former U.S. ambassador to Great Britain and a long-time friend of Nixon.

"I'm just having a few old friends to a very quiet, private dinner," said the former ambassador. "They're old, intimate friends of mine and the former President.

"Mr. Nixon is my weekend guest," Annenberg said. "He is resting and enjoying the sunshine. I urged him to hit a few golf balls, which he did, but he hasn't tried to play any golf as such."

Annenberg said the dinner was not in Nixon's honor and that some of the guests had been invited several months ago.

Most guests arrived in large, dark-colored limousines, while a line of curious tourists drove past the 300-acre estate and peered into its secluded dark-

ness. About two dozen reporters and photographers watched from outside a gate. Sinatra was at the wheel of his Rolls Royce. Beside him was frequent companion Barbara Marx.

Other guests seen arriving were Leonard Firestone, U.S. ambassador to Belgium, and his wife, Barbara, and John Swearingen, president of Standard Oil Co. of Indiana, and his wife, Bonnie.

Former California governor Ronald Reagan was invited but it was not known if he attended.

On his first major outing since his hospitalization for phlebitis, Nixon was said to be relaxing in the mild desert air.

"He is resting and enjoying the sunshine," said Annenberg, who last entertained Nixon here Sept. 8, 1974.

Nixon and his wife, Pat, drove the 150 miles from their home in San Clemente to the Annenberg estate Wednesday.

Nixon was at the walled and heavily guarded Annenberg home Friday when he heard of the sentencing of his former top aides, who were convicted in the Watergate scandal. He issued no statement.

Former Vice President Spiro Agnew reportedly was a weekend guest at Sinatra's de-

sert home, but was not believed invited to Annenberg's party, according to United Press International.

Nixon underwent surgery for phlebitis of the left leg and was close to death from postoperative shock for a brief time.