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CBS Rejects Offer From Nixon Agent

New York

Richard Nixon's literary agent has been turned down by CBS News in an attempt to negotiate a paid television appearance by the former President in which it was proposed that he would talk about his White House years but not the Watergate scandal.

The network, mindful of charges of "checkbook journalism" touched off last March when it paid a large sum to former Nixon aide H. R. Haldeman for two televised interviews by Mike Wallace, cut off the proposal according to CBS News president Richard Salant.*

He said that the agent, Irving Lazar, contacted a member of the CBS News staff on Monday with the offer. He had tried to set up a meeting, "but I wasn't interested," Salant said.

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The network news chief said he thought it would be proper to pay for a presidential memoir, "but I don't think there could be a memoir without Watergate." Conversely, he added, "if he talked about Watergate, that would be current news, and we don't pay for current news."

* 18 JUL - WXP 20 JUL.