

# David Frost Signs To Interview Nixon; Sum Is Undisclosed

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BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., Aug. 10—David Frost, the television personality, announced today that he had bought the exclusive rights to the "television memoirs" of Richard M. Nixon.

Mr. Frost said he and the former President signed a 13-page contract yesterday evening, exactly one year after Mr. Nixon resigned the Presidency.

Mr. Frost said there would be four 90-minute programs, which will be filmed immediately but will not be broadcast until after the elections of November, 1976.

He refused to disclose the amount of money Mr. Nixon would receive for the interviews, which will be filmed at the former President's estate in San Clemente, or when and on which stations the interviews would be televised.

"I should make it clear that the former President has neither requested nor has he received any editorial control—whether in terms of the content

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or editing of the programs, the use of newsreel footage, or by way of prior knowledge of any of the questions," Mr. Frost said. "No subject, including Watergate, has been barred."

The rights to the interviews were acquired by Mr. Frost on behalf of what he called an "international consortium of broadcasting organizations." Mr. Frost refused to identify any of the organizations.

Irving Lazar, a literary agent who has been representing Mr. Nixon, had proposed to the television networks last month that they buy the rights to a series of interviews with the former President.

CBS News and ABC News rejected the proposals on the ground that their company policies did not permit them to buy news exclusives.

NBC News, however, did negotiate with Mr. Lazar on the premise that the interviews would be based on Mr. Nixon's written memoirs when they are completed.

Richard C. Wald, president of the news division, denied industry reports that the asking price for the television

interviews was as high as \$1-million.

Mr. Frost said he spent some time with Mr. Nixon yesterday and he found the former President "physically well."

"He led us on a strenuous tour of the house so we could get an idea of filming locations, and I was astonished how vigorous he looked. It was a total contradiction of the ailing man I had pictured," he said.

### Watergate Discussions

Mr. Frost said Mr. Nixon had seemed "totally in touch with reality" during his conversations with him. He made the comment in response to a reporter's question concerning suggestions of various commentators about the former President's state of mind.

At least one-quarter of the interviews would be devoted to discussions of the Watergate affair, Mr. Frost said. Asked whether Mr. Nixon might be less than candid in discussing the scandal, Mr. Frost said: "I sense that he's ready to start reflecting on his life and his achievements. I have no reason to believe the ex-President will be less than candid."

Mr. Frost said he planned to begin filming immediately and intended to film 20 separate interviews from which the four programs would be cut. However, he said he did not know what would become of the parts of the films that remained unused.

Mr. Frost said that he believed a "major network" would be involved in broadcasting the interviews in this country but said he could not identify any networks until agreements had been signed.

In a press release handed to reporters at a hastily called news conference here, Mr. Lazar was quoted as saying, "From among the many people wanting to interview the former President, Mr. Nixon chose David Frost because of Mr. Frost's unique and wide-ranging experience."

Mr. Frost, in answer to a question, said he did not regard the paid interviews as "check-book journalism," mainly because Mr. Nixon is no longer in office.

"Each person still owns the rights to his own life after retirement," Mr. Frost said. The reason public broadcast of the four interviews will be delayed until late 1976 is that "the

former President does not wish to intervene in the political debate of the next elections," Mr. Frost said.

Mr. Frost, the 36-year-old son of a Methodist minister in Kent, England, burst onto the American television scene in 1963 with an Americanized version of "That Was the Week That Was," a weekly satirical review that had made Mr. Frost a major star in England.

"TW-3," as the irreverent show became known, lasted two years, but Mr. Frost was back in 1969 shuttling, often more than once a week, between London and New York, where he taped a syndicated 90-minute nightly talk show that made him almost as famous as Johnny Carson.

Since 1972, when the David Frost Show was canceled, Mr. Frost's interests have included stints as a BBC interviewer.

Interest here in Mr. Frost has centered on the celebrity status of his well-publicized romances, first with Diahann Carroll, the actress and singer, who broke the engagement and married someone else. Last year, the scenario was repeated when Karen Graham, a Vogue cover girl, married a Las Vegas hotel operator.