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Nixon, Seeming to Falter, Got Time Out

By United Press International

Richard M. Nixon's aides called time out when he seemed to be buckling under pressure in the David Frost interview, giving him time to collect his thoughts for his final monologue, a program aide disclosed yesterday.

"The Nixon people said this was the toughest moment in Nixon's life and asked that the intense interrogation be stopped," said James Reston Jr., who helped Mr. Frost prepare for the taped interview televised Wednesday.

"That's why there's a difference in texture," he said in Chapel Hill, N. C.

Mr. Reston's account would indicate that Mr. Nixon got the 10-minute break in the taping when, apparently close to tears, he completed his recollection of how he dismissed two top White House aides accused of Water-

gate cover-up conspiracy in 1973. His last words in that vignette were, "I wasn't a good butcher."

When the questioning resumed, Mr. Reston said, Mr. Frost stopped questioning the former President on Watergate incidents and tape transcripts and asked him whether he would admit "wrongdoing" and "apologize" to the nation.

Mr. Nixon then began a long, emotional monologue that ran almost uninterrupted to the end of the program and left both men looking exhausted.

"I think that was the climax of the show," Mr. Reston said. He said that Mr. Nixon's men had asked for the respite because, until that time, "point after point of factual evidence showed Nixon was not coming off well."