

## Watergate Speech Decision

# Why Nixon Went to Vegas

speech. Mr. Nixon favored the idea of a point-by-point response. In the solitude of Camp David he decided that it would not serve his purposes to delve publicly into the specific details of the Watergate scandal that has shaken his presidency.

Why did Mr. Nixon break away from the strategy of a detailed, point-by-point response? Interviews with several of the President's senior advisers brought these explanations:

"At first we thought it might be possible to do something detailed and fairly definitive, but then it became clear that every answer he gave would simply create more questions. In short, it would run and on.

It became a question of what was the appropriate level of detail for the President of the United States to provide—a question of the appropriateness of getting into the pit."

He was worried that a detailed response would do more harm than good. He was worried that witnesses would then be called back at the hearings to be asked to respond.

A key factor in the President's decision to offer a broad brush response to the Watergate accusations was his conclusion that the pub-

lic interest outweighed the White House interest on Friday.

The White House commission on this subject, the authors said, "has just finished his" the Senate Water House man said.

Another said "The feeling was that there was a shift to reduce public hearings with Watergate."

In essence, the Nixon advisers were saying, Mr. Nixon offered the public his detailed explanation because he figured he got off the hook without one.