

Post 9/11/73

President Plans Talk Next Week

The White House yesterday confirmed reports that President Nixon will make his long-awaited defense of his role in the Watergate scandal next week.

Deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said that the President will make a speech in mid-week, but he would not say whether it would be a television address from the Oval Office or in some other format.

The format and the time have not been fixed, Warren said. But he announced that following the speech the President "will be holding press conferences and answering questions in other forums."

While Warren would not be specific about the timing of a press conference, he hinted strongly that it would not be held until the President goes to California, now expected to be Monday, Aug. 20.

The speech in mid-week will definitely be from Washington, Warren said.

Present plans call for the President to go to New Orleans Aug. 20 to address the

Veterans of Foreign Wars convention, where he is almost certain to have a friendly reception.

Immediately after the speech, he is expected to continue on to San Clemente, and to remain there until after Labor Day.

For weeks, there have been reports that if the Watergate speech were well received the President would then accept a number of invitations to speak in various parts of the country in an effort to restore public confidence in his administration.

The President has been at Camp David since Wednesday afternoon working on his statement with Raymond K. Price, his principal speech writer. On Tuesday evening, the President and Price cruised down the Potomac on the presidential yacht Sequoia.

On Thursday, they were joined at Camp David by press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler and Alexander M. Haig Jr., the White House staff chief.

Yesterday, J. Fred Buzhardt, counsel to the President, and presidential assistant Patrick J. Buchanan also joined the group to work on the statement.

Asked why it was taking so long for the President to prepare his response to the Watergate hearings, Warren said he did not think it was taking a long time in view of the length of the Senate hearings on Watergate.