

Nixon Inclined To Keep Agnew On the Ticket

Associated Press

Washington

President Nixon said last night his present inclination is to keep Vice President Spiro T. Agnew on the Republican ticket in 1972 because "one should not break up a winning combination."

Mr. Nixon said he will announce by mid-January his own virtually certain campaign for re-election. But he said "there's always the possibility that one might change his mind," and added it is wise to delay such a decision until the last possible moment.

He said in a CBS television interview he would have to make his announcement by January 14 because that is the deadline for entry in the New Hampshire presidential primary, which will be held on March 7.

Actually, he was 10 days early; the filing deadline for a slate of 14 New Hampshire delegates pledged to support his renomination is January 24.

CONVERSATION

Mr. Nixon was interviewed by CBS correspondent Dan Rather in an hour-long conversation televised live from the Oval Office at the White House.

He said he will not engage in active campaigning until after the Republican National Convention, which opens in San Diego on August 21.

"I have decided I will engage in no public partisan activities until after the Republican National Convention," Mr. Nixon said.

As for Agnew, Mr. Nixon said, "my view is that one should not break up a winning combination."

Mr. Nixon also said he would announce another round of troop withdrawals from Vietnam before the end of this month, and held out the possibility of a stepped up pull-out rate.

BOMBING

Mr. Nixon said he ordered the stepped-up bombing of North Vietnam because the enemy accelerated infiltration of South Vietnam, shelled Saigon, and intensified their firing on reconnaissance planes.

"Under those circumstances, I had no other choice . . ." Mr. Nixon said. He said the intensified U.S. bombing over a five-day period last week was "very,

See Back Page

President Inclined to Keep Agnew

From Page 1

very effective."

On other points, Mr. Nixon said:

- He will make another announcement on U.S. troop withdrawals from South Vietnam well before February 1, adding it is possible the rate of pullout will be accelerated. He said U.S. casualties are low and can be kept that way.

- By election day, the level of U.S. forces in South Vietnam will be very low, but a complete pullout depends on the prisoners held by North Vietnam. He said all U.S. forces cannot be withdrawn so long as one American is held prisoner in Southeast Asia.

- Attorney General John N. Mitchell would be the man best qualified to manage his 1972 re-election campaign. But Mr. Nixon said Mitchell also is the man best qualified to be attorney general, and that presents a dilemma. "I haven't crossed that bridge yet," he said.

Available edition of NYTimes did not carry transcript of intv, nor story on it. The intv was telecast 2 Jan, a Sunday, in the evening.

Other material on intv filed POWs.