

Postponing a Speech At San Clemente

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By Maxine Cheshire

Former President Richard M. Nixon's first major speech to an American audience since he relinquished the presidency was to have been delivered in San Clemente on the day before the crucial California presidential primary. But on Tuesday it was postponed without explanation.

The June 7 address, billed as "an overview of foreign affairs," would have been to a luncheon for University of Southern California trustees. Without making it public, Nixon last year designated USC as the site of the Nixon presidential library.

The San Clemente event was organ-

ized by USC board member Gavin S. Herbert Jr., a prominent Newport Beach businessman who supports Ronald Reagan.

USC's 38 board members were noti-

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fied by telephone this week that the luncheon would not take place and that a new date would be selected "sometime in mid-July." No reason was given to them for the change in plans.

Herbert is traveling in Europe and an office spokesman said he does not know how to contact him. Efforts to reach Nixon's chief of staff, Col. Jack Brennan, for comment yesterday were unsuccessful.

Herbert's co-chairman, former White House communications chief Herb Klein, said yesterday that Herbert and Brennan are the only people who know why June 7 was selected in the first place or why it was changed.

Asked who decided to postpone the

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speech, Klein replied, "What motivates the Nixon people I don't know." know."

At least one board member speculated that the reason could be political—that a speech on that day might cause an uproar in the Reagan-Ford California race similar to the one set off when the Nixons visited China just before the New Hampshire primary.

Gordon S. Marshall, who is secretary of the board and a Ford supporter, said yesterday:

"I would assume that Nixon's appearing in headlines the day of the primary would certainly be something you'd just as soon not have happen . . . I guess they could have decided to take no chances of hurting anybody. I'm not so naive as to think that might be the reason."

Marshall pointed out that the luncheon had two purposes. The invitations mentioned only one: an opportunity to hear Nixon's appraisal of "how the

world will be shaping up by the year 2000" and his thoughts on "the future of the world's economic situation and changes that can be anticipated."

In addition, board members were also expecting to be brought up to date on plans for Nixon's presidential library.

Nixon and USC's board reached an agreement last year in a meeting held at the Palm Springs estate of his long-time friend and supporter, former U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain Walter Annenberg.

The agreement was "oral" and "informal," according to Klein. No formal papers have yet been drafted or signed.

The agreement is predicated on Nixon's being able to win a favorable decision from the Supreme Court on eventual ownership of his presidential materials. A law passed by Congress in 1974 gives the U. S. government control.

Nixon lost a lower court bid to regain custody earlier this year but has appealed.

USC has agreed to raise the money itself from private sources to construct a library that Klein says will be "a research library and not a tourist attraction like the monument to LBJ in Texas."

Fund-raising has not begun on a formal basis, Klein said, although some of Nixon's friends have made "informal offers to support" the project financially.

A Nixon Foundation, established in 1969 to build a library, was disbanded in 1975. Its assets were turned over to Nixon's alma mater, Whittier College.

Whittier had hoped to get the library if one should ever be built. But Klein says that Nixon decided on USC because "his wife, Pat, is an alumna, and the campus is in a central area with easy access for scholars."

"These will be the most valuable and interesting presidential papers since Lincoln's," Klein said. "And they may be the most valuable of all time."

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