

Connally denies FRIDAY SEP 14 1979 charters role

John Connally said Thursday he "had nothing to do with the granting or rejecting of bank charters" after *The Dallas Morning News* reported the Senate Banking Committee is examining chartering procedures in seven Texas banks to see if the former treasury secretary exerted any influence.

"It sounds like a hatchet job to me," Connally said at a news conference in Cleveland, where he was campaigning for the Republican presidential nomination.

"I'd taken it with a spoonful of salt. I had nothing to do with the granting or rejecting of bank charters. That was Bill Camp's (U.S. comptroller of the currency) job."

Camp, a native of Greenville, Texas, approved the charters as part of his official duties. Four were approved while Camp, as comptroller, was under the jurisdiction of Connally in the treasury department in 1971 and 1972.

Charters for seven national banks in Texas were approved between 1970 and 1973 by Camp despite the recommendations of his staff and deputy comptroller that they be denied. No such pattern could be found by committee investigators in any other state, a committee source said.

Connally friends and political associates showed up on the initial stockholders lists in each of the banks, including one with seven former aides to Connally when he was governor.

A spokesman for the Senate Banking Committee in Washington confirmed Thursday that his staff has been examining charter applications of national banks for more than a year, including "some from the State of Texas."

Kenneth McLean, staff director of the committee, said his investigators have "made no inferences or conclusions about John Connally. We've come to no conclusions and we're probably another couple of months away from a completion date."

McLean said the study, when completed, will be turned over to the 15-member committee chaired by Sen. William Proxmire, D-Wis.