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Connally Throws Big Ranch Political Party

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SAN ANTONIO — Some pictured it as a gathering to launch a Democratic - Republican coalition similar to the one which gave Texas to Dwight Eisenhower in 1952.

Some said it was intended to put Secretary of the Treasury John Connally in better stead to be Richard Nixon's running mate in 1972.

Others thought it was a farewell party for a Connally who is about to ease back into private life in Texas.

Connally, a former Democratic governor of Texas and the only Democrat in Nixon's cabinet, said of the affair:

"I just invited a bunch of folks down for dinner. No one objects to being invited to a good cocktail party, do they?"

The "bunch of folks" that Connally and his wife Nellie invited to their Picoso ranch

near Floresville yesterday to greet Nixon and the First Lady consisted of 200 of the most politically influential and moneyed citizens in the state.

The guest list included such well-known Texans as computer magnate H. Ross Perot; construction king George Brown; industrialist H.B. Zachry; oilman John Murchison; Miss Ima Hogg, grande dame of Texas society; King Ranch man Bob Kleberg; land magnate Hayden Head; George Christian, press secretary to former President Johnson; former Texas Gov. Allan Shivers, and the leading newspaper publishers in the state.

Most of the guests were either members of the exclusive President's Club during the Johnson administration or key Republican club members.