

President Ford's Private Chat With Connally

by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

President Ford's unscheduled chat with John B. Connally in Houston resulted from mindlessness at the White House that failed to consider either political damage to the President or interference with federal prosecution of Connally. But it also reflects the President's self-destructive loyalty to the ruined Nixon administration and its symbols who today represent a political liability.

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One Ford aide says the decision to see Connally has a basis "not political or legal but most^{ly} personal." As such it falls in the same category with continuing Nixon loyalists in the Cabinet long beyond their time, the visit to Richard Nixon's sickbed just before the 1974 election and, most crucially, the premature Nixon pardon.

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