

Former Gov. John B. Connally of Texas has quietly embarked on a path many close friends predicted he would never take: the rubber chicken banquet circuit to establish his new credentials as a Republican—possibly a Republican presidential candidate.

Connally gave state Republican headquarters in Austin the green light about a month ago to start scheduling appearances for him across the country. Out of hundreds of requests pouring into Austin (as many as 60 in one week), Connally has accepted two so far: the kickoff banquet of the Republican state convention in San Diego, Calif., Sept. 8, and the annual Trunk and Tusk Republican dinner in Phoenix, Ariz., Sept. 16.

Such appearances are essential for ex-Democrat Connally to melt the reserve of Republican regulars if he is to have any chance for the GOP presidential nomination in 1976. But many veteran Connally-watchers felt his distaste for grubby campaigning would preclude such a necessary course.

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