

Connally Verdict Cheers Nixon

By CHRISTOPHER LYDON
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 27—
Former President Richard M. Nixon made several phone calls a week ago to John B. Connally and his triumphant lawyers after the former

Treasury Secretary's acquittal in the milk-money bribery trial here. Beyond congratulating the

entire defense, Mr. Nixon quoted his daughter Tricia to the effect that the jury's exoneration of Mr. Connally rubbed off symbolically on him. Mr. Connally's friends hope the verdict is the start of a broad reaction against the so-called "Watergate syndrome" of public suspicion. The trial remains a lively topic of speculation and gossip in the capital.

Robert S. Strauss, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, who was a character witness at the trial for his onetime University of Texas roommate, is thought to have improved his chances of avoiding any formal charge in connection with his acknowledged misreporting a \$50,000 Ashland Oil Company contribution in 1970 and 1971. Sources in and out of the Watergate suggest it might now look "vindictive" to press the Strauss case hard.

Mr. Connally, meanwhile, is silent about his his political plans but is reported to be in a "don't get mad, get even" mood about various adversaries. Chief among them is his fellow Houston lawyer-

Leon Jaworski, the former Watergate prosecutor who disqualified himself in the Connally case but, in Mr. Connally's view, should have blocked his indictment. Mr. Connally is also miffed, confidants say, with his onetime protégé, Senator Lloyd Bentsen, Democrat of Texas, for his lack of "solicitude," and with Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, for withdrawing his offer to appear as a character witness.

Five of Wisconsin's seven Representatives in Congress have joined a formal 81-name "organizing committee" for Representative Morris K. Udall of Arizona in Wisconsin's Democratic Presidential next April. They are Representatives Les Aspin of Racine, Alvin Baldus of Menomonien, Robert W. Kastenmeter of Sun Prairie, David R. Obey of Wausau and Henry S. Reuss of Milwaukee. The Udall release did not mention that most of the same men were early supporters in 1972 of Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine, whose Presidential campaign was limping severely by the time it reached the Wisconsin primary.

Others on Mr. Udall's Wisconsin team include Don Peterson of Eau Claire, a Democratic national committeeman; State Treasurer Charles P. Smith, an early supporter of Senator George McGovern for President in 1972; Norman Anderson, Speaker of the Wisconsin Assembly; Frank Nicolay of

Abbotsford, who was Mr. McGovern's state chairman in 1972, and Martin Hanson, brother of Senator Gaylord Nelson's administrative assistant, Lou Hanson.

Campaign reports from 1972 disclose that Democrats enjoyed the free use of 193 new automobiles at their national convention in Miami Beach. Republicans used a total of 216 free cars at their 1972 convention a few weeks later.

Most of the cars for each party came from the nation's biggest auto manufacturer, General Motors. Both conventions also reported the free loan of Xerox copiers and multilith machines from the Addressograph-Multigraph Corporation. These are among the formerly legal corporate favors that both parties expect to lose when they accept \$2-million apiece from the Federal Treasury to pay for their 1976 conventions.

Senator George McGovern of South Dakota continues to reassemble what looks like a national political staff even as he dismisses questions about the chance he might run for President again next year. His new press secretary, Alan Baron, a member of the Muskie campaign staff in 1972, confirmed last week that Steve Robbins, the McGovern-scheduling chief in 1972, had rejoined the Senator's nutrition committee staff.