

Former Secretary of Commerce Scores

CONNOR OF ALLIED IS 'SHOCKED' BY IT

In Talk to Business Council,
He Says Decision 'Shakes'
Confidence in President

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HOT SPRINGS, Va., May 8—John T. Connor, chairman of the board of the Allied Chemical Corporation, said today that President Nixon's decision to send United States troops into Cambodia "shakes the confidence of many Americans in his judgment and intentions."

The President's action, Mr. Connor said, "will result in more widespread dissension in this country involving many other loyal citizens besides most of the young, the intellectuals and the blacks."

In a speech before the Business Council, most of whose members, like himself, are presidents or board chairmen of the nation's largest corporations, Mr. Connor said he was "shocked and stunned" by Mr. Nixon's move into Cambodia and the new bombing raids in North Vietnam.

The reception given Mr. Connor's remarks by his fellow executives was described as "polite" by Fred J. Borch, chairman of the board of the General Electric Company, who is chairman of the Business Council.

Stans at Meeting

Interviews with council members indicated that Mr. Connor's views were shared by a minority — probably a rather small minority.

But Mr. Connor has a record of reaching an opinion ahead of most other Business Council members and then finding his fellow executives supporting his view. In 1964, he was one of the first council members to decide to support Lyndon B. Johnson's bid for a full Presidential term and he was a major Johnson fund-raiser in the business community.

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Move Into Cambodia

He referred to his 1964 actions today, indignant that he had some regrets. Mr. Johnson's decision "to escalate the war, again and again," many "tragic consequences," Mr. Connor said, adding:

"Thousands and thousands of lives have been lost or lost or ruined; our foreign relations have been jeopardized; serious social problems have been caused; our young people have become bitter, reckless and disillusioned, and disastrous inflation rages in the national economy, affecting us all."

Mr. Connor served President Johnson as Secretary of Commerce from late in 1965 through January, 1967. At the time of his departure, he was said to have been disgruntled over the lack of influence of the Commerce Department on President Johnson. There was no indication that the war in Vietnam had anything to do with his leaving.

The current Secretary of Commerce, Maurice H. Stans, who was also at the Business Council meeting, spoke before Mr. Connor and asked the businessmen to support President Nixon on the war. His recep-

tion was also characterized by Mr. Borch of General Electric as "polite."

The Business Council, whose sessions are open only to members and invited guests, generally tries to avoid controversy and especially public controversy over the policies of the Government in any area, Mr. Connor's speech was, in that sense, especially unusual.

Mr. Connor said that he hoped President Nixon was right in his belief that the new military moves would shorten what the business leader termed "this senseless war."

But he said he thought that "we should pull back and terminate these new offensive measures and continue our disengagement program quickly—before it is too late."