

Nominee for Treasury

John Bowden Connally Jr.

By RICHARD HALLORAN

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 14— John Bowden Connally Jr. is the second conservative Texan to ride out of the Lone Star State into President Nixon's corral in the last week. Mr. Connally, 53 years old, a Democrat who is a long-time political friend of former President Lyndon B.

Johnson, was nominated today to be Secretary of the Treasury. Last week, the President named Representative George Bush, a Republican who was defeated by Senator-elect Lloyd M. Bentsen, to be Ambassador to the United Nations.

Mr. Connally has been a naval officer, the manager of a radio station, an administrative assistant to Mr. Johnson as a Senator, a lawyer, Secretary of the Navy, and Governor of Texas.

But as has been the case with many Secretaries of the Treasury, his experience in banking and finance had been limited. He is a director of the Gibraltar Savings Association of Houston, the U.S. Trust Company of New York and the First City National Bank of Houston.

'A Political Animal'

"John Connally," said an experienced observer, "is a highly political animal."

He helped Mr. Johnson get elected to the House, worked for Mr. Johnson in the 1956 and 1960 Democratic conventions, nominated Mr. Johnson for the Presidency in 1964 and defended President Johnson's Vietnam policy in the 1968 convention.

Mr. Connally recently impressed President Nixon with his work as a member of the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization, headed by Roy L. Ash, president of Litton Industries.

During a presentation to the Cabinet last March, Mr. Ash ran into considerable hostility on proposals for the Office of Management and Budget and the Domestic Council.

Mr. Connally asked if he could explain. Without demeaning Mr. Ash, the former Governor had the Cabinet members accepting the idea within a few minutes.

Mr. Connally is tall, gray-haired, handsome, personable and articulate, and his manners and bearing recall those of President Johnson. Yet he is suave and has a touch of the Eastern establishment.

"As a Texas host," said an acquaintance here, "he and his wife are without peer."

Mr. Connally was born in Floresville, Tex., Feb. 27, 1917, the son of a butcher-farmer. The late Sam Fore, publisher of the Floresville newspaper, once said: "Those Connally boys knew what wearing darned socks and patched breeches was like. They really came up the hard way."

After working his way through the University of Texas Law School, Mr. Connally married Idanell Brill, winner of several beauty contests. They have two sons and a daughter.

Decorated War Veteran

During World War II, Mr. Connally served as a naval officer aboard the aircraft carrier Essex and was twice decorated for his work as the director of the ship's fighters.

One citation said: "By his professional skill, brilliant tactics, and cool courage in the face of grave peril, [he] contributed essentially to the success of embarked planes in shooting down 69 Japanese aircraft."

Mr. Connally and other veterans ran radio station KVET in Austin from 1946 until 1949, when he came to Washington as an assistant to Senator Johnson. He returned to Texas to practice law in 1952 and was the attorney for the late Sid W. Richardson, a wealthy independent oilman.

President Kennedy named Mr. Connally Secretary of the Navy in 1961. He resigned the next year to run for Governor of Texas.

Mr. Connally was riding in the car with President Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, when Lee Harvey Oswald fired at them, killing the President and wounding the Governor.

As governor, Mr. Connally, a conservative, had a reputation as a big spender, focusing his attention on the improvement of higher education. The state budget rose from \$1.3-billion to \$2.5-billion during his three two-year terms.

Since he left office last year, Mr. Connally has been a partner in a large Houston law firm and has been expanding his three ranching operations in South Texas. He frankly concedes that he has done most of his ranch buying on borrowed money. Things won't be much different in the United States Treasury, the world's largest borrower.