

Connally Assails Demos For Condemning Nixon

Washington

Treasury Secretary John B. Connally, the only Democrat in the cabinet, said yesterday that Senate Democrats had placed "partisan politics above the interest of the nation" in condemning President Nixon's new military moves in Vietnam.

"Even more shocking was that leading Democratic candidates for President would align themselves with such a position," Connally said.

He mentioned no names but left no doubt he was referring to Senators Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota and George S. McGovern of South Dakota who were among the 29 Democrats who voted Tuesday to oppose Mr. Nixon's Vietnam policies.

Connally told a small news conference that despite the Democrats' reaction — and his increasing involvement as one of Mr. Nixon's closest confidants—he still had not reached the point where he would switch from the Democratic to the Republican Party.

But their reaction "does raise serious doubts in my mind . . . about the quality of President that they might make," he said.

Asked if he was contemplating a party switch, Connally said, "I certainly have no present intention to do so but the possibility certainly exists that I could do so."

Although not a member, Connally sat in on the National Security Council meeting at which Mr. Nixon spelled out his decision to mine North Vietnam's harbors and bomb the country's supply routes. He refused to state specifically how he counseled Mr. Nixon on the decision but added, "I was not displeased with the actions he took."

Then he added: "But I am amazed and saddened that

Aussie Protest

Adelaide, Australia

Fifteen hundred Australians paraded through Adelaide streets yesterday in protest against the U.S. mining of North Vietnamese ports.

Eight demonstrators were arrested after the marchers stopped traffic outside the national recruiting center and fought police who threw smoke bombs.

Associated Press

the majority of the Democrats in the Senate took the action they did yesterday. It is inconceivable to me that

we have reached the point in this country where the people would put their party above their country."

He said there was "a general feeling" among administration strategists that the President's decision was "not in any way a confrontation with the Russians.

"We haven't thrown down the gauntlet," he said.

"There is every indication that the Russians want to be helpful to us in bringing about a cessation of hostilities in Vietnam.

"I don't think the Russians will interpret this as a challenge to them," he said. Asked if the Kremlin was likely to call off the U.S.-Soviet Summit meeting later this month, Connally said, "I see no reason why they should."

United Press