

CONNALLY IS GOING ON 15-NATION TOUR FOR THE PRESIDENT

White House Says the Trip,
to Begin Today, Will Focus
on Economic Problems

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KEY BISCAYNE, Fla., June 5—President Nixon is sending Secretary of the Treasury John B. Connally on a month-long mission to some 15 nations on three continents, starting tomorrow, the White House announced today.

Mr. Connally's mission is to center on international economic problems, according to the White House press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler.

But he said Mr. Connally, whose resignation from the Cabinet was announced May 16, would also be able to acquaint the foreign chiefs of state and government with the results of President Nixon's meetings with Soviet leaders in Moscow last month, which resulted in a signed agreement on the limitation of strategic arms and in other accords.

Briefed for 2 Hours

President Nixon and Henry A. Kissinger, his chief adviser on foreign policy, briefed Mr. Connally for nearly two hours this afternoon on the highlights of the meetings in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Ziegler noted that at the time of the announcement of Mr. Connally's resignation, the President had indicated that he would ask him to undertake special missions on his behalf and said that this would be the first.

Mr. Connally's long trip will keep him away from the country during the crucial period of maneuvering preceding the Democratic National Convention. But Mr. Connally, still nominally a Democrat, will be back in time for the Democratic convention, opening in Miami Beach on July 10, should he wish to attend it.

Mentioned as Candidate

The Republican National Convention starts in Miami Beach on Aug. 21 and Mr. Connally has been mentioned as a possible Vice Presidential running mate for Mr. Nixon.

Mr. Nixon, Mr. Connally and Mr. Kissinger met at the President's Key Biscayne residence where Mr. Nixon has been resting since last Friday after his trip to Austria, the Soviet Union, Iran and Poland.

Mr. Connally will go to six South American countries, starting with Venezuela, tomorrow, then to Southeast Asia and South Asia and Europe. He is not expected to engage in specific negotiations, though Mr. Ziegler said that he would listen to the leaders he is to

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visit and that he would have some "of his own points to make."

Mr. Connally, whose final itinerary has not yet been completed, is certain to visit India and Pakistan, Mr. Ziegler said. The White House official also said he would not "rule out" a visit to the new nation of Bangladesh, which has faced crucial economic problems since she became independent as a result of the Indian-Pakistani war last December.

No Stop in Japan

Despite the existence of serious economic problems between Washington and Tokyo, Mr. Connally will bypass Japan during the Asian portion of his tour, because Mr. Kissinger is due to fly there Thursday to meet with Japanese Govern-

ment and business leaders on his long-planned but twice-postponed visit.

It is not certain, Mr. Ziegler said, whether Mr. Connally will stop in Saigon, where an economic crisis is mounting, but Mr. Connally will definitely not go to Hanoi.

The impression here today was that the mission is principally intended to build up Mr. Connally's international prestige. But White House sources sidestepped speculation about whether he is being groomed for some future foreign affairs post.

While Mr. Connally travels as the President's special representative, he still retains his title of Secretary of the Treasury pending Senate confirmation of George P. Shultz, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, who was nominated by Mr. Nixon to succeed Mr. Connally.

Mr. Connally's tour of South America will constitute the highest-level United States mission to countries in the Western Hemisphere since President Nixon took office in 1969.

In addition to Venezuela, Mr. Connally will fly to Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia and Peru. Chile, whose Socialist Government is at odds with the United States over nationalizations of American private investment, was excluded from the itinerary.

Mr. Ziegler, in explaining the planned world tour, said that President Nixon felt that the mission would be "especially timely" after Mr. Nixon's meetings in China and the Soviet Union. He also said that Mr. Connally's talks were necessary because of recent international monetary developments in which Mr. Connally had been closely involved as the Secretary of the Treasury.