

Connally --- 'Nixon Owes Explanation'

Austin, Tex.

Former Treasury Secretary John B. Connally said yesterday President Nixon owes the country a better explanation than he gave for firing Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox, and Mr. Nixon should have turned over the Watergate tapes months ago.

"I must say that the Pres-

ident owed the country a better explanation for his actions than we got," Connally said on the weekly state press-panel television show "Capital Eye."

"If indeed he was going to change his mind about the tapes, I'm sorry that he didn't do it three months ago or four months ago. I think it would have saved him and saved the country an awful

lot of trouble and chaos and confusion in the minds of some," Connally said.

YEAR

The former treasury secretary and Texas governor, who converted to the Republican party earlier this year, also spoke in Houston yesterday.

He said congressional critics have schemed to uphold the nomination of Gerald Ford as vice president while they fight to oust the President.

"There is an element of hatred in this controversy — the smell of a vendetta — and if wiser and cooler heads in both political parties do not take control we are in for a much greater national trauma than we have heretofore experienced," Connally told the American Dental Association convention.

"If those who have charged forth so bravely with their demands for impeachment of the President really think they have a case, then it's time for them to put up or shut up," he said.

CLEAR

He said it is clear some members of Congress want to delay Ford's confirmation vote as a means to discredit the President.

"They deem Gerald Ford to be a hostage to be held in the dungeons of the congressional committees while they deliberate how to get the President to quit or how to impeach him," Connally said.

If there is any reason to reject Ford, then Congress should disclose it or, otherwise, speed his confirmation "and begin restoring some stability to this government," he said.

United Press