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TOM CONNALLY AND THE NEW DEAL

A DISSERTATION
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BY
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TOM CONNALLY AND THE NEW DEAL

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PREFACE

After thirty-six years of almost continuous service in the United States Congress, Tom Connally retired from public life in January, 1953. At first he devoted much of his time to writing his autobiography.¹ After its publication, he lived quietly in Washington, traveled, and generally enjoyed his retirement. He attended his last Democratic National Convention in 1956, where he gave his support to Texas' Senator Lyndon B. Johnson as a favorite son candidate.² Although not a delegate in 1960, he again supported Johnson for the Democratic nomination,³ accepting in the end the convention's choice of John F. Kennedy. During his ten years of retirement, Connally made few public statements, which contrasts sharply to his speech-filled Congressional career.

The Connally autobiography is a good, honest survey of his career as he remembered it in his old age--with the help of manuscript copies of his speeches, memoranda, and the Congressional Record. Except for it, little has been

¹Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally (New York, 1954).

²New York Times, August 14, 1956, p. 15.

³Ibid., January 18, 1960, p. 1; ibid., October 29, 1963, p. 1.

written about his career. Tom Connally will never be considered a great man in history, but he played a significant role during the administrations of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman. Thus, a more analytical and more complete account of his public career than the autobiography seems justified. Further need for a study such as this has been suggested by Richard L. Watson, Jr.:

Too frequently, the New Deal is thought of simply in terms of F. D. R. and the brain trust, with little realization of the role that Congress played in it. Or, if Congress is considered, the Roosevelt critic frequently describes it as a rubber stamp. Yet both houses of Congress during the Roosevelt era were dominated by tough-minded politicians, most of whom had emerged from the jungle of local politics upon the national scene many years before and had kept themselves on the national scene by being ever responsive to the demands of their local constituencies. A surprising number of New Deal measures were originated by Congressmen; and each enactment had to receive the approval of Congress, else it would not become law. Unfortunately, few of the congressional giants of the New Deal era have written their memoirs.⁴

And few of the "congressional giants," it might be added, have been subjects of biographies and monographs. Since Watson wrote his historiographic essay a decade ago, biographies have been published on William Borah and Key Pittman,⁵ but they stand alone in the field.

⁴Richard L. Watson, Jr., "Franklin D. Roosevelt in Historical Writing, 1950-1957," South Atlantic Quarterly, LVIII (Winter, 1958), 108-109.

⁵Marian Cecilia McKenna, Borah (Ann Arbor, 1961); Fred L. Israel, Nevada's Key Pittman (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1963).

The present work is only a partial study of Tom Connally's career. It does not deal with the period of his life in which he was most famous or in which he made perhaps his most important contributions. It is, rather, a study of his earlier career when he was principally concerned with domestic politics and policies. Briefly it surveys his early life and background and his twelve years in the House of Representatives. Then, in greater depth, it traces his election to the United States Senate in 1928 and the first thirteen years of his Senate career.

Connally's interests in the United States Senate from 1929 to 1941 reflected rather accurately the concern of the nation as a whole. The nation was worried about the depression and how to combat it, about the problems of agriculture and industry, and about the maldistribution of wealth. Connally supported such projects as inflation of money, increasing the income of farmers, and controlling oil production. With senatorial seniority, he became in 1941 chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and was a high-ranking member of the Senate Finance and the Senate Judiciary committees. But 1941 marked the beginning of American involvement in World War II and a sudden change on the part of the American public from concern principally over peacetime and domestic affairs to interest primarily in world affairs, defense, and war. Thus, 1941 serves as a good breaking point in Connally's career, and this work leaves

Connally's role in the development of post war American foreign policy for later study.

Many people deserve credit for assisting in the preparation of this work. To each of them the author is deeply grateful. Professor John S. Ezell, now Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Oklahoma, first discussed Tom Connally as a subject for a dissertation with me and encouraged me to undertake it. Some of the preliminary research and writing was done in a seminar directed by Professor W. Eugene Hollon, now of the University of Toledo. His criticisms of the chapters dealing with Connally's political campaigns were most helpful, and attempts have been made to apply his suggestions to the other chapters. Formal supervision of the dissertation has been the chore of Professor Gilbert C. Fite, and to him I owe the greatest debt.

A number of librarians and archivists have aided in the collection and location of primary materials. Dr. Paul T. Heffron, Specialist, 20th Century Political History, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, aided me in my search for materials in that library, which holds the voluminous Tom Connally Papers. Miss Elizabeth Drewry, Director of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York, and several of his staff kindly assembled all the manuscripts in that library so that they were ready for immediate use upon my arrival there. Dr. Chester V. Kielman, Archivist of the University of Texas Archives, Austin, aided me both by personal conferences and direction as well as through his

invaluable Guide to the University of Texas Archives. Dr. Llerena Friend, Librarian of the Eugene C. Barker History Center at The University of Texas, Austin, provided advice and encouragement in the early stages of the project. No one should undertake the study of any Texas subject without first conferring with her concerning the whereabouts of manuscripts, books and people. Mr. Ronald A. Seeliger, Librarian of the Newspaper Collection at The University of Texas supplied a seemingly endless flow of newspapers on microfilm available only in his collection, and he graciously searched out small bits of needed information from his files and provided them by correspondence. Likewise Dr. James M. Day, then State Archivist of the Texas State Library, answered numerous inquiries and supplied great quantities of statistical information. After his resignation, Mr. James R. Sanders, Director, Legislative Reference Division, Texas State Library, extended services, making additional trips to Austin unnecessary. Dr. and Mrs. Guy B. Harrison of the Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, graciously assisted me in searching for Connally material in their repository.

Two collections of government documents have been used in the preparation of this work, and two librarians were especially helpful in directing me to the needed documents. They are Miss Opal Carr of the Bizzell Memorial Library, University of Oklahoma, Norman; and Miss Josephine Williams of the Library, East Texas State University, Commerce.

Invaluable help in straightening out problems of genealogy, personal, and family matters related to Connally came from Mrs. Frances McKay Andrews (Mrs. Earl C. Andrews) of Tyler, Texas, niece of the Senator. She graciously gave of her time and made available without restriction her rich collection of Connally material--most of which was originally assembled by her late mother, Mrs. Sparks McKay, Sr., sister of Tom Connally. Encouragement and help have also come from Mrs. Lucile S. Connally, Washington, D. C., widow of the Senator, who opened the doors to the Senator's military records, and from Judge Ben C. Connally, Houston, only child of the Senator.

A number of public officials have meticulously answered inquiries--some in person and some by correspondence--and assisted in locating materials in various county archives. They include Margaret W. Denard, County Clerk of Falls County, Marlin; Jean Spence, Deputy County Clerk of McLennan County, Waco; Dick Cervenka, County Clerk of Williamson County, Georgetown; and Al Morales, Chief Deputy County Clerk of El Paso County, El Paso.

A number of friends and colleagues have assisted me and encouraged me in ways large and small, professional and personal, and their interest in my undertaking is greatly appreciated. They include Paul D. Casdorff, David D. Webb, Raymond E. White, and Allen H. Chessher, as well as an almost endless list of fellow-students. To all of them I say, "Thank you."

My mother, Mrs. Sammie M. Smyrl, and my late father, Eddie Stevens Smyrl, gave me unending encouragement, as have my parents-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. W. F. McWilliams. But more than any other person I am thankful for the assistance, encouragement, and love that have come from my wife, Carolyn. And to my four-year-old, Vivian, who works on her own dissertation while her friends play dolls, I apologize for even teaching her the meaning of the word.

The reading copies were laboriously typed by my wife, Carolyn, and the final copy was prepared by Mrs. Shirley Downey. I thank them both.

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TOM CONNALLY AND THE NEW DEAL

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF A SENATOR

When Tom Connally entered the United States Senate in 1929, he was fifty-one years old. A rich and varied background had prepared him well for the job that lay ahead. The product of an east central Texas farm, he had firsthand knowledge of the problems of agriculture. In college he studied law and, in time, became an accomplished prosecutor and defender. Although he always enjoyed at least moderate prosperity,¹ he developed a sympathetic awareness of the less fortunate. To a large extent, these were the forces that were to shape his public career.

Thomas Terry Connally, known all his life simply as Tom Connally, was the son of Jones and Mary Ellen Terry

¹Connally's father was described as a "prosperous" farmer. By the time Connally entered Congress in 1917, he was reportedly worth \$100,000. G. W. Glass to Any Bank or Banker, Washington, D. C., March 23, 1917, Tom Connally Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. (hereinafter cited as TCP), con. 2; Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally (New York, 1954), 8.

Connally. His father was born in Walker County, Georgia, September 25, 1825,² and was reared in northern Georgia.³ In the early 1850's, the elder Connally married Ann Hunter. After the birth of two sons,⁴ in 1859 the family migrated to Brazos County, Texas. His first years in Texas were tragic. After incurring heavy indebtedness to buy a farm, he volunteered for service in the Confederate army at the outbreak of the Civil War. While he was fighting with the Twenty-first Texas Cavalry somewhere in Arkansas, he learned of the sudden death of his wife and two children, all of whom had caught "a fever"--perhaps malaria or typhoid. Returning to Texas after the war, he tried in vain to cultivate his farm alone. Dejected, he returned to Georgia to visit friends and relatives, where he married his second wife, the mother of Tom Connally.⁵

Mary Ellen Terry Connally, born August 8, 1844, was also reared in northern Georgia. She married Jones Connally's younger brother, Nathaniel, December 15, 1861, but he was killed at the battle of Chancellorsville. A daughter, Eddie,

²Tom Connally, Information for the National Cyclopedia of American Biography, TCP, con. 3.

³Clipping from Marlin Daily Democrat, December 13, 1930, TCP, con. 594.

⁴Andrew L. Connally and James B. Connally. Memoranda on Connally family history, private collection of Mrs. Frances McKay Andrews, Tyler, Texas (hereinafter cited as Andrews Mss.).

⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 6.

was born of this marriage.⁶ While Jones Connally was in Georgia to visit, he called upon the family of his brother's widow. Impressed with her optimism in the midst of ruin, Jones married the twenty-three-year-old widow and returned to Texas with his bride and her daughter.⁷

Back in Texas with his new wife, Connally paid for the farm after only one year. Cotton sold for twenty cents a pound, or about \$100 a bale. In 1871, he moved his growing family to a McLennan County farm near the little town of Hewitt, about seven miles southwest of Waco. There Tom Connally was born August 19, 1877, the fourth child and only son to survive.⁸

Jones Connally continued to prosper in McLennan County, raising mainly wheat, but some cotton and corn. As he could, he bought adjoining properties until his farm contained 340 acres. Then he purchased an additional 900 acres in Falls County, near Eddy, Texas,⁹ and moved his family

⁶Mrs. Meredith Kendrick (1880-1925).

⁷Andrews Mss.; clipping from Fort Worth Press, March 19, 1932, TCP, con. 595; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 7.

⁸Other children were Arizona (Mrs. L. M. Clements), 1868-1948; Amanda Ophelia (Mew Charles N. Smith), 1872-1946; Travis Jones, 1874-1878; Bertha May (Mrs. Floy Moore), 1879-1963; Ola Estelle (Mrs. J. Rufus Laughlin), 1882-1958; Ella Jennell, 1882-1884; Rose Dovina (Mrs. William Hiram Staton), 1884-1946; Mary Lila (Mrs. Daniel Sparks McKay), 1886-1967; See Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 7-8; clipping from Marlin Daily Democrat, December 13, 1930, TCP, con. 3; Andrews Mss.

⁹Eddy is in McLennan County near the McLennan-Falls County line, but the 900-acre tract lay in Falls County.

there in 1882.¹⁰ Tom grew up on this farm, and his parents lived there for the remainder of their lives.¹¹

It was a pleasant home, and Connally later recalled:

The house had four tall columns in front, a chimney on either end of the house, two porches on the first floor, a second-floor front porch and an interior arrangement of front-to-rear hallways with rooms off the halls. For years it was the finest structure in the neighborhood, despite the fact that it lacked a bedroom for me. I slept in the upstairs hall.¹²

Still standing in 1968, although unoccupied after the death of Mrs. Bertha Connally Moore in 1963, the stately old home is a dominant structure at Eddy and is plainly visible on the eastern horizon from Interstate Highway 35.¹³

Cotton and corn became the principal crops on the Connally farm. Tom spent long hours hauling water on a mule-drawn sled for their cattle during periods of drought.¹⁴

¹⁰That same year the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad was extended through Eddy, which probably explains why Jones Connally bought the Falls County property and moved his family. Walter Prescott Webb (editor-in-chief), The Handbook of Texas (Austin, 1952), II, 217.

¹¹Jones Connally retired from farming in 1890. He died January 9, 1903. Mary Ellen Terry Connally died March 19, 1932. See Connally, Information . . ., TCP, con. 3; clipping from Fort Worth Press, March 19, 1932, TCP, con. 595; clipping from Marlin Daily Democrat, December 13, 1930, TCP, con. 3; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 8-10.

¹²Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 10-11.

¹³It was made a "Medallion Home," denoting its historical interest, in 1963. Marlin Daily Democrat, April 30, 1963.

¹⁴Clipping from Marlin Daily Democrat, TCP, con. 3.

But the family had time for interests outside the farm.

Jones Connally, a Democrat, took a lively interest in politics. His pet project was raising local money to supplement State funds for secondary education. The Connally children attended school in Eddy, which because of the elder Connally's efforts, was open eight months of the year instead of four.¹⁵

Tom's mother actively supported prohibition and woman suffrage. Her special interest was the Baptist Church at Eddy, which she attended regularly. She donated most of the money for its construction. She could not persuade her husband to join the church, although he studied the Bible carefully and could "argue well about the need of immersion."¹⁶ Tom was raised in the Baptist church, but in later life he affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church.¹⁷

The value of education had been well instilled in Tom's mind early in life. During the 1884 presidential campaign, the elder Connally supported Cleveland and wore a "Cleveland hat." At the end of the campaign, the boy's father confided in him, "If I had an education, I would like to be in Congress."¹⁸ Nevertheless, Tom announced on one occasion his intention to quit school and go to work. His parents

¹⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 15-16.

¹⁶Ibid., 5; clipping from Marlin Daily Democrat, TCP, con. 3.

¹⁷Connally, Information . . . , TCP, con. 3.

¹⁸Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 4.

handled the situation well by permitting him to take a job as a farm hand on a neighboring farm at a dollar a day. It was not long before Tom pleaded with his father, "I'm ready for more school."¹⁹

Tom attended the one-room public school at Eddy and studied a curriculum which partially prepared him for college. Perhaps the most significant development in his secondary education came when a new principal, a Mr. Cochran, introduced the practice of inviting parents to attend weekly recitals, debates, and contests. Tom not only excelled in mental arithmetic, but also experienced his first political debate.²⁰

At the age of thirteen, Tom completed the Eddy school. Already his half-sister had attended Baylor University in nearby Waco, but the elder Connallys wondered if such a young boy as Tom might need further education before entering the university. After considering several schools in Waco, they finally conferred with Baylor officials and agreed to place Tom in the preparatory department. The officials labeled him "woefully deficient in Latin, chemistry and physics," saying that he had learned his "own kind of Latin" at Eddy. But after six months of hard work, and while he was still but fourteen years old, Connally entered Baylor as a regular freshman.²¹

¹⁹Ibid., 16.

²⁰Ibid., 17.

²¹Ibid., 17-19.

The course of study at Baylor was largely a standard classical curriculum. It included such subjects as Greek, Latin, elocution, composition, and mythology, as well as surveying, geology, zoology, botany, astronomy, and moral science. Connally studied hard to justify the expense to his father, and his record reflects his efforts. He achieved uniformly high grades.²²

Besides his regular studies, Connally enjoyed the monthly "soirees" with the coeds and entertained thoughts of becoming a journalist. He worked on the campus magazine Literary, serving as editor-in-chief during his senior year. He held a similar post on Volume I of the Baylor Annual,²³ which he helped to establish. He also worked hard at military science. "Sometimes," he admitted, "I pictured myself as a future general." By his senior year, he was the first lieutenant, third-ranking cadet officer in the Baylor corps.²⁴

Of his outside interests, however, he took the greatest pride in the Erisophian Society, one of two debating groups at Baylor. It was customary for the two groups to hold an intramural debate to determine which of them would represent Baylor in state-wide competition. In 1896, during

²²Ibid., 21; Transcript of T. T. Connally, 1892-1896, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

²³The Annual became the Round-Up.

²⁴Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 21-22; Enid Eastland, "The Alumni: Rounding Up the 'Round-Up' Editors," The Baylor Monthly (April, 1928), 8.

his senior year, the faculty decided, without holding the campus debate, to send the other society and let the Erisophians go in 1897. Such an arrangement seemed unfair to Connally who "wanted the better team to go."²⁵

To protest the faculty decision, Connally arose one day at the conclusion of chapel and began to register his complaint to Baylor's President Rufus C. Burleson. Pandemonium broke loose as everyone joined in the argument. Connally shortly found himself seated in Burleson's office, fully expecting to be expelled. Instead he won a weak compromise as to which team would represent the university in the state debating contest. Neither would. But he felt he had won a total victory in justifying his behavior when he was permitted to remain in school.²⁶

At eighteen, Connally was graduated from Baylor, the youngest boy in his class. He received the degrees of bachelor of arts and bachelor of oratory, and a diploma in military science. For the moment, he felt prepared to face the world.²⁷

His experience as editor of the Annual and Literary at Baylor enabled Connally to secure his first job as a reporter on the Waco Daily Telephone at \$10.50 a week. The

²⁵Ibid., 23.

²⁶Ibid., 20, 23.

²⁷Ibid., 25-26; Transcript of T. T. Connally, 1892-1896, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

job lasted but three weeks, and his brief career as a journalist ended. During those three weeks, however, Connally experienced the excitement of the 1896 Democratic National Convention as it was reported by telegraph to the Daily Telephone. Forced into the drudgery of helping out on the family farm after his job in Waco failed, Connally determined to make politics his profession. With the blessings and support of his parents, whose interest in political affairs was never-ending, he prepared to enter law school at The University of Texas as a first step toward a career in politics.²⁸

Studies were Connally's main concern while in law school, but he noticed the freer atmosphere of the State-supported university at Austin as compared to the Baptist institution at Waco. His roommate²⁹ was a star baseball player and a favorite of the girls. Connally, however, "was as far from being a lady's man as Amarillo is from Brownsville." When he was not in class he was likely studying in the Texas Supreme Court Library or participating in the Athenaeum Society, a University of Texas debating group. Contrary to precedent, he was chosen to represent the Athenaeum Society at the 1897 commencement although he was not a member of the graduating class.³⁰

²⁸Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 26-27; Connally, typescript of speech, March 8, 1930, TCP, con. 552.

²⁹Charles Batsell of Sherman, Texas.

³⁰Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 28-29.

All of his activities were not so commendable, at least in the eyes of the school officials. Noting that March 2, Texas Independence Day, was not celebrated on the campus of the University as it was elsewhere in the State, Connally began promoting a celebration with his fellow students. The reason for the oversight on the part of the school, he decided, was that the president, Dr. George T. Winston, was from North Carolina. Winston made a good scapegoat in Connally's eyes. "My poor opinion of plump Dr. Winston," he admitted, "was reinforced by the fact that a short while before, he had objected to an editorial I had written for the Alcalde, the weekly paper, and had called me to his office where he had given me heck."³¹

When a student delegation from the law school approached President Winston with the idea, he turned them down. "Now boys," Connally quoted him as saying, "we have the Fourth of July for the whole United States. That includes Texas and the other forty-four states. That's enough celebrating for any of us."³²

The students³³ were not satisfied. They "borrowed" a cannon from the Capitol grounds, dragged it to the campus,

³¹Ibid., 30-31.

³²Ibid., 32.

³³Besides the future Senator Connally, the students included Morris Sheppard, U. S. Senator, 1913-1941; Pat Neff, Governor, 1921-1925, and President of Baylor University, 1932-1947; and J. W. McClendon, a future judge.

and at noon March 2, 1897, began firing the cannon and making patriotic speeches about Texas' independence. Connally not only manned the cannon but also provided one of the "loudest and most enthusiastic" speeches of the day. At last President Winston "surrendered" and proclaimed an official half-day holiday from class, a tradition still in practice.³⁴

With only two months remaining in his two-year law course, Connally's desire for adventure as a soldier in the Spanish-American War interrupted his studies. He first attempted to join one of the cavalry regiments being formed at Camp Mabry near Austin. He was discouraged by the general lack of organization. He also declined an invitation from his old Baylor military instructor, B. B. Buck, now a major, to join his Second Texas Infantry Regiment being formed at Camp Mabry. Instead, he was more attracted by a regiment of cavalry being formed in San Antonio under Colonel Leonard Wood and Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt. In the company of Carl Lovelace, a former Baylor classmate, Connally went to San Antonio.³⁵

For over a week Connally and Lovelace sought an interview with Wood and Roosevelt. Sent away once by Wood but

³⁴Clipping from The University of Texas Daily Texan, March 2, 1950, TCP, con. 117; Walter E. Long, "B Hall of Texas," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, LXII (April, 1959), 420; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 30-32.

³⁵Clipping from The Service News, XIX (June 26, 1931), TCP, con. 595; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 33-34.

successful at last in seeing Roosevelt, both applicants were accepted subject to passing physical examinations. Lovelace passed the final test, but Connally failed. "I'm sorry," the doctor told him, "but you're too light for your height." All protests were in vain.³⁶

On \$2.20 borrowed from Lovelace, Connally rode the train back to Austin. There he found a more sympathetic medical examiner and enlisted as a private in the Second Texas Infantry. Major Buck named him Sergeant Major³⁷ of the regiment almost immediately. Soon they were on their way to Mobile, Alabama, where they were mustered into service May 31, 1898.³⁸

Connally did not inform his family of his decision to leave school and volunteer for service in the Spanish-American War. But at last he wrote them of his action:

Don't cry and weep about me for there is no use and it will do no good. All of you are very dear to me and I have to go. But remember I am in the army of my country fighting for what is right and right will surely win. When his country called, my father went out as a soldier and I am glad to have an opportunity of following his

³⁶Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 35.

³⁷Sergeant Major was the highest non-commissioned rank at that time.

³⁸In his autobiography, Connally states that he left for Alabama May 19, 1898. According to records in the National Archives, that was the date he was enrolled in Austin. He remained there some time before departing for Alabama. Ibid., 35-36; clipping from The Service News, XIX (June 26, 1931), TCP, con. 595; Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

example. I will be back some day to see you all again. Love to all and a fond farewell.³⁹

As he passed through Eddy on the train, he tossed his civilian belongings off to his family and waved good-by.⁴⁰

"Keen to get across to Cuba and wallop those Spaniards," Connally and the Second Texas Infantry trained near Mobile into July and then proceeded to Miami, Florida. There they fought their biggest battle of the war--against mosquitoes and typhoid fever. After nearly a month, the regiment moved to Jacksonville, and there Connally was hospitalized with yellow jaundice.⁴¹ Connally's regiment, which was still in Florida when the war in Cuba ended, voted not to join the army of occupation, but rather to return home.⁴² They were disbanded in Dallas, Texas, November 9, 1898.⁴³

While Connally prepared to fight in Cuba, officials at The University of Texas decided that he had sufficient credits in law school to earn a degree, which was awarded in absentia.⁴⁴ This automatically licensed Connally to practice in Texas under the laws of the day. After resting

³⁹Quoted in Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 36.

⁴⁰Interview with Mrs. Frances McKay Andrews, niece of Tom Connally, June 3, 1967.

⁴¹Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 36-38.

⁴²Ibid., 38.

⁴³Ibid., 38, gives the date as November 7, 1898. According to military records in the National Archives, the date was November 9, 1898. Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁴University of Texas Ex-Student Directory (Graduates and Non-Graduates), 1883-1925 (Austin, n. d.), 70.

through the Christmas season at the family farm, Connally and his father drove to Waco January 2, 1899, to start the young lawyer in his profession.

The elder Connally used his influence with the law partners William Sleeper and E. A. Jones to secure his son a desk in their office. In return, Tom ran errands for the firm. It was a small beginning, but it looked good to young Connally at the time. There was no salary, though a few unimportant matters were occasionally handed over to the inexperienced young lawyer. Before long, however, he grew restive in this position and decided to leave Waco.⁴⁵

In May, 1899, he moved to Marlin, the county seat of Falls County. Jones Connally had earlier suggested the smaller town as a better place for Tom to begin. Now he was ready to admit that his father might be right. At first he was housed in the office of another family friend, but soon he obtained an office of his own. Next, instead of "acting like a successful lawyer [sitting] in his office [watching] business come pouring through his doors," Connally set out to make himself known in the little town which already boasted several lawyers. Most of his time, he later admitted, he spent only "threatening to practice law."⁴⁶ He

⁴⁵ Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 40-42; Connally, Information . . . , TCP, con. 3.

⁴⁶ Eastland, "The Alumni: Rounding Up the 'Round-Up' Editors," 8.

joined several lodges, attended public gatherings, and made speeches whenever possible. Slowly his practice began to grow.⁴⁷

One time a colored preacher came to me [wrote Connally] with a deed for some land and asked me to check his title. When he returned a few days later, I had completed the job and told him that his title was clear.

"Mr. Connally," he said, "what do I owe you?"

"You're a minister of the Gospel," I told him, "and I as a lawyer make no charges to a minister of peace."

Without blinking an eye, he said enthusiastically, "Well, if that's the case, Mr. Connally, then I just want you to know that from now on, you're going to be my lawyer."⁴⁸

At first the cases were trivial, but soon Connally was appointed one of two public defenders for a Negro charged with murder. Shortly thereafter an established attorney asked his assistance in another murder case, and in both trials his clients won acquittals. The young lawyer soon acquired the needed confidence in the courtroom and the beginning of a good reputation.

Connally had looked upon his law career as a gateway to politics. "Law and politics are a good combination," his father had always told him.⁴⁹ His opportunity appeared in the late spring of 1900 when no one else was interested in running for the State Legislature as the flotorial representative

⁴⁷Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 42.

⁴⁸Ibid., 43.

⁴⁹Ibid., 46.

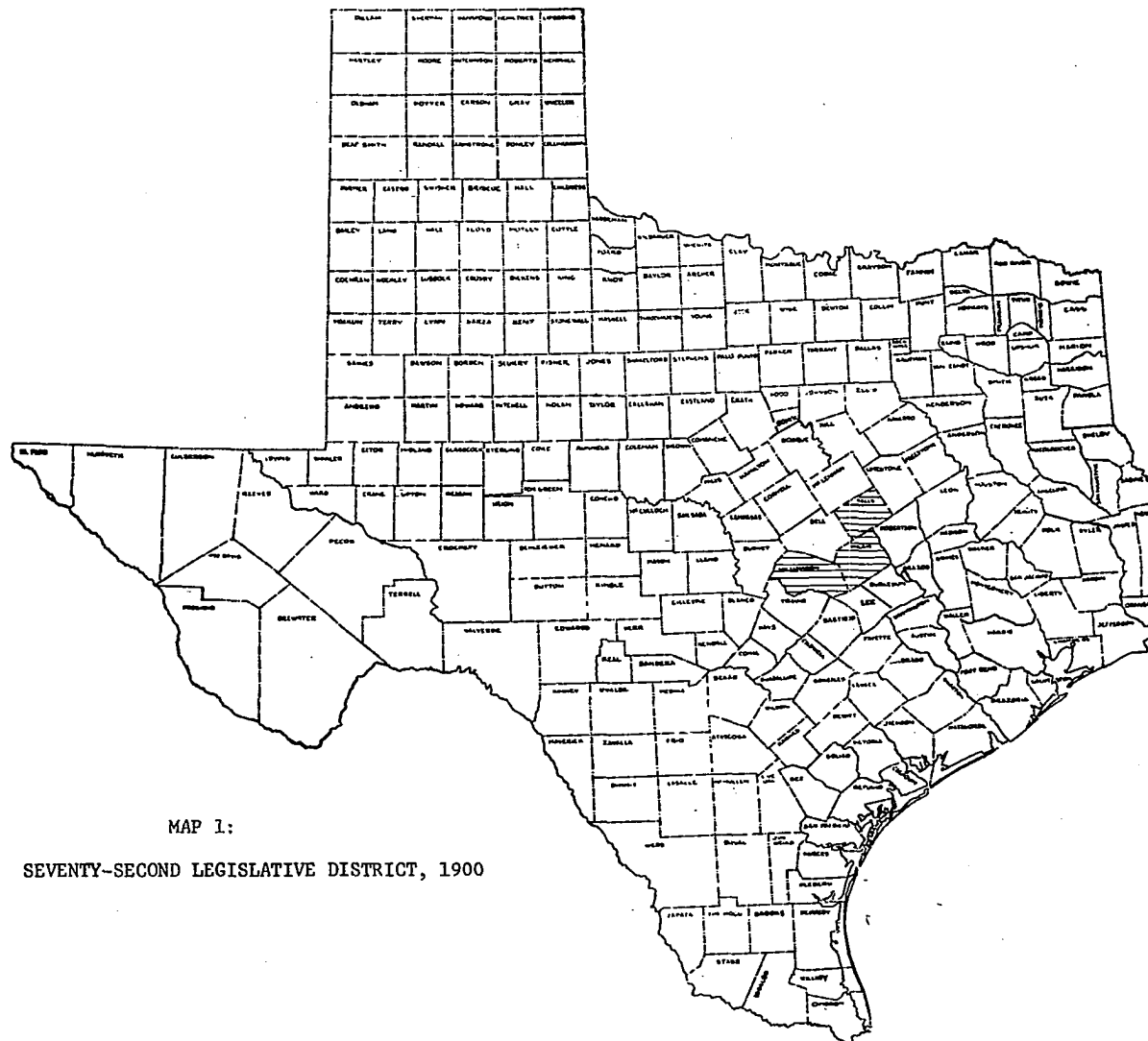
of the Seventy-second Texas District.⁵⁰ In spite of running unopposed, Connally wisely made a tour of the district in a token campaign to acquaint himself with his future constituents. After winning a sure victory in his attempt for public office at the age of twenty-three, Connally was sworn into the Texas Legislature January 8, 1901. He was assigned to the Criminal Judiciary Committee.⁵¹

In the Twenty-seventh Legislature, Connally gained a reputation as one of the "young progressives" in the tradition of James S. Hogg.⁵² Almost immediately he found himself facing one of the State's most powerful political figures, Congressman Joseph W. Bailey. During the administration of President William McKinley, Bailey rose to the position of minority leader in the House of Representatives, and in 1901 he was a candidate before the legislature for United States Senator.

⁵⁰In 1900 this district included the central Texas counties of Falls, Milam, and Williamson and was entitled to four representatives. One was elected from each of the three counties, and the flatorial (or floater) representative ran at large. The district was not very compact. (See Map 1, p. 17.) This partially explains the lack of potential candidates.

⁵¹Election Records, 13, Falls County Courthouse, Marlin, Texas; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 46-47.

⁵²James S. Hogg was Governor of Texas, 1891-1895, and remained a symbol of progressivism. Robert C. Cotner, James Stephen Hogg: A Biography (Austin, 1959), 516-517. Organized labor in the State recognized Connally's efforts in its behalf. See newspaper clipping, [1916,] containing facsimile copy of the letter, H. G. Wagner to TTC, March 16, 1908, TCP, con. 592.



MAP 1:
SEVENTY-SECOND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT, 1900

As Connally joined the legislature, charges were raised against Bailey for maintaining improper relations with the Waters-Pierce Oil Company.⁵³ Bailey called Connally into a private conference and sought his vote in support of a special committee report which not only exonerated the candidate of the charges but also attacked those persons who advanced them. Connally refused, and thus fell out of favor with Bailey, who subsequently was found innocent of the charges and elected Senator. The two were never reconciled.⁵⁴

Connally accomplished little of importance in his first term in the legislature. He secured passage of a minor road bill aiding Falls County, and on the last day of the session made his first speech--against monopolies. Perhaps Connally's most significant achievement was the establishment of a lasting political friendship with a fellow legislator, John Nance Garner of Uvalde. While the legislature was redistricting the State, Garner wanted a new Congressional district created which would include Uvalde. Connally supported the successful attempt, and Garner won election to Congress from the new district.⁵⁵

⁵³The Waters-Pierce Oil Company was a Missouri company which was secretly owned in part by the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey and which did business in Texas. The court case involving it covered the years 1897-1909, and is one of the most famous in Texas judicial history. For a brief description of it see Webb (ed.) The Handbook of Texas, II, 869.

⁵⁴Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 47-48; Sam Hanna Acheson, Joe Bailey, The Last Democrat (New York, 1932), 139-151; Rupert N. Richardson, Texas: The Lone Star State (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1958), 284-286.

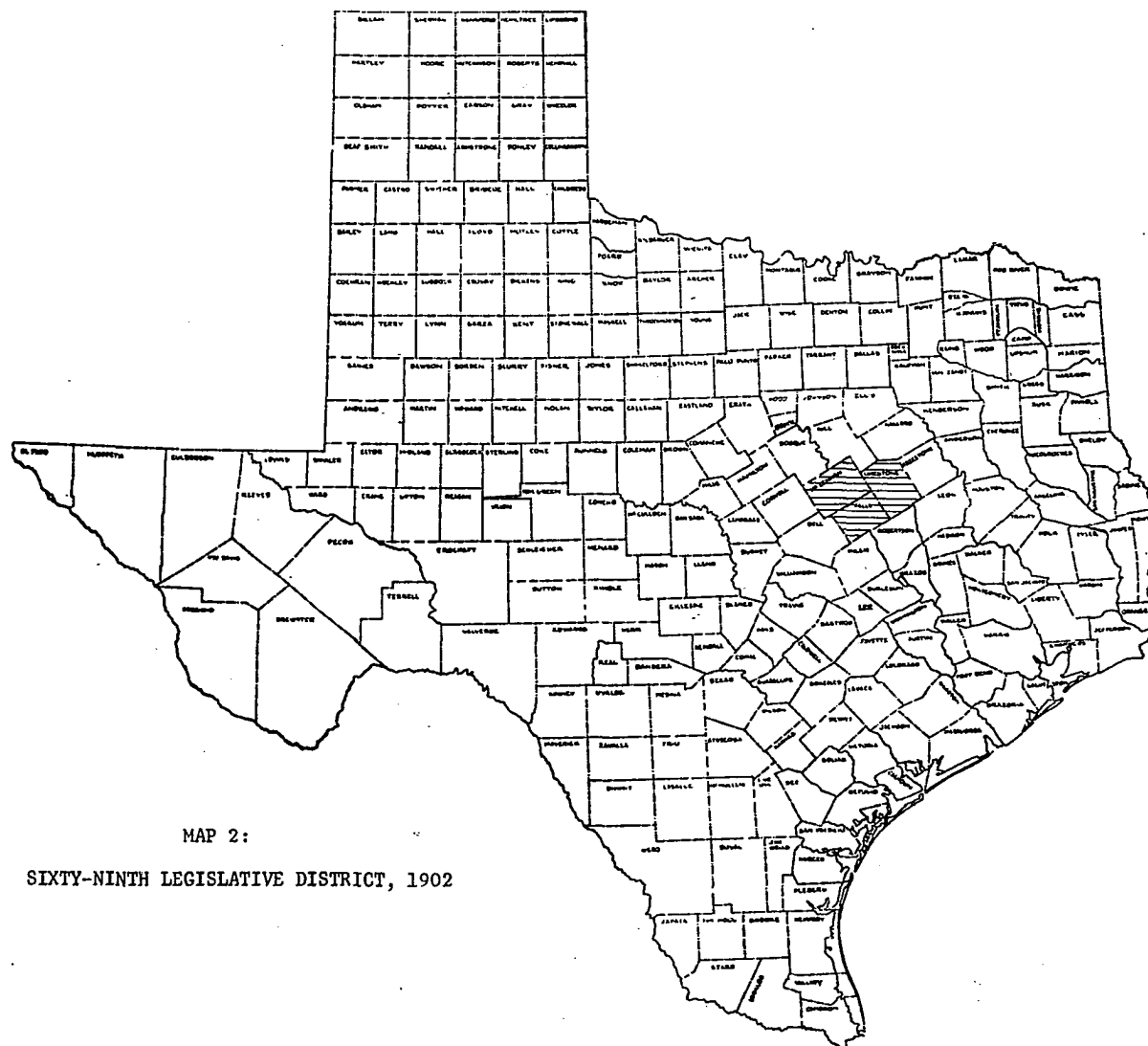
⁵⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 48-49.

In 1902, Connally sought re-election to the legislature. Because of redistricting, Falls County now lay in a district with McLennan and Limestone counties, which included populous Waco. (See Map 2, p. 20.) Only two candidates ran for the two flatorial seats allotted to the district,⁵⁶ so for the second time, Connally was assured election to office. Nevertheless, he again gave considerable effort to the campaign. If he were ever to gain a higher office, it would be imperative to have strong support from Waco and McLennan County.⁵⁷

In the Twenty-eighth Legislature, Connally made one very important contribution. He secured passage of a measure which brought labor unions and farm organizations under the terms of the Texas antitrust laws. Some members of the Legislature objected that this was unfair to both farmers and laborers. Others agreed with Connally, who usually was in sympathy with these groups, that the bill did not prohibit the right of farmers and laborers to organize. It simply required that they not engage in the restraint of trade. The purpose of the law was to satisfy recently implied objections of the United States Supreme Court to the existing Texas antitrust law, which did not cover labor and farmer organizations. Connally looked upon his proposed change as

⁵⁶ A third candidate announced but withdrew after a joint debate among the three men.

⁵⁷ Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 50-51.



MAP 2:
SIXTY-NINTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT, 1902

necessary if the State were to maintain its restrictions on business corporations operating within the State. The bill passed the House March 23 by a vote of 103 to 2. It passed the Senate March 28 by a vote of 28 to 0.⁵⁸

Once in operation, the law did not interfere with either the farmers or labor unions. It was, however, very effective as an antitrust measure. Under its terms, the State ultimately collected \$1,808,483.30 in fines and interest against the Waters-Pierce Oil Company for antitrust violations--a judgment upheld by the United States Supreme Court.⁵⁹

Although Connally was responsible for writing the bill, it carried the name Connally-Meachum Act as it passed the State legislature. The name resulted from a political deal made in the 1903 speaker's race. Connally served as campaign manager for Pat Neff, his former classmate. Thinking that the campaign would be a close one, he approached Meachum, whom Connally considered opposed to Neff. "If you line up for Pat Neff," Connally told him when the session opened, "and see what else you can do for him, I'll let you become co-sponsor of my antitrust bill." The bargain was struck; Neff was safely elected by the vote of seventy-three to

⁵⁸Texas, Legislature, House, Journal of the House of Representatives of the Regular Session of the Twenty-eighth Legislature, CCLXXX, 1903, 941-942. H. P. N. Gammel, The Laws of Texas (Austin, 1904), XII, 119-123; Dallas Morning News, March 29, 1903.

⁵⁹Waters-Pierce Oil Co. v. Texas, 212 U. S. 86 (1908); Webb (ed.)-Handbook of Texas, II, 869; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 57.

fifty-seven, and shortly thereafter the Connally-Meachum bill was introduced and passed.⁶⁰

Despite the possibility of becoming speaker of the House of Representatives, local tradition discouraged Connally from seeking a third term. Returning to private practice, Connally's income increased. After three years in Marlin, he no longer required his father's support. In 1903, he moved his office into the new bank building in the center of town, and his "practice began to amount to something."⁶¹ In addition, he succeeded in overcoming much competition and the interference of Mrs. Fannie R. Clarkson in his courtship of her daughter Louise.⁶² Mrs. Clarkson was the wealthy widow of a prominent Marlin lawyer,⁶³ and she was slow to accept Connally as qualified to be her son-in-law. He persisted and married Louise Clarkson November 16, 1904.⁶⁴

⁶⁰Connally implied in his autobiography that the Neff-Schluter vote was much closer. Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 51; Cotner, James Stephen Hogg, 517; Texas, Legislature, House, Journal of the House of Representatives of the Regular Session of the Twenty-eighth Legislature, CCLXXX, 8.

⁶¹Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 44-45.

⁶²Ibid., 52-53.

⁶³Ben B. Clarkson, 1845-1891, left a large estate, made up mainly of farm land. His widow, as independent executrix, posted \$34,000 bond--an indication of the value of the estate. Probate Records, E, 586; F, 10-11; K, 602, Falls County Courthouse, Marlin, Texas.

⁶⁴The ceremony occurred at 12:30 p.m. in the fashionable Clarkson home in north Marlin. It was performed by A. J. Weeks, "an elder in the M. E. Church South." A few close friends and relatives attended. An hour later the bride

Connally restrained his political ambition for a time and gave his attention to making a living. After a couple of years, however, he again turned to politics. This time he ran for County Attorney of Falls County against the incumbent, George Carter, who was a personal friend. The two had roomed together for a while during Connally's first year in Marlin. "When George got married," Connally recalled, "he said 'I do' while wearing my dress suit." Nevertheless, the two fought each other bitterly. Then Carter fell ill and was unable to campaign. This and the fact that Carter was seeking a third term, explains Connally's large four-to-one victory.⁶⁵

During his two terms as county attorney, Connally came into contact with all sorts of people and developed a compassion for individuals in all walks of life. Sensational murder trials brought attention to his ability as a trial lawyer, and he kept himself abreast of political developments around the State. In 1908, he was elected delegate to the National Democratic Convention from his Congressional district. But when he arrived at the State convention, he found that of all the delegates, only he and one other were not members of the Joe W. Bailey "crowd." The convention adopted a resolution that only supporters of Senator Bailey

and groom left for the St. Louis World's Fair. Marriage Records, VI, 567, Falls County Courthouse, Marlin, Texas; Marlin Ball, November 17, 1904.

⁶⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 54-55.

be sent to the national convention, eliminating Connally and his friend.⁶⁶

After four years as county attorney, during which time a son was born,⁶⁷ Connally again turned to his private law practice. Friends urged him to run for Congress against Robert L. Henry, who had served since 1897,⁶⁸ but he concluded that such a move would be wasted effort on his part. He bided his time and participated in local affairs whenever possible. In 1912, he organized local support for Woodrow Wilson and assisted in the election of a Wilson delegate to the State Democratic Convention. He also was elected to the Marlin school board and served as chairman of a commission to draft a new charter for the City of Marlin.⁶⁹ Congress was a goal, to be sure, but as yet it was only something of which to dream.

⁶⁶Ibid., 55-61.

⁶⁷Ben Clarkson Connally was born in Marlin, December 28, 1909.

⁶⁸U. S., Congress, Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961 (Washington, 1961), 1044; Webb (ed.), Handbook of Texas, I, 799.

⁶⁹Newspaper clipping [1916,] TCP, con. 592; Connally, Information . . . , TCP, con. 3.

CHAPTER II

YEARS IN THE HOUSE

In 1913, Connally journeyed to Washington as a tourist to witness the inauguration of Woodrow Wilson and the end of sixteen years of Republican rule. He "caught the excitement of the Capitol Building and tried to imagine what it would be like to sit in the House with the political greats."¹ His opportunity to realize that dream came in 1915 when Congressman Robert L. Henry announced his intended retirement at the end of the current session.

Connally announced for the seat January 15, 1916. Within the next few weeks he received the endorsement of the Falls County Bar Association and numerous area newspapers.² For a time he feared that his friend Pat Neff, now the popular County Attorney of McLennan County, might also join the race. His opposition was already formidable

¹Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally (New York, 1954), 65.

²Clippings from Marlin Daily Democrat, February 16, 1916; Lott Tribune, January 14, 1916; January 26, 1916; Moody Courier, April 7, 1916; Chilton Homestead, March 13, [1916,] TCP, con. 592.

enough. It included District Judge Tom L. McCullough of Waco and District Judge John D. Robinson³ of Belton.

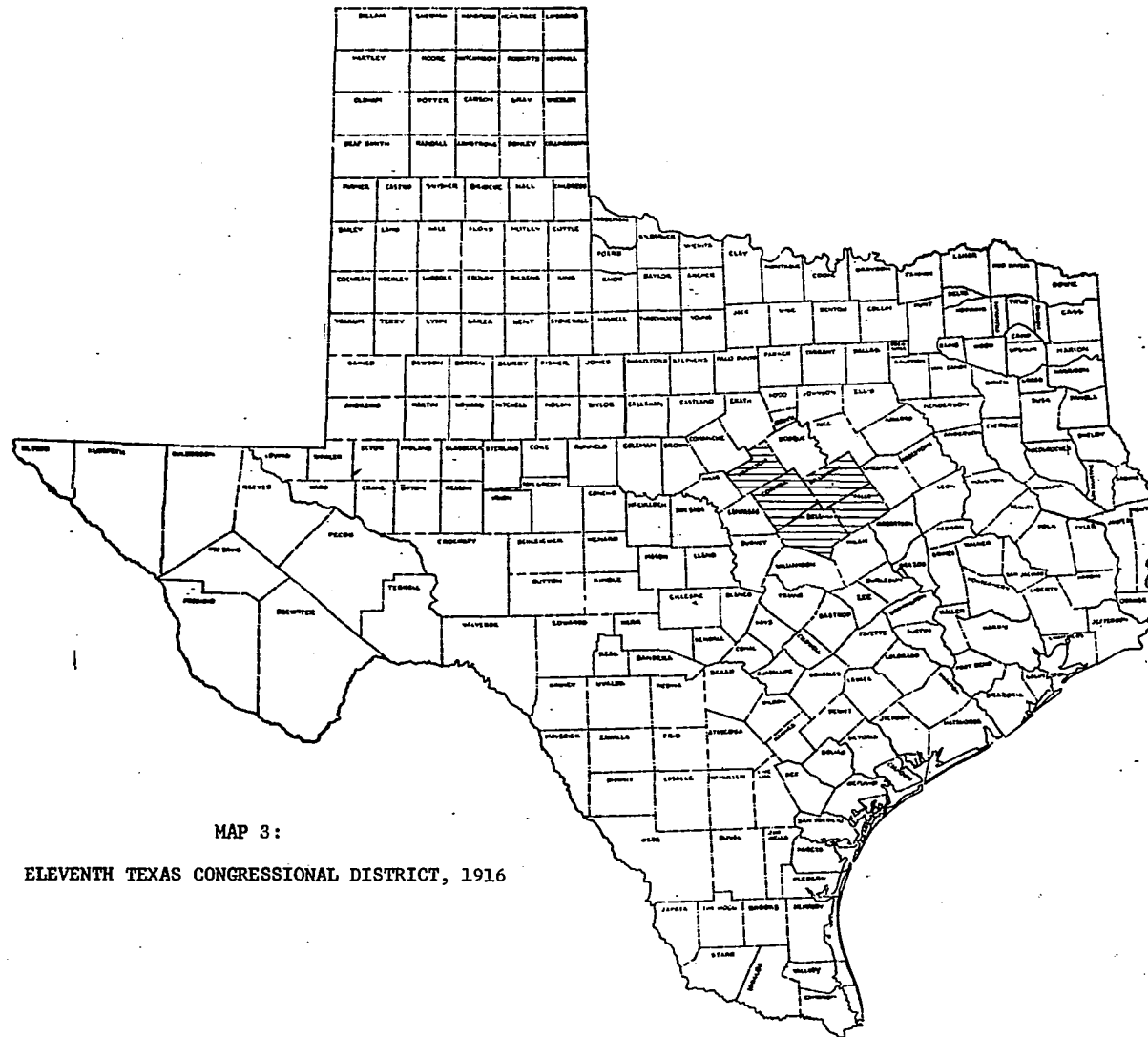
Connally was definitely underdog. Texas' Eleventh Congressional District included McLennan, Falls, Bell, Coryell and Hamilton counties. (See Map 3, p. 27.) Waco and Temple were the largest urban centers and were in the populous counties of McLennan and Bell, which were also the home counties of McCullough and Robinson. The two judges were better known in the district as a whole. And in addition, Connally was opposed by both Governor James E. Ferguson, who resided in Bell County, and by outgoing Congressman Henry of McLennan County.⁴

Connally began his campaign April 14, 1916, at his old home town, Eddy, which was friendly territory. A big turnout, including friends from miles around, appeared for "Connally Day" and got him off to a good start.⁵ He bought a new Buick roadster with "the brightest red wheels you ever saw and a shiny black body And everywhere I'd stop,

³It was John D. Robinson whom Connally beat out as representative from the Athenaeum Society to speak at the 1897 commencement at The University of Texas. Connally had nominated Robinson for the honor, but the group was so impressed with Connally's nominating speech that he was chosen instead. Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 29.

⁴Ibid., 65-67.

⁵Clipping from Waco Morning News, [April 15, 1916], TCP, con. 592.



MAP 3:
ELEVENTH TEXAS CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, 1916

[wrote Connally,] a crowd poured into the street to examine my Buick."⁶

Connally campaigned on a twenty-five-point platform. He advocated a child-labor law, government-owned and -operated arsenals, higher tax rates for the wealthy, a low tariff, independence for the Philippines, an international court, a revision in labor legislation which would favor the worker, and national preparedness.⁷ Although the principal economic activity of the Congressional district was agriculture, Connally made a special appeal to organized labor in the area, pointing to his anti-big business record in the Texas legislature--a position which was also conveniently attractive to farmers.⁸ For the most part, however, the candidates differed little on the basic national issues.⁹

Robinson was generally considered the strongest candidate since Ferguson and Henry supported him and he was the only "wet" candidate in what was considered a "wet" region.¹⁰

⁶Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 69-70.

⁷Clipping from Gatesville Messenger, March 31, 1916, TCP, con. 592; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 68.

⁸Newspaper clipping, [1916,] containing facsimile copy of a letter, H. G. Wagner to TTC, March 16, 1908, TCP, con. 592.

⁹Clipping from McGregor Mirror, February 11, 1916, TCP, con. 592.

¹⁰McCullough was the only avowed "dry" candidate, while Connally maintained the middle position of personally favoring prohibition but supporting the principle of local option. In 1917, however, he voted for the XVIIIth Amendment in the House of Representatives. U.S., Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 2d Sess., 1917, LVI, Pt. 1, 469.

With this in mind, it was Connally's idea to concentrate mainly against McCullough so as to get as much "dry" and anti-Robinson vote as possible.¹¹ In the end, his strategy proved effective. Not only was Connally elected, but also the prohibition question was submitted to the people.

"Submission," as the issue was popularly called, passed in the five counties of the Eleventh District by a vote of 10,953 to 9,385.¹² This indicated that the "wet" vote in that area was not so strong as predicted and Connally's middle-of-the-road stand in favor of local option attracted votes. Connally safely led both his opponents, as the following late returns show:¹³

Candidate	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Tom Connally	9064	39.7
John D. Robinson	7386	32.4
Tom L. McCullough	<u>6362</u>	<u>27.9</u>
Totals	22,812	100.0

¹¹Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 67-75.

¹²Dallas Daily Times Herald, July 30, 1916.

¹³Official returns are not available. Only a certification of nomination was filed with the Secretary of State rather than the exact vote of each of the candidates. Thus the newspaper tabulations are the best source available. These figures were published by some Texas newspapers eight days after the election, and are fairly complete. See Dallas Morning News, July 30, 1916; Dallas Daily Times Herald, July 30, 1916.

As the nominee of the Democratic Party, Connally faced only token opposition in the general election the following November. The Republican candidate, John L. Vaughn, was from Mart, in eastern McLennan County;¹⁴ Thomas M. De Loach of Waco ran as a Socialist.¹⁵ Connally easily defeated both men, as the following chart indicates, and thus became the first Representative elected to Congress from Falls County.¹⁶

Candidate	Party	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Tom Connally	Democratic	14,695	87.7
John L. Vaughn	Republican	1,443	8.6
Thomas M. De Loach	Socialist	<u>620</u>	<u>3.7</u>
Totals		16,758	100.0

The European war held the attention of the country as Connally entered Congress in 1917. Significantly, he drew an assignment on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Congressman John Nance Garner, in charge of committee assignments for Texas members, noted that it was a minor committee,

¹⁴Paul Casdorff, A History of the Republican Party in Texas, 1865-1965 (Austin, 1965), 256.

¹⁵Polk's Morrison & Fourny Waco City Directory (Waco, 1916), 206; Waco Semi-Weekly Tribune, November 1, 1916.

¹⁶1916 Election Register, Office of the Secretary of State, Austin, Texas (mimeographed copy); clipping from Lott Tribune, January 14, 1916, TCP, con. 592.

but he encouraged the new Congressman to accept it since the special session was called to deal with the German crisis.¹⁷

Connally's first day in Congress was a memorable one by any standard. The day was gloomy, excitement all through the capital was great, and Connally was understandably tense. The first order of business was the election of Speaker Champ Clark, which due to the smallness of the Democratic plurality, was in question until the votes were cast.¹⁸ Connally voted with the majority.¹⁹

Later that night President Wilson addressed a joint session of Congress to request a declaration of war. Then at ten o'clock, Connally attended his first committee meeting when the House Foreign Affairs Committee considered the joint resolution for war. Finally, April 4, the committee reported the resolution with only one dissenting vote. Although he gave serious consideration to the grave issue, he never faltered in his support of the resolution.²⁰ He again voted

¹⁷ Although it lies outside the scope of this study, it should be noted here that Connally's principal work in the Congress was as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. This assignment, then, was the beginning of his work in foreign affairs. Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 78.

¹⁸ Ibid., 79; Seward W. Livermore, Politics Is Ad-journed: Woodrow Wilson and the War Congress, 1916-1918 (Middletown, Conn., 1966), 13-14.

¹⁹ U. S., Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 1st Sess., 1917, LV, Pt. 1, 107.

²⁰ Dorsey Shackleford of Missouri was the dissenter on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. The resolution passed the House April 6 by a vote of 373 to 50, Connally voting "aye." Ibid., 412; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 78-81.

with the majority when the House endorsed the declaration of war.

It was an awesome beginning for the freshman Congressman. After a month in Washington, he found time to write home to his aging mother.²¹

Washington, May 2, 1917

Dear Mother:--

I'm ashamed that I've not written you before but since I've been here there have been so many things to keep me busy and so much has had to be done that I have had very little time [to] do anything. Being a new member, I felt that I should give all the time I could to learning the way of things here and I think I have succeeded fairly well so far.

Fortunately I secured good committee assignments for a new member and have made many new friends and acquaintances. We are pleasantly located and are keeping house in an apartment. Louise does her own work and teaches Ben his lessons at home. We are all anxious to get home again to see all of you but we do not know when we shall get away. Some think by the first of June but I am fearful that we shall not be able to get away until the middle of June or perhaps later.

The war presents many momentous questions. The spending of billions of dollars and the raising of taxes to a point much higher than ever in the recent past. The consequences are terrible to contemplate when we think of the blood that must be shed, the terrible toll of life and the hardships and privations that must be endured.

I feel that my duty requires that I stay at my post. If circumstances were not such I think I should try to render the country some service in assisting in the war. It all brings back vividly the days of 1898 when we were at war with Spain.

Louise has heard from Bertha and I am so glad that all of you are well and getting along nicely. The rains which have fallen since we left home

²¹ Andrews Mss.

doutless have given much encouragement in the hope for good crops. Prices will be good in all farm products and with a good yield Texas will prosper notwithstanding the war.

Dear Mother forgive me for my failure to write as often as I should. I'm thinking of you just the same and I am grateful to you always for making it possible for me to realize some of my ambitions. You have always been so good to me and have always inspired me to endeavor to accomplish something in the world.

With love to all of [you] and especially to you in which Louise and Ben join.

Affectionately,

Tom.

After the declaration of war, Wilson's conscription request was critically debated. The issue was nonpartisan, with Speaker Clark leading the opposition,²² and Julius Kahn, Republican of California, sponsoring the administration-endorsed bill. Most Southern members favored the volunteer method of raising an army,²³ but Connally showed both independence of sectional pressure and loyalty to the Wilson administration by voting for conscription.²⁴

Connally accomplished little of importance in those early years. For instance, he secured for his district one of the army training camps, Camp MacArthur, near Waco.²⁵

²²The opposition included such other prominent Democrats as Majority Leader Claude Kitchin of North Carolina and S. H. Dent of Alabama, chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee.

²³Livermore, Politics Is Adjourned, 16-18.

²⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 1st Sess., 1917, LV, Pt. 2, 1557; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 89.

²⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 87.

But he refrained from engaging in debate on the floor of the House for quite a while. He finally took that step during the controversy over Theodore Roosevelt's request to raise a volunteer unit similar to the old Rough Riders. In his speech of May 12, Connally opposed "a special privilege to appease the desire of one man to lead the 'first' force to France." He said that the recently passed conscription act would be seriously weakened by approving Roosevelt's request. Instead of asking for privileges, he told the House, Roosevelt ought to say, "Here am I--not as a major general, but here am I as a private if need be--here am I; send me wherever thou needest me; thy will and not mine be done." As the applause broke out, Connally sat down with a dry tongue.²⁶

More than a year passed before he again addressed the House. Then, September 11, 1918, he delivered what should properly be considered his maiden speech. In it he advocated the passage of the 1918 revenue bill, which required those who were profiting from the war to pay a larger share of its cost. The Texas representative developed a theme that he would repeat many times during his Congressional career--the need for taxing excess and war profits. "If the young manhood of the land gladly rushes to arms in the Nation's hour of need, ready to make any sacrifice," Connally declared, "surely there should be no grumbling when extravagant profits

²⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 1st Sess., 1917, LV, Pt. 3, 2213-2214; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 89.

are drafted for the service of the country."²⁷ The speech was a lengthy discourse on American and German military history, including a summary of the events leading to the war. Even though the end of the war was in sight, he argued, the American people should not decrease their support of the war effort. Burying his appeal under an excess of classical references, this speech more closely resembled his college debates than the biting and witty orations for which he was later known. But he held the attention of the House for almost thirty minutes and received noticeable applause at least eight times.²⁸

The next day, Connally received his commission as an army captain and adjutant of the Twenty-second Infantry Brigade, Eleventh Division, stationed at Camp Meade, Maryland. He was the first Democratic member of Congress to volunteer for the army.²⁹ In a statement to the press, he said:

Having had military experience and the army being in need of men with such experience, I have decided to join the army even though members of congress are exempt under the law. All of the great war measures have been passed by congress and the work of the present session is about concluded. The session which convenes in December will only be in session a short time and will be devoted largely to routine matters. The regular session of the next

²⁷U. S., Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 2d Sess., 1918, LVI, Pt. 10, 10212.

²⁸Ibid., 10212-10216.

²⁹Clipping from [Washington?] Star, September 18, 1918, TCP, con. 592. Four Republicans had already volunteered.

congress does not convene until December, 1919, and all of us hope the war will be ended by that time

Since I draw no salary as a member of congress until my return from the army I have thought my constituencies would be willing for me to have a leave of absence. Both of the Texas senators and my colleagues in the house from Texas have kindly consented to look after departmental business for me. On votes in the house I am paired against a republican, who is in the army.³⁰

Although this was the second war in which he had volunteered, Connally was not destined to experience combat duty. As late as October, 1918, his division was scheduled for overseas duty at any moment, but it was still at Camp Meade when the Germans surrendered.³¹

Urged by his fellow members to return to Congress, Connally quickly obtained a discharge. He did not resume his duties in the House, however, until after the passage of a resolution to restore to the rolls those members who had joined the military. Meanwhile, without any particular effort on his part, Connally was renominated in the Texas Democratic primary and re-elected to Congress in the November general elections.³²

³⁰Clipping from Waco Times-Herald, September 28, [1918,] TCP, con. 592.

³¹Actually Connally spent much of his army service seriously ill with a case of flu. There was great relief among members of his family at Eddy when news came by telephone that he had passed the crisis and was expected to survive. Personal interview with Mrs. Frances McKay Andrews, niece of TTC, June 3, 1967; clipping from West News, November 1, 1918, TCP, con. 592.

³²Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 95.

During the immediate post-war period, Connally was concerned with the peace-making efforts of Congress. As a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee he attended one lengthy session at the White House after Wilson returned in 1919 from his first European trip. Shortly thereafter Connally and a group of Congressmen made a tour of Europe on their own. He had no doubt about the usefulness of a league of nations, a belief he still held after the next war. In fact, almost anything Wilson advocated, Connally accepted as necessary. "For," Connally wrote, "I admired Woodrow Wilson more than any man alive In government and statecraft, he was probably the best advised person in the world at that time."³³ Connally played no significant role in the League debate in Congress, but he was among the regular Democrats Wilson could rely on throughout his administration. Looking back on events, however, Connally was a little more cautious in his acceptance of all that Wilson did:

At the time, I thought that Wilson had acted properly in asking the Senate to reject the Lodge reservations [to the Treaty of Versailles]. Certainly, they watered down the League of Nations. But now [1954] I believe that if he had accepted the reservations, things might have been better in the long run. At least we would have had a toe-hold. A weak League could have been strengthened in the years to come. And American participation in it might have checked the isolationism of the Roaring Twenties.³⁴

³³Ibid., 96-98.

³⁴Ibid., 102.

In the House, Connally continued to back Wilson. When the Republican-dominated Foreign Affairs Committee reported a joint resolution calling for peace with Germany, Connally led the House fight against it. He spoke at length April 8, 1920, but the resolution passed. Nevertheless, President Wilson, who was reportedly impressed by Connally's arguments, vetoed the action the following month.³⁵

When Wright Patman proposed a bonus for World War I American servicemen, Connally opposed his fellow Texan. He argued in the House that it was nothing but a cheap trick to get votes just before the 1920 elections. Many of his own constituents, he maintained, including veterans, were opposed to the measure, and he challenged the idea that veterans would benefit from the bonus as much as its supporters claimed.³⁶

In 1920, the Congressman attended his first Democratic National Convention. As a delegate, he followed the Texas leadership and supported William McAdoo for president. Only on the last ballot did the Texas delegation vote for Governor James A. Cox, the nominee of the convention. After the convention adjourned, Connally served on the formal committee to notify Cox of his nomination, and he continued his activity in the presidential campaign by making speeches in Oklahoma

³⁵Ibid., 103-104; U. S., Congressional Record, 66th Cong., 2d Sess., 1920, LIX, Pt. 5, 5352-5358; ibid., Pt. 6, 5480; ibid., Pt. 7, 7429; ibid., Pt. 8, 7809.

³⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 66th Cong., 2d Sess., 1920, LIX, Pt. 8, 7936.

and Missouri.³⁷ In the little Mississippi River town of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Connally first met Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Democratic nominee for vice president. In the light of later events, it was a memorable occasion:

F. D. R. and I were together for about one hour at Cape Girardeau [Connally recalled]. He made a short speech and then rushed off to another engagement. Since he used little of his time at Cape Girardeau, I had to fill in most of his speaking date as well as my own. On that occasion he did not strike me as an aggressive speaker. He was certainly serious and earnest and showed youthful vigor. But he told no stories during his speech and didn't try to work up a close feeling between himself and his audience. . . . Years later when F. D. R. became President, I recalled to him our Cape Girardeau speaking date, and he readily remembered it with an embarrassed grin.³⁸

After the Republican victory in 1920, Congressmen such as Connally could accomplish little. He was responsible in part, however, for an amendment to the 1921 naval appropriation bill to provide funds for the calling of an international disarmament conference. Connally's original amendment failed in the House, but subsequently the idea was sponsored by William E. Borah and restored to the bill in Senate action. Accepted by a conference committee, it finally became law and led to the calling of the Washington Conference in 1921.³⁹

³⁷Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 104-106.

³⁸Ibid., 106.

³⁹U. S., Congressional Record, 66th Cong., 3d Sess., 1921, LX, Pt. 5, 4733-4734; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 107-108.

Connally normally remained in the background as the House Foreign Affairs Committee did its work. Through that committee, however, he introduced an amendment to an appropriation bill, raising the fee for passports. Against much noisy opposition, he argued that his amendment would raise from ten to twelve million dollars a year, enough to pay the cost of the entire foreign service. His amendment was accepted in a modified form and the bill passed in February, 1921.⁴⁰

When the 1924 National Democratic Convention nominated John W. Davis, Connally was on his way to Europe with a Congressional investigating committee. Upon his return, he actively supported the national Democratic ticket. He was not especially impressed with his party's candidate when he finally saw him, but neither was he pleased with Coolidge's victory in November. Connally wrote about Coolidge: "He no more acted the part of an aggressive President than an old barn door."⁴¹

During the Coolidge years, Connally secured passage of a bill raising the age of army volunteers from eighteen to twenty-one and another creating the House Veterans

⁴⁰On the floor of the House, Connally's amendment to raise the fee from one dollar to five dollars was removed. In the Senate the idea was incorporated again and the fee was made ten dollars. The House finally accepted the Senate version. U. S., Congressional Record, 66th Cong., 3d Sess., 1921, LX, Pt. 5, 4732; ibid., Pt. 4, 4008; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 86.

⁴¹He would have preferred William G. McAdoo as the Democratic nominee. Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 109-110.

Committee. Occasionally he spoke for the Democratic minority in House debate on foreign affairs. For instance, he supported a settlement with Mexico and denounced United States interference in Nicaragua. He told the Woman's Democratic Club of Houston:

As the representative of mothers and fathers whose unwilling sons must carry on war when it is waged, I protest against such a thing [as intervention in Nicaragua]. In the name of the rights of small nations as well as of great I protest against it. In the name of fairness to the people of Nicaragua I protest against it. Above all, as an American citizen who loves his country and who glories in its traditions I protest against it, because it is wrong. . . . We are alienating the respect and confidence of Europe and stirring up the hatred and bitter passions of every people in South and Central America. . . .⁴²

In matters more closely related to his constituents, he gave his support to efforts against the various McNary-Haugen bills. Though meant as farm relief, which he strongly favored, the plan in Connally's view was nothing more than "levying a tax on everything [the farmers] sold without assuring them that they would get an increase in prices."⁴³ Moreover, he complained that although it might benefit the producers of a limited number of agricultural commodities, it would not help cotton growers.⁴⁴

⁴²Connally, speech, April 10, 1928, TCP, con. 551.

⁴³Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 111-113.

⁴⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 69th Cong., 1st Sess., 1926, LXVII, Pt. 9, 9472-9475. Connally himself owned extensive cotton lands, as did his wife and mother. TTC to W. B. Yeary, February 15, 1928, TCP, con. 122.

In addition, he felt that the proposed tax, or equalization fee as it was called, was unconstitutional.⁴⁵ He told one audience of constituents:

I was opposed to giving a Federal Farm Board of twelve members, only three of whom were from cotton growing states, the unlimited power to tax every farmer any amount it might see fit on the products of his soil and toil. I was also opposed to that feature which levied the fee upon every bale of cotton and bushel of wheat on every farmer in the land, and then turned over the money so collected to the co-ops society [sic] to handle and to spend.⁴⁶

His position was appreciated in Texas. One observer commenting upon the last McNary-Haugen bill stated: "The support of this measure has grown to be something of a craze, but I have not found in Texas any decided tendency among those engaged in farming to indorse it. . . ."⁴⁷ The regularity with which Connally was re-elected, and the size of his vote, support that impression.

⁴⁵Connally voted against the bill in 1924 and 1927, although many Southern Congressmen supported it in 1927. He would have voted for it in 1928 had the equalization fee been removed. Instead, he was paired against it and remained in Texas to campaign. U. S., Congressional Record, 68th Cong., 1st Sess., 1924, LXV, Pt. 10, 10341; 69th Cong., 2d Sess., 1927, Pt. 4, 4099; TTC to Victor H. Schoffelmeyer, February 23, 1928; TTC to A. C. Perry, telegram, April 12, 1928; A. C. Perry to TTC, telegram, April 12, 1928; A. C. Perry to TTC, April 19, 1928, TCP, con. 122; John D. Hicks, Republican Ascendancy (New York, 1960), 198.

⁴⁶Connally, speech, April 17, 1928, TCP, con. 551; TTC to Texas Farm Bureau Federation, February 23, 1928, TCP, con. 122.

⁴⁷T. N. Jones to TTC, January 27, 1928, TCP, con. 122.

Connally introduced a more beneficial plan for Texas cotton interests February 23, 1928. It proposed the creation of an export corporation and the inauguration of a tariff debenture system, both of which were endorsed by George B. Terrell, Texas Commissioner of Agriculture. The export debenture idea was not original with the Connally bill. Rather, it was first considered in 1926 by Congress in the McKinley-Adkins bill and was endorsed by the National Grange.⁴⁸ Connally believed that this plan would relieve the depressed price of cotton on the domestic market. Since the proposal contained a bounty for exported cotton in the form of a debenture certificate, supporters of the plan hoped to stimulate foreign trade.⁴⁹ In explaining his plan to the president of the Farmers Marketing Association in Dallas, he wrote:

I [favor] the export debenture plan whereby the export corporation or any other exporter of cotton or other agricultural products would receive a treasury debenture which would authorize them to import manufactured goods at a reduced tariff rate. These debentures would be negotiable and the corporation could sell the same to importers. It has been estimated that in this way the farmers of the United States would secure an average of \$144,000,000.00 annually in increased values to their product⁵⁰

⁴⁸George B. Terrell to TTC, February 16, 1928, TCP, con. 122; John D. Black, Agricultural Reform in the United States (New York, 1929), 255.

⁴⁹TTC to W. B. Yeary, February 23, 1928, TCP, con. 122; U. S., Congressional Record, 70th Cong., 1st Sess., 1928, LXIX, Pt. 3, 3490.

⁵⁰TTC to W. B. Yeary, February 15, 1928, TCP, con. 122.

He further desired to create a government corporation that would guarantee the cost of production to farmers, but the export debenture was his main concern. Although Connally pleaded with the House Committee on Agriculture to approve at least one of the several bills which carried all or some of his proposals, none passed during the Coolidge Administration.⁵¹ One was defeated on a roll call vote by 146-185.⁵²

The regulation of cotton exchanges was another of Connally's projects. Texas farm interests urged such regulation throughout this period as a means of stabilizing the cotton market.⁵³ Connally introduced a bill for this purpose February 8, 1928.⁵⁴ The idea was not to destroy the exchanges

⁵¹U. S., Congressional Record, 70th Cong., 1st Sess., 1928, LXIX, Pt. 3, 2818-2821.

⁵²This vote is not a good reflection of support for the export debenture. The proposal was in the nature of a substitute for the McNary-Haugen bill, and many of those voting for it were actually opposed to all price-raising schemes, voting for this for strategical reasons. Connally was recorded here as "not voting." See Black, Agricultural Reform in the United States, 255.

⁵³Examples include Frank A. Briggs, Editor of Farm and Ranch, and George B. Terrell, Texas Commissioner of Agriculture. Frank A. Briggs to TTC, February 14, 1928; George B. Terrell to TTC, February 16, 1928, TCP, con. 122. See also T. N. Jones to TTC, January 27, 1928, TCP, con. 122.

⁵⁴It was proposed to Connally by Frank A. Briggs. TTC to Frank Briggs, February 9, 1928, con. 122. A similar bill was introduced by Carl Vinson of Georgia. TTC to H. O. Cross, February 9, 1928; TTC to George B. Terrell, February 9, 1928, TTC to George B. Terrell, February 24, 1928, TCP, con. 122; U. S., Congressional Record, 70th Cong., 1st Sess., 1928, LXIX, Pt. 3, 2762.

but rather to control them, "so as to cut out manipulation, straddling, fictitious sales, tendering and retendering of the same dog-tail cotton from time to time with no bona fide intention of actual sale or delivery. . . ." ⁵⁵ He argued that during the fall of 1927 the cotton market had been "scandalously manipulated," with prices varying thirty dollars a bale. But just as in the case of his bill for an export debenture system, Congress did nothing toward the regulation of cotton exchanges. ⁵⁶

For twelve years Connally served in the House of Representatives, interrupted only by his brief military career. His constituents supported him faithfully at election time, and seldom did he have even the slightest hint of opposition. In 1922 W. D. Lewis announced for the seat, but when Connally let it be known that he was not going home to campaign, Lewis withdrew. In 1926, he was opposed by Lowesco Brann of Hamilton County, but that proved little more than a practice exercise for the popular incumbent. ⁵⁷

During the campaign, the two candidates met in joint debate at a community called Deer Creek. Making use of a single lemon lying on the table in front of him, Connally would pound the table to emphasize his points, causing the

⁵⁵TTC to George B. Terrell, February 9, 1928, TCP, con. 122.

⁵⁶One of the three similar bills by Vinson, with which Connally would have been satisfied, was reported from committee, but the House took no action on it. U.S., Congressional Record, 70th Cong., 1st Sess., 1928, LXIX, Pt. 8, 8478.

⁵⁷Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 113-114.

lemon to bounce around. Both Connally and the crowd were amused. "I proceeded to ignore Brann from then on," wrote Connally, "and let him stumble through the rest of the [campaign] without me or the lemon." Connally won an overwhelming victory.⁵⁸

Connally's six terms in Congress were not extraordinary. He served on no major committees, and he sponsored no major legislation. He supported Wilson's war effort, favored the League of Nations and the Treaty of Versailles, opposed the veterans' bonus bill and the McNary-Haugen bills, and stood with the Democrats against most of the partisan issues in the Republican Twenties. His speaking ability was acknowledged and used, both in House debates and in political campaigns. His seat in the Congress was safe for the foreseeable future, but advancement within the party structure in the House of Representatives was restricted by others with more seniority. Had Connally left Washington in 1928, and were he to be judged on the basis of his House career, he would be remembered no better than Robert L. Henry, his predecessor, or Oliver H. Cross, his successor.

Just when he began to consider running for the United States Senate is uncertain, but there is little doubt that becoming Senator had been his ambition for years. In the early Twenties he was urged to run by his former

⁵⁸Ibid., 114.

college roommate, Charles Batsell,⁵⁹ and by Fred Acree, an influential Waco supporter.⁶⁰ But in both 1922 and 1924, there were good reasons not to run. In the first year the leading candidates were far better known than Connally, one having run for president in 1920.⁶¹ In 1924, the popular Morris Sheppard, author of the XVIIIth Amendment, stood for re-election. Not until 1928 did Connally see an opportunity for political advancement.

⁵⁹Charles Batsell to TTC, November 8, 1920, TCP, con. 3.

⁶⁰[Fred Acree] to TTC, April 3, 1922, Fred Acree Papers, A 1/8, 60. University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas.

⁶¹In 1922 Earle B. Mayfield defeated James E. Ferguson, former governor and candidate for president on the American Party ticket in 1920. Mayfield had been a member of the Texas Railroad Commission.

CHAPTER III

SENATE CAMPAIGN, 1928

In thirty years of politics, Tom Connally never lost a bid for public office. Neither did he attempt a state-wide campaign. When he decided to run for the United States Senate in 1928, he stood a good chance of losing. Twelve years in Congress had gained him little fame outside his rural central Texas district, and at the age of fifty, defeat in a Senatorial race would seriously damage his political future.¹ Re-election to Congress, on the other hand, would be a simple and entirely predictable matter.

Connally never lacked self-confidence, nor was he blind to political signs around the State indicating displeasure with the incumbent Senator, Earle B. Mayfield. In 1922, Mayfield utilized a Ku Klux Klan endorsement, according to general belief, to defeat an avowed anti-Klan candidate.² The Klan subsequently declined sharply in

¹His predecessor in Congress, Robert L. Henry, had not run for re-election in 1916 in order to campaign for a Senate seat instead. Defeated, he never again held public office. Walter Prescott Webb (editor-in-chief), The Handbook of Texas (Austin, 1952), I, 799; Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally (New York, 1954), 119.

²Former Governor James E. Ferguson.

power across the State and left Mayfield open to attack.³ As Connally looked about in the House of Representatives, it seemed that his future had definite limitations. John Nance Garner, Sam Rayburn and two other members of the Texas delegation possessed more seniority than Connally.⁴ Three others had equal seniority.⁵ After determining that certain Texas Democrats did not plan to run,⁶ Connally entered the Senate race January 24, 1928.⁷

³This was apparent as early as 1924 when Mrs. Miriam A. Ferguson defeated the Klan candidate, Felix D. Robertson, for governor by nearly 100,000 votes. Charles C. Alexander, "The Ku Klux Klan in Texas, 1920-1930," The Historian of the University of Texas, I (September, 1962), 21-43; Charles C. Alexander, The Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest ([Lexington,] 1965), 199; Rupert Norval Richardson, Texas: The Lone Star State (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1958), 317; Alexander Heard and Donald S. Strong, Southern Primaries and Elections, 1920-1949 ([Tuscaloosa, Alabama,] 1950), 136.

⁴Garner entered the House March 4, 1903. He was slated to be minority floor leader in 1929 and would become Speaker in 1931. If Connally had remained in the House and Garner had chosen to keep his position on the Ways and Means Committee, some thought Connally would have been the next minority leader. Osgood Roberts, "Connally's Ambition for Senate Upsets House Democrats," Washington News, January 28, 1928, (typescript), TCP, con. 551. Rayburn and Hatton W. Sumners became members March 4, 1913, while James P. Buchanan joined Congress April 5, 1913.

⁵They were Joseph J. Mansfield, Thomas L. Blanton, and Marvin Jones.

⁶Connally would have deferred to any of the following who might have run: former Governor Pat Neff, Governor Dan Moody, Garner, Rayburn, or Cullen F. Thomas, a former candidate for Senator. Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 118-119.

⁷TTC, Press Release, January 25, 1928 (mimeographed), TCP, con. 551.

Besides Connally and Mayfield, four other candidates entered the race.⁸ Two of these, Congressman Thomas L. Blanton and Colonel Alvin M. Owsley, were major contenders. Blanton represented the Abilene district in Congress, and as the only candidate from West Texas, he would surely be strong in that section of the State.⁹ Owsley was a former national commander of the American Legion.¹⁰ Claiming to be a friend of the veteran, and better known in the more populous eastern half of the State, he was a stronger candidate than Blanton. The two additional candidates, Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham and former Congressman Jeff: McLemore, had only small followings.

⁸ A seventh candidate was former Governor O. B. Colquitt, who announced April 17, 1928, but withdrew June 5 when it became apparent that New York Governor Alfred E. Smith would capture the Democratic nomination for president. Colquitt said he could not run on the same ticket with Smith. An eighth candidate, Houston lawyer W. A. Rowe, was in the race only briefly. Tyler Courier-Times, February 17, 1928; Gainesville Daily Register, June 5, 1928; Washington News, January 28, 1928 (typescript), TCP, con. 551.

⁹ Austin American-Statesman, April 22, 1928.

¹⁰ Apparently at one time Connally had planned to make a nominating speech for Owsley at the 1924 Democratic National Convention for vice president on the ticket with John W. Davis. A manuscript for such a speech is in TCP, con. 550. Connally, however, was not a delegate to the convention, but rather went to Europe to investigate the United States Shipping Board. Owsley was nominated instead by Thomas H. Ball of Houston, but before the first ballot was completed, Owsley's name was withdrawn and Texas changed its votes to Charles Bryan, the winner of the nomination. Democratic Party, National Convention, New York, 1924, Official Report of the Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention . . . , 1924 (Indianapolis, [1924]), 73, 998-999, 1027, 1029.

Before the campaign was well underway, Washington columnist Clinton W. Gilbert, in "Mirrors of Washington," predicted a Connally victory and encouraged his cause:

Good judges of Texas politics tell me that Texas is likely to get a good senator out of the welter of candidates who have entered the race to succeed Senator Earle B. Mayfield, namely, Representative Tom Connally

If Connally should win the senatorship. . . , Texas would send to Washington its best qualified man. John Garner, another Texan, is an able man, but he is temperamentally a House member and not a senator. Mr. Connally is a man of good sense who makes an excellent speech. With the opportunities of the Senate he should develop into one of the best men on the Democratic side.¹¹

Connally conceded from the beginning that Mayfield would lead in the first Democratic primary. This left him the task of beating Blanton and Owsley for a spot in a run-off with Mayfield. But since Mayfield was the real opponent, Connally concerned himself primarily with an attack on the Senator's vulnerable record.¹²

Connally opened his campaign April 17 at Belton, in his own friendly Congressional district.¹³ His long speech

¹¹Clinton W. Gilbert, "Texas Has a Chance to Send a Good Senator to Washington," Dallas Times Herald, February 14, 1928 (mimeographed), TCP, con. 551.

¹²Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 119; Amarillo Daily News, April 28, 1928.

¹³His mother sat on the platform with him just as she had at the opening of his campaign for the House in 1916. This time he was a little more than disturbed by her reaction to his campaign. She told him that he "should have been satisfied to stay in the House of Representatives." Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 120.

touched practically every current political issue. Subsequent speeches were similar. Before the common use of radio, it was imperative to develop every theme in each speech. His favorite topics--those his audiences seemed to like best--were farm legislation, the Eighteenth Amendment, European war debts, immigration, and the tariff. From the outset he promised to support the nominee of the Democratic National Convention, whoever he might be. The issue of a "wet" Catholic for president was serious in Texas, but party loyalty was more important to Connally. Speaking in the north Texas town of Childress, Connally told a questioner:

. . . I do declare that the Democratic party is the one hope of the nation in this hour when Republican corruption and an orgy of graft and bribery has brought high officers in Washington to the lowest state in the nation's history, and I shall give loyal support to my party. It has always been my uniform practice to support the nominee of my party.¹⁴

Connally scored his biggest points, however, when he launched personal attacks on Mayfield, the only opponent he ever mentioned by name.¹⁵ Once during the campaign Mayfield offered a suit to anyone who could show that Connally had accomplished anything as a Congressman. "Make him give you

¹⁴Quoted in Wichita Falls Record News and Amarillo Daily News, April 27, 1928.

¹⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 120; Austin American Statesman, April 22, 1928; Amarillo News and Globe, April 22, 1928; Amarillo Daily News, April 18, 1928.

a good suit," Connally replied, "and not that old second-hand thing he ran in in 1922--that sheet and pillow case. Make him give you a good suit that can be worn in the day-time as well as at night." Although the Klan was hardly a political issue by 1928, Connally made Mayfield the "bed-sheet-and-mask candidate."¹⁶

Beginning with a disadvantage, Connally started his campaign six weeks before Mayfield. He worked hard to make himself known to the voters, whereas Mayfield was a veteran state-wide campaigner. His strategy was to appear in the rural areas during the early stages of the campaign and to concentrate on the more populous areas in the last weeks--after Congress adjourned and Mayfield returned home.¹⁷ He was gratified by news of support as it came to him through letters and the press.¹⁸ He was especially pleased to receive the public endorsement of S. P. Brooks, President of Baylor University. Brooks issued the following letter for mass distribution.¹⁹

¹⁶Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 121.

¹⁷Tyler Courier-Times, May 11, 1928; ibid., May 28, 1928; Wichita Falls Times and Record News, May 27, 1928; Austin American-Statesman, April 22, 1928.

¹⁸TTC to A. H. Britain, February 22, 1928; TTC to Mark L. Goodwin, March 8, 1928, TCP, con. 4.

¹⁹S. P. Brooks to "My Friends," June 9, 1928, Samuel Palmer Brooks Papers, Political Correspondence, 1928-1929, Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Waco, Texas

June 9, 1928

To My Friends:

I am going to vote for Tom Connally for United States Senator. This vote will be made with great heartiness, with no reservations. I invite my friends to join in this service to the state.

/S/ S. P. BROOKS

First Connally toured the Texas Panhandle. Then he headed south to the Rio Grande Valley, stopping at small towns, crossroads, and at the "forks of the creek." Reception seemed good everywhere. In fact, the only disturbance he encountered during the entire campaign was in his opening speech at Belton, where a heckler in an airplane caused minor annoyance for a while with a loudspeaker that could drown out even Connally.²⁰

Next he moved into East Texas, where strong racial prejudice made Mayfield popular. At Marshall, his voice failed and the audience wondered "if they had come by mistake to the silent movie instead of the new 'talkie.'" Little harm was done, since Connally could not hope to receive much support from that section. After two days' rest, his voice returned, and he moved on.²¹ Following a swing

²⁰Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 120-121; Tyler Courier-Times, April 20, 1928.

²¹Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 124-125.

through south central and southeast Texas, and a second excursion to the Texas Panhandle where Blanton was so popular, Connally concentrated on the urban votes of Galveston, Austin, Houston,²² and Fort Worth.²³

One of his supporters supplied him with a campaign song:

SONG

HON. TOM CONNALLY

FOR U. S. SENATE

Tune of Casey Jones

HON. TOM CONNALLY, is the man we need,
He's been in Congress and sent us seed,
He had a clean record--he's earned his pay
Let's put him in the Senate of the U.S.A.

CHORUS

Tom Connally, we want him in the Senate,
Tom Connally, I'm gonna help him win it,
Tom Connally, when the race is run,
Will sit in the Senate in Washington.

2nd Verse

He was raised near Eddy, two miles from
The town of Bruce but don't blame Tom,
He drove good horses with master minds,
Tom, learned to read between the lines.

²²One of his Houston supporters was Oveta Culp, Secretary of the local Tom Connally Club. Miss Culp, later as Oveta Culp Hobby, would receive Connally's endorsement as commander of the Women's Army Corps. Under President Eisenhower she became Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

²³Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 125. The only other major urban center, San Antonio, was visited on the earlier trip to the Rio Grande Valley. TTC, Press Release, 1928, TCP, con. 551.

3rd Verse

He practiced law it was his pet,
 He moved to Marlin, he lives there yet,
 They kept him in hot water, now so they say,
 He ran for Congress just to get away.

4th Verse

Hon. Tom Connally, is a name,
 That should live forever in the Halls of Fame,
 Tom, is capable, deserving too,
 So vote for Tom, whatever you do.

5th Verse

Tom's climbed the ladder step by step,
 So let's give him a little help,
 He's helped us all so what do you say,
 Let's help Tom, on Election Day.²⁴

Few differences separated the candidates on the major questions. Consequently they resorted to personal criticisms. Owsley said Connally's brain worked like "molasses in January," and both he and Mrs. Cunningham said they were seeking to fill the "vacancy"--meaning Mayfield's seat.²⁵ Mayfield, in turn, claimed that Texas owed him a "full" term, since he had spent two of his six years in Washington explaining to the Senate the manner of his election. To this Connally retorted, "He drew his pay . . . didn't he?"²⁶

At Wichita Falls, Connally delivered a crucial blow

²⁴G. B. (Red) Harris, "Hon. Tom Connally for U. S. Senate," copy in TCP, con. 86.

²⁵Gainesville Daily Register, June 14, 1928; Wichita Falls Record News, July 12, 1928.

²⁶Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 123.

to Owsley's senatorial aspirations when the two candidates spoke to a meeting of war veterans. The program committee, which favored Owsley, requested him to eulogize the World War I veterans. Connally was told to talk about the Spanish-American War, which had fewer veterans.

Connally spoke first. When he finished his story of the war in Cuba, he "forgot" to stop:

I rushed headlong into World War I I turned on my full patriotic oratory and praised at great length our World War I soldiers as the equals of "Caesar's Tenth Legion" and "Napoleon's Old Guard." I went through the Argonne Forest, Chateau-Thierry, St. Mihiel and Belleau Wood as I relived that war. When I finished speaking the ovation sounded like a cannon roar and a long two- or three-minute echo.

Owsley was left with little to say.²⁷

Concentrating on Mayfield, Connally charged that the Texas Senator voted with Republicans more often than any other Southern Democrat. Not once, Connally maintained, did he raise his voice against the scandalous Republican activities of the 1920's.²⁸ He also contended that Mayfield, as a member of the Texas Railroad Commission (the State's oil regulatory agency), had "shaken down" Wichita Falls oil men to finance his 1922 campaign. Had Mayfield lost the race, and remained on the Commission, oil men who had not contributed would have been in an awkward position. "I don't want

²⁷ Ibid., 122.

²⁸ Amarillo News and Globe, April 29, 1928.

your money," Connally told a Wichita Falls rally. "I won't shake you down."²⁹ He might have added, "I just want your votes."

The year 1928 was especially exciting in Texas politics. State offices were being contested bitterly, and it was also a presidential election year. Adding to the excitement, the Democratic National Convention met in Houston June 16-19. Connally and his opponents watched the proceedings while they campaigned, knowing that the outcome in Houston could effect their own efforts. Mayfield appeared before the Platform Committee and unsuccessfully sought the convention's endorsement of the McNary-Haugen bill, which he had supported.³⁰ When the convention ended, Connally confirmed his earlier statements on party loyalty by saying that he would support the national ticket, that he was willing to work for it, and that he was pleased with the platform adopted by the national convention.³¹

As the first primary campaign neared its end, there was growing optimism at Connally's Dallas headquarters. The Austin American-Statesman informed its readers in a front-page

²⁹TTC, speech, quoted in Wichita Falls Record News, July 4, 1928.

³⁰Clipping from Fort Worth Star-Telegram, [July 1, 1928,] TCP, con. 551; Democratic Party, National Convention, 1928, Official Report of the Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention . . . , 1928 (Indianapolis, [1928]), 189-191.

³¹Canyon News, July 5, 1928.

editorial that the Marlin Congressman would come in second or third in the primary, and it advised its readers to vote for him:

Speaking purely politically, there is nothing fundamentally wrong about Mayfield; speaking purely personally there is nothing fundamentally wrong with Owsley, but speaking for those voters who read this, we feel that Tom Connally in his personal and political life, in his service at Washington, and in his promise of consistent and loyal service to come, best represents the majority vote of Texas. He should be in the run-off primary and he should be elected.³²

The Lamar County Echo was even more optimistic:

All guns from the camps of senatorial candidates are being turned on Tom Connally, the brilliant democrat from central Texas, who seems to be leading the field. No candidate wants to be in the run-off with Connally. Senator Mayfield thinks he has a chance to defeat either Owsley or Blanton in the second round, but knows his doom is sealed if he is pitted against Connally. Some very questionable methods are being used to influence voters to desert Connally, but the democrats of the State--those in all walks of life who believe in a square deal to all and special privileges to none--will not be hood-winked by any last minute mud-sling. If the vote could be taken to-day, Connally would easily lead the ticket.³³

A poll based on inquiries in seventy counties showed Connally leading during the last week of the campaign.³⁴

Another poll, probably more thorough than the first, concluded on election eve that Mayfield would lead Connally

³²Austin American-Statesman, July 1, 1928.

³³Lamar County Echo, June 29, 1928 (typescript), TCP, con. 551.

³⁴Austin American-Statesman, July 23, 1928.

into the run-off.³⁵ The Congressman concluded his campaign with a radio broadcast, the first political speech delivered exclusively to a radio audience in Texas.³⁶ He later wrote, "I merely voted [on election day] . . . and then sat about nonchalantly chewing my nails while awaiting the returns."³⁷

The following table shows the results of the first primary:³⁸

Candidate	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Mayfield	200,246	29.7
Connally	178,091	26.4
Owsley	131,755	19.5
Blanton	126,758	18.8
Cunningham	28,944	4.3
McLemore	<u>9,244</u>	<u>1.4</u>
Totals	675,038	100.1

Connally's 26 per cent of the popular vote assured him a place in the run-off with Mayfield. An analysis of the voting (See Map 4, p. 61) revealed several factors important in planning the run-off campaign. Three candidates did well in the more heavily populated eastern half of the








³⁵Gainesville Daily Register, July 27, 1928.

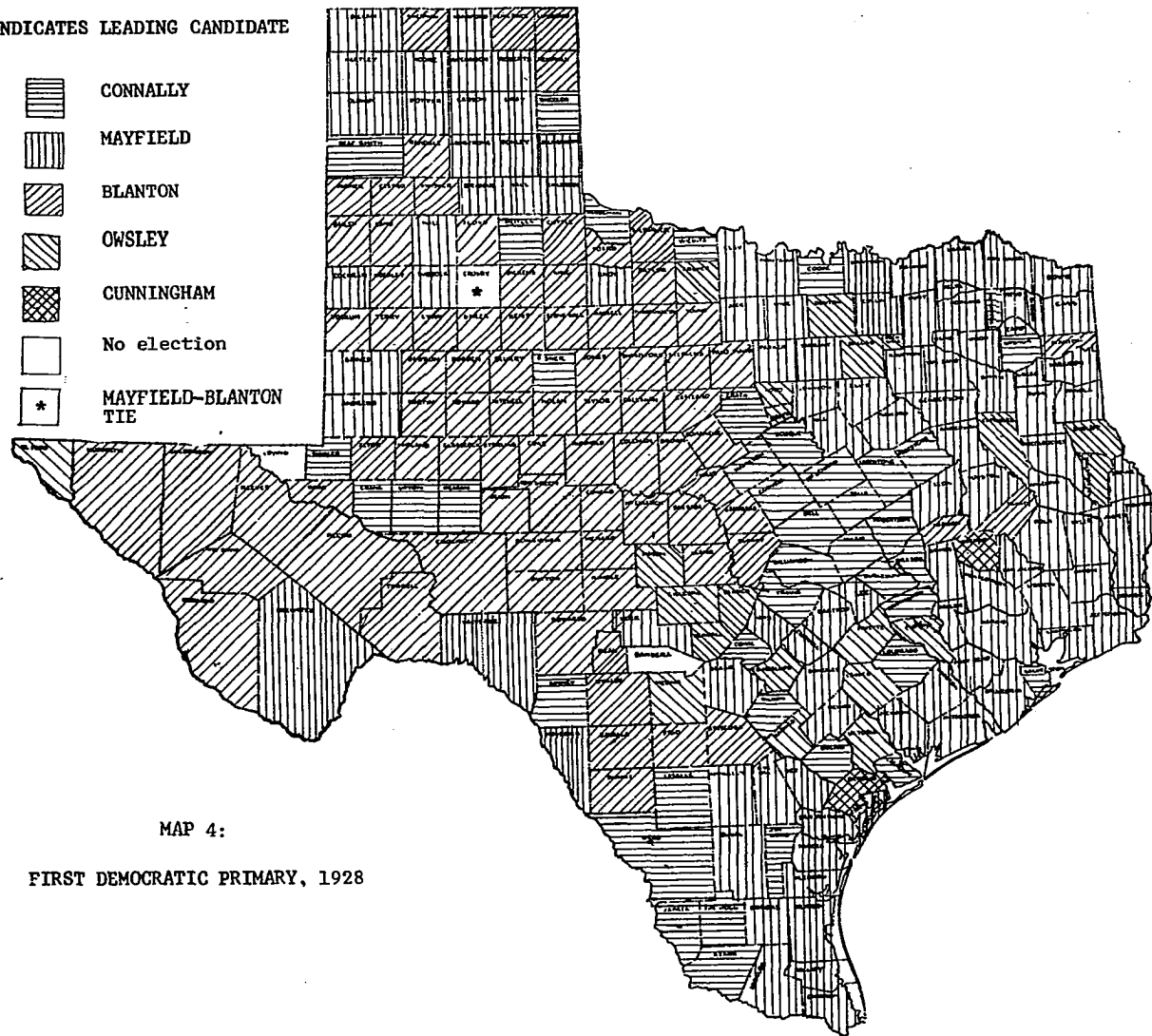
³⁶Tyler Courier-Times, July 27, 1928.

³⁷Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 125.

³⁸Heard and Strong (comps.), Southern Primaries and Elections, 167, 170.

LEGEND INDICATES LEADING CANDIDATE

-  CONNALLY
-  MAYFIELD
-  BLANTON
-  OWSLEY
-  CUNNINGHAM
-  No election
-  MAYFIELD-BLANTON
TIE



MAP 4:
FIRST DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY, 1928

State--Mayfield, Connally, and Owsley. As expected, Connally ran strongest near his home county, Falls, but he also received a large part of the boss-controlled counties in the Rio Grande Valley. Blanton practically monopolized the scantily populated western half of the State. The winner in the pending run-off, then, would be whoever received the Blanton and Owsley vote. Noting that Mayfield's urban vote declined from the 1922 election, Connally hoped that it showed most of his strength and that the remainder of the vote cast was anti-Mayfield.³⁹ Optimistically, he observed that the total Blanton-Owsley vote exceeded that of Mayfield.⁴⁰

The second Democratic primary was only a month away, so the run-off campaign began immediately. McLemore, who received an insignificant vote in the first primary, was the only defeated candidate to endorse Mayfield. "Owsley ducked out of the State," while Mrs. Cunningham supported Connally "weakly and noiselessly." Blanton, on the other hand endorsed Connally openly, and his influence in West Texas proved great.⁴¹

Connally began the run-off campaign with a futile challenge to Mayfield for a joint debate. Too clever for

³⁹Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 126.

⁴⁰TTC, Press Release, ca. August 1, 1928, TCP, con. 551.

⁴¹Blanton even introduced Connally at an Abilene rally. Tyler Courier-Times, July 20, 1928; ibid., July 31, 1928; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 126.

that,⁴² Mayfield tried to prove Connally an unimportant figure in Congress by stressing that he served only on the Foreign Affairs Committee.⁴³ Connally engaged the support of John Nance Garner to explain that bit of campaign trickery to the voters. By the House rules, Garner told the press, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee could serve on no other committee.⁴⁴

At first few new issues arose during the run-off. With only two and a half weeks left, Connally found some mud to sling. Mayfield and A. P. Barrett, a power magnate and known Mayfield supporter, reportedly met with James E. Ferguson in an Austin hotel. Mayfield and Ferguson were thought of as political enemies, but so were Ferguson and Connally. Connally alleged that money passed from Barrett to Ferguson on behalf of Mayfield's candidacy. Whether true or not, the Ferguson Forum, a weekly political journal, came out in support of Mayfield, and Connally made the most of the story of the meeting.

It was Ferguson whom Mayfield defeated for the Senate in the bitter and controversial 1922 election. So when the former governor announced that "old sores" were healed, Connally asked: "Was it electric power ointment

⁴²Gainesville Daily Register, August 13, 1928.

⁴³Austin Statesman, August 21, 1928.

⁴⁴Ibid.; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 127.

or Hiram Evans,'⁴⁵ Klan salve that healed those sores?" Connally told a crowd in front of the Alamo that "Ferguson and the power magnate and Earle [Mayfield] are all in the same bed, and it's a single bed at that." The deal, according to the story, transpired in Room 428 of the Stephen F. Austin Hotel. Thus "Room 428" became Connally's battle-cry.⁴⁶

Connally campaigned vigorously throughout August in East Texas, hoping to pick up Owsley's vote. At Tyler, he excited a crowd of 3,500 by asking: "What did Jim [Ferguson] say to you, Earle [Mayfield], and what did you say to Jim there in room 428 and what did the other man [Barrett] say to you both, there in room 428?" Though poorly phrased, the question went over well at the rally,⁴⁷ and Connally continued the theme in other East Texas speeches.⁴⁸ He pointed out that voters now had the unique opportunity to vote against Ferguson and Mayfield with a single ballot.⁴⁹

In desperation, Mayfield struck back only three days before the election. His followers spread the rumor that at one time Connally applied for membership in the Ku Klux

⁴⁵Hiram Evans was Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

⁴⁶Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 128-129.

⁴⁷Austin Statesman, August 10, 1928.

⁴⁸Ibid., August 12, 1928; ibid., August 21, 1928.

⁴⁹TTC, Press Release, ca. August 1, 1928.

Klan. A photostatic copy of his alleged application was produced.⁵⁰ It was dated August 9, 1922, and bore a signature remarkably like that of the Congressman's. If the document were authentic, then Connally was something less than honest in his attack on the Klan. With the little time left, Connally did his best to disprove the rumor. He went to considerable expense and effort to convince the voters that any such document was a forgery--a cheap and dishonest trick.⁵¹ Coming to his aid was J. M. Kennedy, publisher of the Marlin Daily Democrat, with an open letter which was reproduced for mass distribution:

Nothing could be further from the truth than the charge or report that Tom Connally is now or ever has been a member of, or in sympathy with the organization known as the Ku Klux Klan.

It is well known in Central Texas and elsewhere that the undersigned was one of the first in Texas to oppose the klan, and that such opposition has continued personally through the columns of The Marlin Democrat, and will so continue, as long as the klan is in politics, or attempts to thwart justice and freedom as it has in the past.

Frequently in 1922 and other years I conferred with Tom Connally and discussed with him the Ku Klux Klan.

Unequivocally and positively, Connally declared that he had no sympathy with the klan or any other secret political organization, or group, that sought to control the politics of the country, or the government.

Tom Connally is a Jeffersonian democrat. His faith in, and adherence to the fundamental principles

⁵⁰ A photographic print of such a document is in TCP, con. 85.

⁵¹ Austin Statesman, August 24, 1928.

of this government--freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion and absolute separation of church and state--is as well grounded as that of any statesman of modern times.

When I think of Connally as a candidate for Senator, I think of the illustrious and lamented Culberson,⁵² whose defeat was brought about by a combination of circumstances in which, singular[ly] enough, the same forces and the same figures were dominant as are now undertaking to defeat Connally.

I note also, that the same ku klux personage, under a different title, who was instrumental in lining up the klan for Mayfield in 1922 is now undertaking to defeat the national democratic ticket by the same methods employed in the 1922 Senatorial Campaign in Texas, and I have no doubt is now supporting Mayfield for re-election.

Those who whisper around or publish that Connally is now or was ever in secret or public sympathy with the klan are resorting to the same methods suggested to klansmen by the imperial wizard, W. J. Simmons, that of systematic misrepresentation of an opponent or candidate, not to the wizard's liking.

Also it is well known that any public man or candidate who opposes the klan is marked by the klan bosses for political "banishment," by fair means or foul.

I, an original and constant opponent of this secret political organization called the klan, am positively convinced that Tom Connally was never in sympathy with the klan or its methods, nor had any affiliation or connection therewith for any minute of his life.

Sincerely,

/S/ J. M. KENNEDY
Publisher of The Marlin Democrat⁵³

Mayfield's allegations were potentially damaging to the Connally campaign but they were apparently ineffective.

Connally received 320,071 votes to Mayfield's 257,747,⁵⁴

⁵²Charles A. Culberson, United States Senator from Texas, 1895-1923.

⁵³J. M. Kennedy, signed statement (mimeographed), n.d. [1928], TCP, con. 551.

⁵⁴Heard and Strong (comps.), Southern Primaries and Elections, 170.

polling over 55 per cent of the vote. Mayfield gained only a little over 50,000 votes in the second primary, and Connally almost doubled his own previous vote. It was a stunning victory, predictable after the first primary, but hardly foreseeable five months earlier when the campaign began.




Connally ran well in nearly every part of the State in the second primary. (See Map 5, p. 68.) As expected, Mayfield ran strong in East Texas. Connally also drew majorities in nineteen rural Panhandle counties and in scattered South Texas counties where political bosses controlled large numbers of Latin voters.⁵⁵ But even in those sections, he did not carry the counties with the urban centers of Amarillo, Lubbock, Abilene, Brownsville, and Laredo. In fact, Connally captured every major population center and the bulk of the Owsley and Blanton vote, deciding factors in the election.

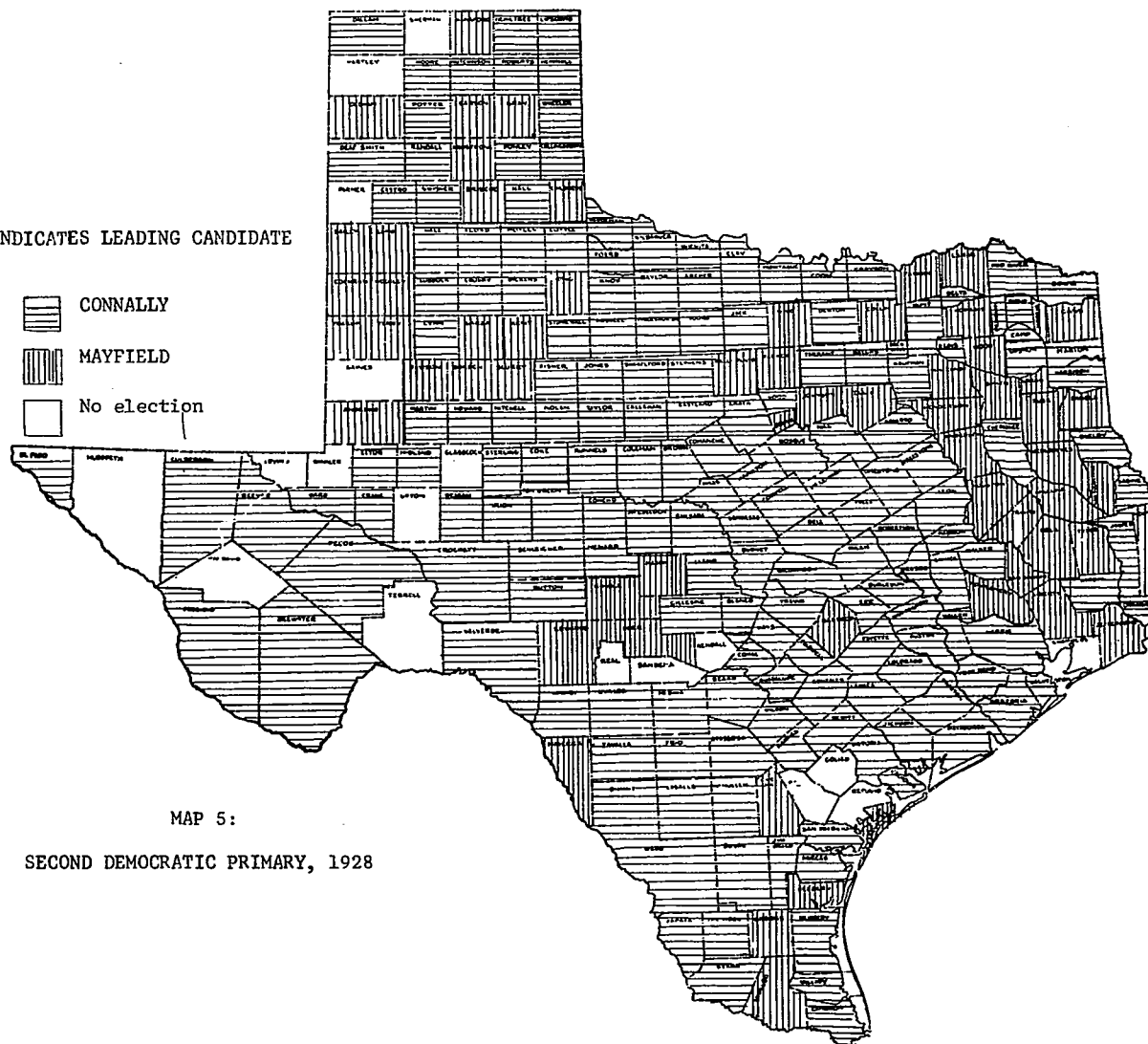
Since nomination by the Democratic Party was tantamount to election in Texas before 1960, the general election in November, 1928, was relatively insignificant. The following chart shows the ease of Connally's election over the nominees of the Republican, Socialist, and Communist parties:⁵⁶

⁵⁵Connally was cautioned by one supporter: ". . . be sure and get the Sheriff's support at Edinburg, Texas. I don't know him but he votes all the Mexicans in that [Hidalgo] County and runs things politically. He was the sole cause of J. R. Ball['s] carrying that County for State Treasurer two years ago." J. H. Pouree to Bob [Robert H. Higgins, Connally's campaign manager in 1928,] TCP, con. 86.

⁵⁶Heard and Strong (comps.), Southern Primaries and Elections, 170.

LEGEND INDICATES LEADING CANDIDATE

-  CONNALLY
-  MAYFIELD
-  No election



MAP 5:
SECOND DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY, 1928

Candidate	Party	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Tom Connally	Democratic	566,139	81.2
T. M. Kennerly	Republican	129,910	18.6
David Curran	Socialist	690	0.1
John Rust	Communist	<u>144</u>	<u>0.0</u> ⁵⁷
	Totals	696,883	99.9

Connally carried every county except three: Bandera, Edwards, and San Augustine. In seven of the traditionally Republican "German counties,"⁵⁸ Connally received a surprising majority, although in three of them--Gillespie, Guadalupe and Kendall--Kennerly received a strong minority vote. A large Republican vote always existed in Bandera County, where in 1928 no Democratic primary was held. But Kennerly's lead in Edwards and San Augustine counties is more difficult to explain since neither was a traditionally Republican county. It might be noted, however, that neither of them gave Connally much support in either the first or second Democratic primary, indicating opposition to Connally personally rather than to the Democratic Party.

⁵⁷More exactly 0.02.

⁵⁸They were Austin, Comal, De Witt, Fayette, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Kendall, Lee, Medina, and Washington counties. See Seth Shepard McKay, Texas Politics, 1906-1944 (Lubbock, 1952), 9.

The state-wide popularity of the Republican presidential nominee probably accounts for the three counties in the Republican column.⁵⁹ Herbert Hoover carried Edwards County by an overwhelming vote and was also popular in San Augustine County, in "dry" and Protestant East Texas.⁶⁰ In fact, the popularity for Hoover probably explains why Kennerly drew as many votes as he did. Running against Morris Sheppard for the Senate in 1924, Kennerly received 101,252 votes, or 14.7 per cent of the total, as compared to 129,910 or 18.6 per cent in 1928.⁶¹ More significant was the size of Connally's victory in the face of defeat for the national ticket in Texas. This is explained by extensive cross-voting in 1928, as indicated by the comparison of votes in the following table:

Candidate	Party	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Al Smith	Democratic	340,080	45.2
Tom Connally	Democratic	566,139	81.2
Herbert Hoover	Republican	367,242	51.8
T. M. Kennerly	Republican	129,910	18.6

⁵⁹See Paul Casdorff, A History of the Republican Party in Texas, 1865-1965 (Austin, 1965), 136.

⁶⁰Heard and Strong (comps.), Southern Primaries and Elections, 170-172; Edgar Eugene Robinson, The Presidential Vote, 1896-1932 (Stanford, California, 1934), 346.

⁶¹Heard and Strong (comps.), Southern Primaries and Elections, 167-170.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOOVER YEARS

President Hoover called Congress into session April 15, 1929, to consider modifying farm and tariff policies. The freshman Texas Senator was the only new Democrat to enter the Upper House, which convened in special session March 4, as numerous Republicans swept into office on the strength of the national ticket.¹ Throughout the Hoover years, the Democrats remained in a minority in the Senate. Although it was a bleak period for Democrats who wished to pass party legislation, this circumstance ironically proved beneficial to Connally, who began to climb the seniority ladder.

After serving for twelve years on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Connally hoped to gain a seat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Failing that, he

¹Whereas Earle B. Mayfield was the only Senator, Democratic or Republican, who sought re-election and was defeated, numerous Republicans replaced Democrats who did not seek re-election. In the 70th Congress (1927-1929), the Republican majority in the Senate was 49 to 46; in the 71st Congress (1929-1931), it was 56 to 39. Dallas Times Herald, November 18, 1928; U. S., Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957 (Washington, 1960), 691.

expressed a preference for either the Interstate Commerce Committee or the Finance Committee.² As a new member, he did exceedingly well, drawing assignments to four committees: Finance, Banking and Currency, Public Buildings and Grounds, and Privileges and Elections.³ The first two were major committees, and the others were important.

Similar to his entry into the House in 1917, Connally's first Senate term began with a special session to deal with an emergency. Instead of an international crisis and war, President Hoover told Congress in 1929 to consider "further agricultural relief and legislation for limited changes of the tariff," which, he said, "in justice to our farmers, our labor, and our manufacturers [cannot] be postponed."⁴ There were other differences as well. Where Congressman Connally followed the lead of President Wilson and House leaders almost blindly, the new Senator had developed his own political philosophy and possessed little respect for President Hoover and his Republican policies. In Connally's mind, "Hoover was an inept President from the

²Texas' other Senator, Morris Sheppard, was on the Commerce, Manufactures, Irrigation and Reclamation, and Military Affairs committees. Clipping from Houston Press, February 27, 1929; clipping from Bishop News, April 26, 1929, TCP, con. 594.

³U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 1, 246; clipping from Bishop News, April 26, 1929, TCP, con. 594.

⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 1, 19.

start."⁵ The two men were sworn into office on the same day, and, as pointed out in the press, while they were "as opposite in political views as black and white, they were both the choice of [Texas]."⁶

The Hoover Administration recommended the Agricultural Marketing Bill to the special Congressional session. It proposed a Federal Farm Board made up of nine members, who in turn were to be advised by a series of special committees interested in particular commodities. The Board was supplied with \$500 million revolving fund to provide loans to cooperative associations or to create stabilization corporations if needed to deal with unusual farm surpluses.⁷ This plan was not satisfactory to the agricultural interests. Farm spokesmen amended the House bill by including in it a system of export debentures similar to those proposed in 1926 as an alternative to the McNary-Haugen bill. The plan called for the government to give debenture certificates to farmers who exported surplus commodities to the extent that those commodities were protected by tariff duties. These certificates could be sold to importers and used to pay tariff duties on other imports. Farmers,

⁵Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally (New York, 1954), 134.

⁶Clipping from Tri-City News Herald, March 8, 1929, TCP, con. 593.

⁷Murray R. Benedict, Farm Policies of the United States, 1790-1950: A Study of Their Origins and Development (New York, 1953), 240.

therefore, would realize a higher price for their exports while meanwhile relieving some of the pressure on the depressed domestic market caused by the surplus. According to the amendment, the debenture feature could be employed at the Farm Board's discretion.⁸

Connally strongly favored the export debenture plan. As he told the Senate in his maiden speech May 2, 1929:

Mr. President, in view of the short time I have been a Member of this body, I should not so soon lift up my voice in the Chamber were it not for the fact that I, in part, represent one of the greatest agricultural States in the Union, and its interests are vitally concerned in the legislation now pending I am heartily in favor of the measure

I congratulate the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry and that committee for reporting this bill, including what is known as the debenture plan. Frankly I believe without the inclusion of that plan it will give little aid to agriculture. While I am opposed to the amendment offered by [Senator Watson of Indiana] to strike that plan from the bill, I shall support the measure regardless of the fate of the amendment. I am anxious to secure relief for the American farmer and I shall take whatever I can get, imperfect though it may be.⁹

Connally chided the Administration for not fulfilling the promise of the Republican platform of 1928. One sentence in it had read: "The vigorous efforts of this administration toward broadening our export markets will be

⁸ John D. Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 1921-1933 (New York, 1960), 217; Theodore Saloutos and John D. Hicks, Agricultural Discontent in the Middle West, 1900-1939 (Madison, 1951), 406.

⁹ U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 1, 786.

continued."¹⁰ He maintained that the export debenture plan would do just that. But, Connally said, with contempt for Hoover and Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon:

To meet the approval of the administration and Mr. Mellon, a plan must be found which will not benefit the farmer, which will not give him any relief, [and] which will not relieve him of any of the burden under which he is now staggering. If such a bill can be found and, thereby, the farmer can be fooled, the Secretary of the Treasury and the administration will be happy to support it!¹¹

Senator Watson's move to strike out the debenture provision failed in the Senate,¹² but the House succumbed to White House pressure and insisted that the provision be removed.¹³

Connally and Senator Peter Norbeck of South Dakota headed a stalling action which lasted a few days. With Democratic and Republican farm interests combining, the Senate voted at first to reject a conference report calling for abandonment of the debenture plan. This forced the House to bring to a vote its objection to the plan. Both Connally and Norbeck knew that they would not get the House to change its mind, and they readily admitted that they would eventually have to acquiesce. But they achieved a certain victory by getting House members on record in a vote of 250

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹New York Times, May 3, 1929, p. 4.

¹²U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 1, 997-998; ibid., Pt. 2, 1269.

¹³Ibid., Pt. 3, 2788-2789.

to 113 against the provision.¹⁴ For the first time they knew exactly how much strength they had in the lower chamber, and they had ammunition to work with during the next Congressional elections.¹⁵ Although disappointed by the removal of the export debenture provision from the bill, Connally still supported the Agricultural Marketing Act in June as it passed the Senate.¹⁶ As soon as was practicable, he urged the newly created Farm Board to give early consideration to the cotton situation which was of concern to Texas farmers.¹⁷

President Hoover also suggested that the special session of Congress revise the protective tariff to alleviate the farmers' plight. Congressman Willis C. Hawley of Oregon introduced such a bill in the House on May 7, but Congress was slow to reach an agreement on the measure. Hoover had intended that Congress consider only limited revisions in the agricultural schedules, and for a time the House respected his wishes. But under the pressure of powerful lobbyists, more and more upward revisions were made in nonagricultural schedules by logrolling methods.

¹⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 3, 2661, 2788-2789.

¹⁵New York Times, May 20, 1929, pp. 1, 12.

¹⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 3, 2886.

¹⁷New York Times, July 20, 1929, p. 16.

There was an attempt by a coalition of Democrats and Republicans in the Senate to pass a resolution limiting revisions to agricultural products, which Connally supported, but it failed passage by a single vote.¹⁸

Senator George W. Norris of Nebraska received the export debenture plan and succeeded in getting it amended to the Hawley bill. Connally was very pleased with the forty-two to thirty-four vote,¹⁹ but he was not optimistic about the future of the plan in the light of its recent removal from the Agricultural Marketing Act. In addition to this major change, the Senate favored repealing the "flexible" provisions of the existing law which permitted the president to alter tariff rates without specific Congressional approval.²⁰ Connally's attitude toward these provisions was clear. He long supported the debenture, but of the "flexible" provision, he told the Senate: "that power, surrendered in 1922, ought to be recaptured by Congress and redeposited where it belongs, in the legislative department of the Government."²¹

Connally attacked the bill when it reached the Senate and warned of its consequences on foreign trade.

¹⁸Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 219-220; U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 3, 2975.

¹⁹U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 5, 4694.

²⁰Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 220-221.

²¹U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 4, 4026.

Germany, he said, was ready to buy surplus fruit grown in California and Florida, but it could not be expected to pay for this product in gold. Several nations were prepared to buy American pork, cotton and wheat, he said, but they would be unable to do so if American tariff schedules shut out their goods as payment. Furthermore, he asked, how could the United States expect European nations to repay their war debts if trade were reduced or prohibited?

Bringing his argument even closer to home, Connally pointed out the inconsistency of the Hoover Administration's bid for improved hemispheric relations and Republican efforts to raise the tariff:

President Hoover made his famous South American goodwill tour [just prior to his inauguration] to encourage cordial relations with the countries of South America and to build up our foreign trade. If the present tariff bill is to follow the tracks of the President through Central and South America, it will destroy the good effects of the President's tour and arouse resentment instead of good-will. If we are to sell American goods in South America, we must buy some of their products.²²

Meanwhile, Connally introduced amendments to the tariff bill that favored interests in Texas. He spoke in favor of stronger restrictions against the importation of cattle from Argentina where he claimed hoof-and-mouth disease was widespread.²³ Such restriction would, of course, improve the domestic market for Texas cattle. Higher rates

²²New York Times, July 23, 1929, p. 14.

²³U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 4, 357.

on cattle were eventually adopted through several Connally amendments.²⁴ He defended the right of antique dealers to use Texas ports as ports of entry for their goods rather than to give the Secretary of the Treasury the power to limit the number of such ports.²⁵ Opposed to the protective tariff in principle, Connally could neither resist seeking protection of American-smelted antimony, an industry with a potentially bright future in Texas, nor maintaining a high tariff on winter tomatoes from Mexico which would compete with Rio Grande Valley tomatoes from Texas.²⁶ Similarly, he wanted to retain high schedules on wool and figs, both of which were produced in his State.²⁷ In other words, Connally was for lower tariffs in principle, but he favored protection when his constituents were involved. He reflected the inconsistent and paradoxical position of so many political leaders in the 1920's.

Later he attacked an attempt by northern Senators to remove a House provision in the tariff bill banning Canadian flour milled in the United States from entering the Cuban market as American flour.²⁸ Such was fair neither to

²⁴Ibid., 2d Sess., 1920, LXXII, Pt. 4, 3862-3867; New York Times, February 19, 1930, p. 15.

²⁵U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 4, 4329.

²⁶Ibid., Pt. 5, 5417-5420, 5660-5662.

²⁷Ibid., 5604, 5891.

²⁸Ibid., Pt. 4, 3760.

the American farmer nor the southwestern miller, he contended. With his usual ability to make his opponents look bad, he argued:

It does seem to me that in a Congress which has been consuming the summer in the pretense of doing something for the American farmer through the avenue of a protective tariff, when we get to the point where we can do some little [sic] for the wheat farmer by reason of the tariff, there should not be raised all manner of objections, that it will put people out of employment at Buffalo, and that it will rob the Cubans of this particular type of flour, for which only their anatomies are suited.²⁹

He pictured the issue as one of choosing between five millers and thousands of wheat farmers. Then he turned on Senator Reed Smoot, the sponsor of the Senate bill, from the sugar beet State of Utah, and asked if he would like to permit Java sugar milled in Cuba to enter the United States as Cuban sugar? After debates lasting several days, the Senate move was defeated eighteen to fifty-one.³⁰

Connally continued his assault on the bill. He asked the Republican leaders if they had understood the President when he asked for "limited revision" of the tariff. Or was it that they did not intend to follow his suggestion? "'Limited revision' seems to be limited by the sky alone," he said. Finally he challenged Hoover: "The farmer is about to be given a lemon instead of a relief.

²⁹Ibid., 3776.

³⁰Ibid., 3819-3822, 3826.

It remains to be seen if President Hoover will courageously intervene and stop this raid upon the American people. It is to be hoped that he will make good the words of his message."³¹

Connally, however, held little hope for such intervention. All through the summer of 1929, he fed the Democratic National Committee with partisan propaganda. Typical of his statements through this organization was a slur on Hoover the Engineer. "President Hoover, as reported in the press, is 'interested in a sugar tariff which would protect both the producer and the consumer.' If President Hoover can find such a sugar tariff he will perform a marvelous engineering feat."³²

When the regular session of Congress convened in December, 1929, the Senate had reached no agreement on the tariff bill. Debate and stalling continued through the winter and into the spring. Finally, the Senate passed its version of the bill March 24, 1930, by a vote of fifty-three to thirty-one, with Connally voting with the minority.³³ In the House, the majority refused to accept either the debenture or the cancellation of the "flexible" provisions. The Texas Senator remained far from optimistic

³¹New York Times, July 3, 1929, p. 3.

³²Ibid., August 4, 1929, p. 4.

³³U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1930, LXXII, Pt. 6, 6015.

about the future of these provisions which he favored.

"The men who will serve as conferees on behalf of the House and the Senate," he warned, "are opposed to the debenture, and over in the White House sits an Executive who is opposed to all [the Senate amendments]." ³⁴ Thus the deadlock continued.

The White House and Republican leaders in Congress exerted pressure on Democrats and insurgent Republicans by saying that the delay in action on the tariff was the prime cause of growing unemployment. Connally retaliated by accusing the Administration of trying to evade the issue and escape the responsibility for failure to deal with unemployment. ³⁵ Eventually the House, with Hoover's open support, had its way, and the Senate accepted the Hawley-Smoot Tariff bill June 13, 1930, by a vote of forty-four to forty-two. Again Connally voted "nay." Little support in either house came from the agricultural West and South for the final version, which increased rates on twenty-five agricultural items and on seventy-five industrial products. ³⁶

Shortly after the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act was signed, Secretary of the Treasury Mellon predicted it would benefit

³⁴New York Times, March 25, 1930, p. 2; Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 221.

³⁵New York Times, March 10, 1930, p. 2.

³⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1930, LXXII, Pt. 10, 10635; Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 221.

the nation's economy. "American industries now know where they stand," he said, "and will, I am confident, adjust themselves without difficulty to the new conditions." Connally, who detested Mellon, quickly answered:

Yes, the farming industry now knows where it stands. It knows that it will pay more for the necessities of life which it must buy and will continue to be forced to sell its surplus in a world free market. It knows that its outgo will be greater and its income will be smaller.

Other American industries also know where they now stand. The Aluminum Company of America now knows that it owns practically 50 per cent of aluminum deposits throughout the world. It knows that the Conference Committee, dominated by the Mellon school of thought, increased rates on aluminum fixed by the Senate bill.

Secretary Mellon, with the spirit of a courtier of the Stuart kings, glorifies the flexible tariff provision, giving the Executive, rather than Congress, the power to revise individual schedules. Let the Executive make the laws, rather than the representatives of the people, is the essence of bureaucracy and tyranny.

It may be hard on the people, but it is splendid for those who either wield the power or have sufficient influence to dictate how such power may be executed.³⁷

During the special session of the Seventy-first Congress, Texas' junior Senator sponsored or co-sponsored three bills with limited success. Two concerned agriculture, and one dealt with Senate procedure. The first one was a renewed attempt to regulate cotton exchanges. He was no more successful in 1929 than previously, for the bill never came out of committee.³⁸ His second bill

³⁷New York Times, June 22, 1930, p. 22.

³⁸U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 1, 335; ibid., Pt. 6, 245.

proposed the abolition of secret sessions in the Senate while discussing executive business unless voted by a two-thirds majority. The proposal had been a part of his personal campaign platform in the 1928 election, and he was deeply committed to it:

The people of the United States do not believe in secret government. The Senate, in passing on nominations of the President to office, is exercising a power conferred by the people. The people have a right to know how their Senators vote on such important questions.

The power of Federal judges affects the property, the lives of the people. There is no reason why action confirming or rejecting their appointments should be taken behind closed doors, and still less reason why a vote on confirmation should be kept secret. The Senate ought to open its doors.³⁹

Much to his disgust, no action was taken to change the Senate rules.⁴⁰ Finally, he was one of six co-sponsors of a bill giving Congressional approval to the Rio Grande Compact, an agreement among the States of Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas authorizing control of the Rio Grande. No action was obtained in the first (special) session of the Seventy-first Congress, but a similar bill co-sponsored by Connally in the second session passed June 17, 1930.⁴¹

While Congress argued how best to "relieve" the

³⁹Ibid., Pt. 2, 1889; ibid., Pt. 3, 3048-3049; New York Times, May 27, 1929, p. 2.

⁴⁰U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929, LXXI, Pt. 6, 273.

⁴¹Ibid., Pt. 3, 2759; ibid., Pt. 6, 260; ibid., 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1930, LXXII, Pt. 10, 10478, 10538, 10541; U. S., Statutes at Large, 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1930, XLVI, Pt. 1. 767-773.

farmer, the nation was stunned by the stock market crash in October, 1929. Hoover's request for a tax cut in December encountered little opposition in Congress. Connally supported the measure willingly, but the economy continued its decline.⁴² By the following spring, and for the remainder of the Hoover years, the farmer was not alone in needing relief. Protectionists contended that the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act would alleviate the sag in business conditions but events proved that it further restricted foreign trade. Other measures were necessary to combat the depression. Although some of Hoover's attempts to deal with depression problems went far beyond anything done by previous depression presidents, Connally was among those Democrats and insurgent Republicans who favored even stronger measures. Along with others, he anticipated the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt. As the depression gradually grew worse, the Democrats optimistically began to plan for the 1930 elections, the outcome of which greatly effected the career of the Texas Senator.

Throughout the nation sentiment definitely favored Democratic candidates. The depression, which was so easily blamed on the Republicans, and the usual anti-administration trend in "off" election years account for the shift in political sentiment.⁴³ Although not himself a candidate for

⁴²U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1929, LXXII, Pt. 1, 670; Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 235.

⁴³Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 237.

re-election, Connally accepted frequent requests from his Democratic colleagues in Congress to aid them in their campaigns. In Texas, he made a special effort to defeat Harry M. Wurzbach, Texas' only Republican Congressman, who resided in the San Antonio District. He spoke numerous times in behalf of Henry B. Dielmann, Wurzbach's opponent, but it was a losing cause.⁴⁴

In the midst of the campaign, Connally received an urgent summons from national Democratic leaders to aid Senator Sam G. Bratton of New Mexico in his bid for re-election. At about the same time, Alben Barkley made a similar request for his services in Kentucky, as did Thomas P. Gore in Oklahoma, but the Democratic National Committee asked him to speak in New Mexico. There he was a major attraction in Bratton's successful campaign.⁴⁵

While the 1930 elections failed to establish a Democratic majority in the Senate, they did improve Connally's position on Senate committees. He still labored

⁴⁴Harry L. Sexton to TTC, October 11, 1930; TTC to Frank C. Davis, November 19, 1930, TCP, con. 92; Paul Casdorph, A History of the Republican Party in Texas, 1865-1965 (Austin, 1965), 139-140.

⁴⁵Millard E. Tydings to TTC, telegram, October 16, 1930; Jouett Shouse and Joseph W. Byrns to TTC, telegram, September 30, 1930; T. P. Gore to Tom Conley [sic], October 13, 1930; TTC to Thomas P. Gore, November 3, 1930; TTC to James V. McClintick, telegram, October 21, 1930; Alben W. Barkley to TTC, telegram, October 23, 1930; TTC to Alben W. Barkley, telegram, October 23, 1930; TTC to Sam G. Bratton, telegram, October 20, 1930; Millard E. Tydings to TTC, October 30, 1930; Sam G. Bratton to TTC, telegram, November 1, 1930, TCP, con. 92.

under the handicap of belonging to the minority party, but he now possessed seniority not usually held by a Senator in his first term of office. Connally entered the Senate in 1929 with eight others. Below them in seniority in the first session was only one Senator, Henry J. Allen, who was appointed to replace Vice President Charles Curtis.⁴⁶ When the second session opened in 1931, twenty-one Senators were below or equal to Connally in seniority.⁴⁷ At this point he gained a seat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and at the same time maintained his place on the Senate Finance Committee.⁴⁸

The depression worsened in the United States during 1931 as Europe's economy collapsed.⁴⁹ Hoover's efforts to improve the economy through the volunteer National Credit

⁴⁶Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 239; U. S., Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics. . . to 1957, 691; U. S., Congress, Official Congressional Directory, 71st Cong., 1st Sess., 1929 (Washington, 1929), 166.

⁴⁷U. S., Congress, Official Congressional Directory, 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1931, 161-162.

⁴⁸He gave up his seat on the Banking and Currency Committee, but remained on the Committee on Privileges and Elections and the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds. U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1931, LXXV, Pt. 1, 439-440; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 134; clipping from Ennis News, December 18, 1931.

⁴⁹Connally got a firsthand view of the European situation and talked with his counterparts from several European nations when he attended the Interparliamentary Union conference in London in the summer of 1930. It was his second such meeting. He had attended the Geneva session in 1924. Later he attended sessions in Constantinople in 1934 and in Rome in 1948.

Association and the President's Unemployment Relief Organization simply were insufficient to stem the tide. Connally was disgusted with the President, who, he said, limited "the relief business" to "business relief."⁵⁰ The major effort of the Hoover years to deal with the depression was the creation early in 1932 of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Although Connally admitted that "there was nothing wrong with this bill if it had been part of a broad relief program," he voted against it when it passed the Senate.⁵¹

Connally and other Democrats secured passage of a bill, known as the Garner bill, authorizing over a billion dollars for public works to ease the growing unemployment pressures. "But," according to Connally, "President Hoover bragged that he vetoed the bill ten minutes after it reached his desk for signature."⁵² The Emergency Relief and Construction Act represented a compromise between the President and the liberal spenders. Connally supported that act, which provided \$300 million in 3 per cent loans to the

⁵⁰Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 135.

⁵¹U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, LXXV, Pt. 2, 1705.

⁵²Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 136. The bill passed the House 202 to 157 and the Senate 43 to 31. No attempt was made to override Hoover's veto. U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, LXXV, Pt. 13, 14820; ibid., Pt. 14, 14957.

States, though he had preferred grants to loans.⁵³ Connally throughout the contest supported a large-scale program of relief for the needy, whether the city jobless or the drought-stricken farmers.⁵⁴

Hoover was especially concerned about the lack of credit and the safety of creditors' loans. Connally complained that the President was far more interested in the mortgage holders than in the home owners who were losing their homes. To ease the credit problem, whatever the motive, Congress created the Federal Home Loan Bank System at Hoover's request. Connally voted for the bill which passed in July, 1932.⁵⁵

Early during the depression, Connally spoke in behalf of the nation's war veterans. In May, 1930, Hoover vetoed a pension bill for Spanish-American War veterans. On a motion by Connally, the Senate reconsidered the bill and passed it over his veto.⁵⁶ Shortly thereafter, in

⁵³Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 136; Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 271-272. At one point Connally attempted to amend the bill with a provision that the States would have to pay back only one half of the loan. This failed passage in the Senate 32 to 42. U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 3d Sess., 1930, LXIV, Pt. 1, 572, 575-576.

⁵⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 3d Sess., 1930, LXXIV, Pt. 1, 42, 1112-1113, 1118.

⁵⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 135; Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 274; U. S., Statutes at Large, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, LXVII, Pt. 1, 725-741.

⁵⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1920, LXXII, Pt. 9, 9722, 9876; New York Times, May 29, 1930, p. 6; ibid., May 30, 1930, p. 12.

conjunction with Senator David I. Walsh of Massachusetts, Connally sponsored a bill to increase World War I veterans' pensions to equal those of Spanish-American War veterans.⁵⁷ They were, however, only partially successful.⁵⁸

In January, 1931, Connally introduced "a bill to provide for the payment to veterans of the cash surrender value of their adjusted-service certificates."⁵⁹ The bill did not pass, but eventually during that session Congress passed an act over Hoover's veto giving some aid to veterans. The statute authorized loans of up to 50 per cent on their certificates. Connally supported the bill both times it came before the Senate.⁶⁰ During the next session, Connally led the fight to lower the interest on such loans from 4½ per cent to 2 per cent.⁶¹ But when it came to Congressman Wright Patman's "Bonus bill," he continued to question its net effect just as he had as a Congressman and voted "No."⁶²

⁵⁷New York Times, June 29, 1930, p. 16; U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1930, LXXII, Pt. 11, 11481.

⁵⁸TTC to R. E. Merritt, October 7, 1930, TCP, con. 95; U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 2d Sess., 1930, LXXII, Pt. 11, 12414-12418.

⁵⁹U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 3d Sess., 1931, LXXIV, Pt. 3, 3117.

⁶⁰Ibid., Pt. 5, 5386; ibid., Pt. 6, 6230; Hicks, Republican Ascendancy, 275.

⁶¹New York Times, April 24, 1932, p. 2.

⁶²TTC to T. F. Harwell, July 5, 1932, TCP, con. 95; U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, LXXV, Pt. 12, 13274.

While Connally displayed wide interests in legislation during the Hoover Administration, the need for farm relief remained his primary concern. In 1931, the most pressing agricultural problem was the year-long drought that plagued much of Texas and other States. On numerous occasions Connally urged the Senate to pass drought relief legislation. The following telegram from what Connally described as "the chamber of commerce of a large and ordinarily prosperous county" typified the sense of emergency and tragedy:

One thousand two hundred families in various sections of this county in dire need. No money to finance crops or buy food. Have no security outside of prospective crops and can not borrow. Local charity organizations short of funds. Think Congress should take action to relieve distress.⁶³

Much of the time Connally spoke to a near-empty chamber. On one such occasion he was interrupted by a quorum call. When it was completed, he shamed the ninety Senators who answered the roll:

. . . I desire to apologize to Senators who were enjoying their luncheons and were interrupted by the quorum call. It must, indeed, be distressing when, in the midst of a comfortable and luxurious meal, Senators are disturbed by some hoarse-voiced individual pleading that other men who have no food and who have no money with which to buy food should be given an opportunity not to feast on choice viands but to secure a mere crust in order that they may preserve their own lives and the lives of their families.⁶⁴

⁶³U. S., Congressional Record, 71st Cong., 3d Sess., 1931, LXXIV, Pt. 2, 2058-2060, 2143-2144; ibid., Pt. 5, 4590-4595; ibid., Pt. 7, 6622-6623.

⁶⁴Ibid., Pt. 5, 4590-4595.

Even after Congress appropriated some \$20 million for loans to drought-stricken farmers, Connally spent much of his time appealing to Secretary of Agriculture Arthur M. Hyde for faster and more efficient administration of the loans and urging upon the Administration a more liberal policy in collecting the loans.⁶⁵

As if the plight of the cotton farmer were not bad enough in the summer of 1931, prices dropped sharply due, according to Connally, because the government predicted a large cotton crop. Connally protested to Secretary Hyde that not only was the publication of such an estimate poorly timed, but also it was of questionable accuracy.⁶⁶ Again he made a futile attempt to secure passage of a bill regulating transactions on cotton exchanges.⁶⁷ And for a third time he spoke for and voted in favor of an export debenture program, which for the third time was defeated.⁶⁸

Although Connally voted against the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, he sought to use the agency for direct benefit to agriculturalists. He submitted a bill which permitted that agency to loan up to \$250 million to exporters or foreign purchasers who would dispose of surplus cotton and wheat, but the bill was not acted upon.⁶⁹ He was

⁶⁵Ibid., Pt. 7, 6622-6623.

⁶⁶New York Times, August 10, 1931, p. 17.

⁶⁷U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1931, LXXV, Pt. 1, 203.

⁶⁸Ibid., 1932, LXXV, Pt. 10, 10942, 11010, 11013-11014.

⁶⁹Ibid., Pt. 11, 11966-11967.

successful, however, in a campaign to force the Post Office Department to use cotton twine rather than imported jute for tying bundles.⁷⁰

Two more serious questions which the nation faced during the Hoover years were the cancellation of European war debts and a proposed national sales tax. On both issues, Connally took an early and definite stand. He spoke against Hoover's moratorium on the repayment of European debts as a step toward cancellation and urged the immediate reduction of tariff duties against European products so that those nations could balance their payments due the United States. Further, Connally advocated an international conference on currency and coinage as another aid to international trade.

As soon as he heard rumors of a Mellon-supported sales tax proposal, he voiced his opposition. Speaking in Uvalde, home town of John Nance Garner, who later supported President Hoover's sales tax measure, Connally attacked it as regressive:

Such a tax would be a burden upon the poor. It would tax food and clothing and the necessities of life. I am utterly opposed to such a Federal tax. If new Federal taxes are to be levied, I shall favor the increase of inheritance taxes on the great fortunes of the land. Sur taxes in the higher brackets of the income tax should also be increased. The ability to pay is a fundamental element in all sound taxation. The great aggregation of wealth in the hands of a relatively few people is a direct threat at our economic independence and competence. Great inheritances must bear a fair share of the burdens of government.⁷¹

⁷⁰TTC to J. R. McCarl, July 11, 1932, printed in ibid., Pt. 14, 15032.

⁷¹TTC, Press Release, Uvalde, Texas, October 5, 1931, TCP, con. 552.

Connally could not stop the moratorium, but a large group of Democrats and insurgent Republicans, strengthened by the stand of President-elect Roosevelt, combined to kill the sales tax proposal.⁷²

While Connally favored deficit spending as a means of combating the depression, he advocated the need for economy in government. Although his statements sometimes seemed contradictory, his appeals for economy usually took the form of attacks on wasteful and inefficient spending and urging use of savings for productive projects. Particularly Connally favored a reduction in government salaries. "While salary reductions alone will not bring about large savings in amount," he said, "let me suggest to Senators that they will have one of the most splendid psychological effects upon the country."⁷³

Also in the interest of "economy," Connally fought the removal of troops from posts along the Rio Grande, such as Fort D. A. Russell at Marfa and Fort Brown at Brownsville. Secretary of War Patrick J. Hurley justified his decision to abandon some of the older posts on the Mexican border by arguing that the troops were serving no proper function

⁷²TTC to Paul H. Brown, December 28, 1931; TTC to C. W. Cotton, December 22 (?), 1933, TCP, con. 135; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Age of Roosevelt: The Crisis of the Old Order (Boston, 1957), 448-450; U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, LXXV, Pt. 10, 11664; Harris Gaylord Warren, Herbert Hoover and the Great Depression (New York, 1959), 274-276.

⁷³U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, LXXV, Pt. 7, 7653.

there. Connally replied that it was wasteful to abandon usable government-owned property, moving the troops to locations where new quarters would have to be built. Hurley charged that Connally was acting like a "pork barrel" politician. Contending that Hurley was simply trying to pull troops together near the larger cities in order to protect them against an imagined Communist threat, Connally replied that Hurley himself had an "inordinate appetite for pork" when the Secretary of War prevented a similar removal of troops from Fort Sill in the Secretary's home State of Oklahoma. Such was nothing more than "autocracy" and "false economy," he charged.⁷⁴

Democrats succeeded in controlling the House of Representatives in the Seventy-second Congress as a result of deaths and Democratic victories in special elections. Democratic politicians, in turn, did their best to make the voters aware of Congressional efforts to cut unnecessary spending on the eve of the national political conventions. Speaking to a national radio audience May 12, 1932, on behalf of the Democratic National Committee, Connally proclaimed:

No government has the right to spend a single dollar of the people's money above that necessary for the maintenance of an economical administration.

⁷⁴Ibid., Pt. 14, 15116-15117; clipping from Washington Post, December 31, 1932; clipping from Dallas Dispatch, January 1, 1933, TCP, con. 596.

Waste can not be defended. Extravagance is a breach of public faith. Squandering of public money is a form of embezzlement.⁷⁵

This speech was delivered more to malign Hoover than to reduce government spending. Connally favored both deficit spending and the election of a Democratic president.

Although Connally was active in previous presidential contests, his role was more prominent in 1932. Nearly two years prior to the national conventions, newspaper reporters requested Connally to list the likely 1932 Democratic presidential nominees. He suggested six as strong possibilities: former Secretary of War Newton D. Baker of Ohio, Senator Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas, Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York, former Senator Jim Reed of Missouri, and Senator Walter F. George of Georgia.⁷⁶ No mention was made of John Nance Garner. It cannot be determined if such a possibility crossed his mind, but, in any event, Garner was not mentioned as a potential candidate until his election as Speaker of the House of Representatives.⁷⁷

Meanwhile Connally continued to think in terms of other men. His favorite among the various possibilities was former Secretary Baker, but in the spring of 1931 he recognized Roosevelt as the front-runner:

⁷⁵U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, LXXV, Pt. 9, 10201.

⁷⁶New York Times, October 2, 1930, p. 24; clipping from Texarkana Gazette, October 1, 1930; clipping from Ranger Times, October 2, 1930, TCP, con. 594.

⁷⁷Bascom N. Timmons, Garner of Texas: A Personal History (New York, 1948), 152-153.

I think Governor Roosevelt would make a fine candidate; and it is likely that he would win against Hoover. I am somewhat inclined to favor Baker of Ohio, but recognize that he might arouse antagonisms on account of the war, particularly among German-Americans. At this time it looks like Roosevelt. He is progressive--and that suits me. He would carry Texas easily, but in view of the depression almost anyone else could.⁷⁸

After a series of editorials appeared in numerous Hearst newspapers favoring the candidacy of Garner, a Texas movement quickly developed in his behalf. Garner was the first Texan to be speaker of the House of Representatives and the first since Sam Houston to be considered seriously as a presidential candidate. The two Texas Senators made a joint statement February 17, 1932, to the effect that Garner would be a candidate at the Democratic convention the following summer. The statement read in part:

. . . we have no hesitation in averring that John Garner by training and experience in national affairs and by his wide grasp of national problems is the most highly qualified of all those who are being mentioned as candidates in either the Republican or Democratic parties. Texas presents him to the nation as a man grounded in the fundamentals of democracy, a rugged and militant champion of the American people.⁷⁹

From that point on, Connally gave his full effort to Garner's candidacy. Unquestionably Connally supported Garner as a fellow Texan. But Connally was undoubtedly impressed

⁷⁸Memorandum, ca. March 26, 1931, Democratic National Committee, 1932, Correspondence, 1928-1933, FDR Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.

⁷⁹Timmons, Garner of Texas, 156.

by Garner's presidential qualifications and the Speaker's excellent chance of being elected. Without suggesting any personal dislike or political distrust one for the other, Connally and the Speaker were not the closest of friends. Their personal relationship was cordial, and their political association was always firm, but neither considered the other among his staunchest allies.⁸⁰ The State Democratic Convention, which met in May, 1932, elected Connally as a delegate to the Chicago national convention.⁸¹ Sam Rayburn, chairman of the Texas delegation, announced in June that Connally would make the principal nominating speech for Garner.⁸²

The Roosevelt camp early realized that Connally was a key to Texas politics and their efforts to acquire delegate support. A memorandum prepared for use by the Roosevelt organization in the 1932 pre-convention campaign made the following evaluation of the Texas Senator:

⁸⁰ Connally's closest personal friends and political allies on the Texas delegation were Marvin Jones, Congressman from Amarillo, 1917 to 1940, and Congressman Luther Johnson, Congressman from Corsicana, 1923 to 1946. Connally maintained good relations also with Senator Morris Sheppard, but their primary interests were too different for them to develop a really close political alliance.

⁸¹ This was in spite of his moderately "dry" position on the liquor question, one of the most potent of all political issues in Texas. The State Convention voted to support a move to submit the question to the States, and it omitted Senator Morris Sheppard from its list of delegates. Clipping from Austin Statesman, May 25, 1932; clipping from Greenville Herald, May 25, 1932; clipping from Marshall News-Messenger, May 29, 1932, TCP, con. 96.

⁸² New York Times, June 10, 1932, p. 2.

The most influential political leaders in Texas today are Tom Connolly [sic], Gov. Ross Sterling, former Governor Dan Moody, and former Governor Pat Neff.

These four men are drys. If any one of them took a favorable position either expres[s]ed or implied, the effect would be most helpful and would probably control the decision of Texas.

Connally, the most powerful, is not unfriendly, but his chief purpose in life is to be re-elected senator. He is unlikely to do anything which in his judgment promised to make difficult his re-election.⁸³

As the convention opened, both Senators Key Pittman of Nevada and Harry B. Hawes of Missouri urged Connally to give his support to Roosevelt.⁸⁴ Although no reply to their telegrams seems to exist, surely Pittman and Hawes realized at least a slight possibility for such a move on Connally's part.

Connally was the first choice of the Texas delegation to serve as its representative on the important Platform and Resolutions Committee of the national convention. He declined to serve, however, saying he would be busy working on the Garner campaign.⁸⁵ On the third day of the convention, nominating speeches began. Immediately, Alabama's chairman yielded to New York and Roosevelt's name was placed in nomination.⁸⁶ The galleries were filled with

⁸³F. M. F. (?), Memorandum, FDR Papers, Box 718.

⁸⁴Fred L. Israel, Nevada's Key Pittman (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1963), 98.

⁸⁵Clipping from Dallas News, June 20, 1932, TCP, con. 596.

⁸⁶Democratic Party, National Convention, Official Report of the Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention Held at Chicago, Illinois, June 27th to July 2nd, Inclusive, 1932 ([Chicago, 1932]), 206-211.

Al Smith supporters, who booed and hissed. When California was reached on the roll call, that chairman yielded to Texas, and Connally obtained "a respectful hearing"⁸⁷ as he presented the "Andrew Jackson of 1932," "Field Marshal of the Armies of Democracy, the great Speaker of the House, John Nance Garner."⁸⁸ Next Al Smith was placed in nomination, followed by half a dozen less important candidates.⁸⁹

On the first ballot Roosevelt led with 666½ votes, Smith was second with 201¾ votes, and Garner was third with 90¼ votes. On the second ballot, Roosevelt gained 11½ votes, Smith lost 7½ votes, and Garner remained steady. On the third ballot, completed about nine o'clock in the morning after an all-night session, Roosevelt gained a little, Smith lost slightly, and Garner added eleven votes to his total.⁹⁰ As the convention adjourned for the day, it was clear that Garner would have to move quickly to the front as a compromise candidate, give his support to someone else, or be responsible for deadlocking the convention.⁹¹

⁸⁷Timmons, Garner of Texas, 161-162.

⁸⁸TTC, Speech at Chicago National Convention by Tom Connally, Placing John Garner in Nomination for President, June 30, 1932, TCP, con. 552; Democratic Party, National Convention, Proceedings. . . 1932, 214-218; U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, LXXV, Pt. 13, 14608-14609.

⁸⁹Democratic Party, National Convention, Proceedings . . . 1932, 218-287.

⁹⁰Ibid., 288-289, 301-302, 315-316.

⁹¹Timmons, Garner of Texas, 164.

To gain nomination, a candidate needed approximately 770 votes.⁹² Only ninety votes were pledged to Garner--those of Texas and California. During the second ballot, Arthur F. Mullen, floor leader for Roosevelt, approached Connally and discussed Garner's receptivity toward the vice presidential nomination on a ticket with the New York governor. "The subject has never been broached to Garner," Connally replied, but he reportedly agreed that such a move seemed the only way to avert a deadlock. But when he sought an adjournment, presumably to gain time to talk with Garner, objections were raised by New York's delegation. After the third ballot, an adjournment was gained, and during the day, while the delegates rested from their long night's work, Garner made his decision to withdraw.⁹³

The Speaker was in Washington during the Chicago convention. Talking only with members of the Texas delegation by telephone, and refusing a call from Al Smith, Garner determined that unless Roosevelt won on the fourth ballot, a long and costly deadlock would result. Whether urged or not by Connally, but certainly not discouraged by him, Garner released the Texas and California delegations, and

⁹²The number needed for nomination varied in accordance with the number of votes cast on a given ballot.

⁹³Clipping from Fort Worth Press, July 14, 1932; New York Herald-Tribune, July 14, 1932; clipping from Dallas Dispatch, July 14, 1932; clipping from Dallas News, July 15, 1932, TCP, con. 596.

Roosevelt was nominated on the next ballot.⁹⁴ As a reward for his cooperation, Garner was selected as the vice presidential candidate by the convention on the first ballot, while Connally presided as acting chairman.

According to Mullen, the Roosevelt floor leader, Connally was largely responsible for Garner's switch to Roosevelt. Questioned at the time, Connally refused to verify or deny Mullen's version of the proceedings, but in his autobiography he claims much of the credit. Frank Freidel, the principal Roosevelt biographer, dismisses the Mullen version and Connally's significance as no more valid than a number of others. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., however, gives some credence to the significance of the Mullen-Connally talks.⁹⁵

After the convention was over, Connally announced from his home in Marlin that he would accept the request of Democratic Chairman James A. Farley to campaign in behalf of the national ticket.⁹⁶ Again he and Roosevelt were on the same campaign trail. "The paramount issues," he said, "are economic. . . . The American electorate cannot be 'befuddled' by the old time protective tariff slogan."

⁹⁴Timmons, Garner of Texas, 164-166; Frank Freidel, Franklin D. Roosevelt: The Triumph (Boston, 1952), 305-311.

⁹⁵Clipping from Abilene News, July 15, 1932; clipping from Dallas News, July 15, 1932, TCP, con. 596; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 141-145; Freidel, Franklin D. Roosevelt: The Triumph, 309-310.

⁹⁶Clipping from Marlin Daily Democrat, August 12, 1932, TCP, con. 596.

Poking fun at the Republicans, he said, "The Republican Committee still has on hand a large supply of the 1928 Hoover coin, upon which is stamped, 'Good for Four Years of Prosperity.' What will they do with them in 1932?" Throughout the campaign he stressed the unfulfilled promises made by the Republicans for farm relief and lower taxes. And, Connally pointed to the high Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act and the depression that followed as "proof" of what happens under Republican administrations.⁹⁷

After Roosevelt's victory in November, Connally returned to Washington for the last of the "lame duck" Congresses. Little of what he proposed was enacted into law during that short session, but by Roosevelt's inauguration, Connally had formulated some ideas which would become part of the New Deal. Connally was indeed elated for the "Happy Days" to resume.

⁹⁷New York Times, July 25, 1932, p. 3.

CHAPTER V

THE EARLY NEW DEAL

Shortly after the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in November, 1932, Connally received an invitation to confer with the President-elect at his retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia.¹ The Senator accepted the nomination of Roosevelt with enthusiasm and campaigned diligently for the Roosevelt-Garner ticket. Pleased as he was with the resulting Democratic victory, however, he did not look upon Roosevelt as a magical cure-all for the national depression. Connally's support for the New York governor came more from his deep belief in party loyalty. Often during and after the campaign, he worried about Roosevelt's presidential potential. His apprehensions deepened when he attended a Roosevelt victory dinner in New York City and again when he met with Roosevelt in Georgia December 1, 1932.²

When the two men met privately, they discussed taxes,

¹Clipping from Austin Ferguson Forum, November 24, 1932, TCP, con. 596.

²Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally (New York, 1954), 147.

relief, and the budget. Connally claimed to be speaking for several Democratic Senators as well as himself when he urged Roosevelt to support a program that included drastic tax reductions as a means of increasing purchasing power among consumers and federal borrowing as a source of income for relief programs.³ It alarmed the Senator, however, to hear the President-elect stressing the need for a balanced budget and the importance of strict constitutional limitations in dealing with the depression. As a lawyer, Connally was fully aware of the Constitution, but now he argued for emergency action. "If it was constitutional to spend forty billion dollars in a war," he protested to Roosevelt, "isn't it just as constitutional to spend a little money to relieve the hunger and misery of our citizens?"⁴

Perhaps Connally succeeded in convincing Roosevelt that a balanced budget was not the immediate objective. Or, as suggested by historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., perhaps Roosevelt appeared conservative in front of the Senator at this time simply to test his reaction.⁵ In any event, Connally had limited faith in the new administration as it took office March 4, 1933.

³Clipping from Dallas Dispatch, December 1, 1932, TCP, con. 596.

⁴Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 147-148.

⁵Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Age of Roosevelt, Vol. I: The Crisis of the Old Order, 1919-1933 (Boston, 1957), 452.

Generally there was little difference between Connally's and Roosevelt's suggestions for fighting the depression. Connally favored both government economy and deficit spending, and although his statements appeared as uncertain and contradictory at times as Roosevelt's, he was sincere in his proposals. He talked a great deal of the time about cutting expenses and a balanced budget to impress upon the general public the responsible nature of the incoming administration. "The way to economize," he told the Senate, "is to economize." He urged a reduction in expenditures by the Treasury Department and voted to cut back air mail service contracts. To help balance the budget, he proposed a definite plan. First, he said, every appropriation must be reduced "absolutely to the lowest practicable point." Second, President Roosevelt should be given the power to reorganize the executive departments. Third, Connally proposed that the new Secretary of the Treasury call in all due bonds bearing the high interest rate of $4\frac{1}{4}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This alone could save the government up to three million dollars which could be spent, Connally said, aiding a more needy segment of the population. Finally, he urged that Congress refrain from any additional taxation.

In his earlier talk with Roosevelt, Connally did not think a yearly balanced budget absolutely imperative. "Any sound program of balancing the Budget," he said, "ought to be spread over a longer period than a year." He

was one of those who favored deficit spending and lower taxes in time of depression, to be evened out by higher taxes in time of prosperity--a full three years before the publication of John Maynard Keynes' The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money (1936). To him it seemed a practical approach. Again he compared the emergency of the depression to that of World War I:

When we have a great war we do not undertake to pay all the running expenses of that war during its continuance; we borrow for the future, trusting that the American people will redeem the obligations thus incurred, as they have always redeemed them. We are in war to-day, not with men, not with an enemy with guns in his hands, but we are in war; we are in war with great economic forces which are more unconquerable than are men with guns in their hands. We are in a war with the unseen forces of a terrible depression So, it is as justifiable now to take care of any reasonable or temporary deficit by a reasonable amount of borrowing on the future or any future prosperity as it would be in any other crisis.⁶

Connally hoped only to approach a balanced budget in 1933 by curbing wasteful spending. For example, he criticized excessive appropriations for army equipment which he felt unnecessary. He tried unsuccessfully to delete one-half million dollars from the 1933 army appropriation bill⁷ and urged similar economy in naval appropriations.⁸

⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 2d Sess., 1933, LXXVI, Pt. 3, 3077, 3080-3081.

⁷Ibid., Pt. 4, 3784-3787.

⁸Ibid., 3506-3507.

But savings such as these were only a small part of Connally's ideas on fighting the depression. Huge government expenditures were even more important, as were government controls in both agriculture and business.

On inauguration day, Connally was ill with influenza.⁹ As he listened to Roosevelt's address by radio, he felt encouraged by such phrases as "This nation asks for action, and action now. Our greatest primary task is to put people to work I am prepared under my constitutional duty to recommend the measures that a stricken nation in the midst of a stricken world may require."¹⁰

Just as the 1930 elections improved Connally's relative position in the Senate and within his various committees, so did the general election of 1932. In 1933, forty Senators ranked below him and the nine others who had entered the Senate in 1929¹¹--nineteen more than in 1931. Moreover, after only four years service, he had climbed the seniority ladder about halfway on two major committees. On the Senate Finance Committee, he ranked sixth among thirteen Democrats, and on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee he ranked seventh among thirteen.¹²

⁹Clipping from Dallas News, March 3, 1933; clipping from Dallas Times Herald, March 3, 1933, TCP, con. 596.

¹⁰Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 148; Samuel J. Rosenman (ed.), The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (New York, 1938-1950), II, 12-15.

¹¹U. S., Congress, Official Congressional Directory, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, 161-162.

¹²Ibid., 176-177.

During the early years of the New Deal, domestic economic legislation received most of Connally's attention. As a member of the Finance Committee, he was often at the center of action. He respected Roosevelt's aggressive attitude in declaring a banking holiday and calling Congress into special session, and he supported without qualification the Emergency Banking Act of March 9, 1933.¹³ Among the various pieces of major legislation which were before Congress in the early days of the Roosevelt Administration, the two which most interested Connally in 1933 were the Agricultural Adjustment Act and the National Industrial Recovery Act.

As a Senator from Texas, Connally was naturally concerned with farm problems. A product of a Texas farm, and now a large landowner,¹⁴ he had a good understanding of the problems. The whole farm issue, he thought, could be reduced to the need for more money--more real purchasing power--for farmers. In early March he spoke to Roosevelt about this. Connally saw only two alternatives--either issue great volumes of paper money or reduce the gold content of the dollar. To him, reducing the gold content of the dollar seemed the better choice. It would create more money while

¹³U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, LXXVII, Pt. 1, 67.

¹⁴Besides cotton land already owned by Connally and his wife, additional lands were inherited upon the death of the Senator's mother in 1932.

maintaining the basically hard money policy called for in the 1932 Democratic platform.¹⁵

In the final days of the Hoover Administration, Connally had proposed gold devaluation in Senate debate. In a hearing before the Senate Finance Committee, he tangled with Bernard Baruch in a hopeless argument. The Senator maintained that if the gold content of the dollar were cut in half, it would take twice as many gold dollars to make a given purchase, or, in other words, that the price of the item would double. Baruch denied this, and although he admitted that to cut the gold content of the dollar would have the effect of raising prices, he said that internal prices especially would not be effected nearly so much as Connally thought. He argued that Connally's idea would be disastrous, since it would cause a rush on the gold held by the Federal Reserve System, and that the reserve would disappear between the time the proposal was discussed and the time it went into effect.¹⁶

¹⁵New York Times, January 25, 1933, pp. 1, 7; ibid., January 26, 1933, p. 2.

¹⁶U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Finance, Hearings, to Make Investigation and Study of Present Economic Problems of the United States with View to Securing Constructive Suggestions with Respect to Solution of Such Problems, 72d Cong., 2d Sess., 1933, 22-35, 59-66; TTC, Speech, January, 1934, TCP, con. 553; New York Times, February 13, 1933, p. 1; clipping from Houston Press, January 20, 1933, TCP, con. 133; clipping from Austin American, February 14, 1933, TCP, con. 596; clipping from ibid., February 15, 1933, TCP, con. 133.

Connally continued to maintain, throughout his questioning of Baruch, that his plan would be beneficial. He claimed there would be an immediate increase of 50 per cent in cotton and wheat prices, creating a greater purchasing power for farmers. Baruch finally admitted that inflation was needed, and soon, but he denied that Connally's scheme would work.¹⁷ Anyway, as Connally readily admitted, there was no chance that any inflationary measure could be passed while the Republicans still had control.¹⁸ Response to Connally's proposal varied from complete approval, to admission that the Senator meant well but was perhaps mistaken, to absolute disapproval.¹⁹

When the Seventy-third Congress met, however, the Democrats controlled both houses. The debate shifted from whether an inflationary measure should be passed to aid the farmers to what kind of inflationary measure would be passed. The agriculture bill, providing for the Agricultural Adjustment Act, came before the Congress soon after the banking crisis settlement. Most of its features pleased Connally,

¹⁷U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Finance, Hearings, to Make Investigation and Study of Present Economic Problems of the United States with View to Securing Constructive Suggestions with Respect to Solution of Such Problems, 72d Cong., 2d Sess., 1933, 59-60; TTC, Memorandum [1933,] TCP, con. 515.

¹⁸"Hoover would veto it," he wrote his old college friend Carl Lovelace. TTC to Carl Lovelace, January 30, 1933, TCP, con. 133.

¹⁹W. B. Bizzell to TTC, January 26, 1933; clipping from Houston Post, February 18, 1933; clipping from Houston Chronicle, January 20, 1933, TCP, con. 133.

and he supported each feature that promised aid to the farmer. He took an active part in the Administration's fight to keep the meaning of the term "basic commodities" within bounds, admitting corn, cotton, wheat, rice, hogs, and dairy products, but eliminating sugar cane, sugar beets, and peanuts.²⁰

Connally did not become involved in the debates on acreage control and benefit payments, leaving those issues to others interested in the farmer's welfare. Of more immediate concern to Connally was Title III of the proposed Agricultural Adjustment Bill, which called for a new monetary policy. The leading figure in the fight for inflation was Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma, who proposed that a large number of greenbacks be issued. Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, supported by Huey P. Long of Louisiana, favored the free coinage of silver.²¹ But the Texan had his own solution--the devaluation of the gold dollar--that he had proposed during the Hoover Administration:

. . . I submit [he told the Senate] that if the purpose of the proposed legislation is to reduce the value of the gold dollar, the best and most practical way of reducing the value of the gold dollar is to reduce the value of the gold dollar, not indirectly, not by a backstairs method, not by going around and climbing in the kitchen window but by the exercise of the sovereign power of the Congress vested in the Congress by the Constitution

²⁰ New York Times, April 22, 1933, p. 6.

²¹ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Age of Roosevelt, Vol. II: The Coming of the New Deal (Boston, 1959), 41.

to coin money and--to do what? Not to fix its value but to regulate the value of the gold dollar.²²

During the course of Senate debate, Connally introduced a new bill which reduced by one-third the gold content of the dollar. It also provided for the establishment of a government agency to adjust the gold content further in accordance with an index of commodity values. Speculation was discouraged by a special tax of 100 per cent on all profits made through gold transactions. But Connally's bill was buried in committee along with numerous others.²³

His idea, however, was not completely lost. As the inflation drive gained momentum in Congress, the President continued to oppose the plans which required specific inflationary action. Finally Senate leaders and the Administration reached a compromise which embodied not just one of the proposals but a combination of them. And rather than making them mandatory, the amended version of the bill authorized the president "in his discretion" to purchase up to \$200,000,000 of silver for coinage, to issue paper money up to \$3,000,000,000, or to devalue the gold dollar by as much as 50 per cent. Thus, the policy which Connally advocated became part of the law.²⁴ Soon it was put into

²²U. S., Congressional Record, 72d Cong., 2d Sess., 1933, LXXVI, Pt. 3, 2363-2371.

²³New York Times, April 4, 1933, p. 27; U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, LXXVII, Pt. 2, 1892-1894; clipping from San Antonio Express, April 5, 1933, TCP, con. 133.

²⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, LXXVII, Pt. 2, 2171; New York Times, April 29, 1933, pp. 1, 4.

practice in conjunction with other ideas and the Senator expressed his approval of the over-all Roosevelt monetary policy.²⁵

While Connally favored the Agricultural Adjustment Act and its important Thomas amendment, he opposed the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act. From the beginning, he held that the proposed law was an unconstitutional delegation of power by Congress. When witnesses appeared before the Senate Finance Committee in April, they included Hugh Johnson and Donald Richberg, spokesmen for the Administration, who explained how various industries would be regulated by rules of its own members. Connally respected both men, but he nevertheless made clear his opposition to the proposed law:

What you intend doing [Connally told Johnson and Richberg] is to turn over a man's business to this group and have it tell him how to operate under what rules. Don't you know that the government has no power to delegate the direction of an industry to a committee of its own members? Such control has to be granted by Congress to a government agency operating under strict rules set by Congress.²⁶

²⁵Dexter Perkins, The New Age of Franklin Roosevelt, 1932-45 (Chicago, 1957), 20; Basil Rauch, The History of the New Deal, 1933-1938 (New York, 1944), 104-105; New York Times, December 1, 1933, p. 2; ibid., December 20, 1933, p. 33.

²⁶Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 160. The April hearings were not published. The committee met again May 22-June 1, during which time Richberg was again questioned, and Connally's tone toward him and the bill was similar. These hearings were published. See U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Finance, Hearings, on S. 1712 and H. R. 5755, Bills to Encourage National Industrial Recovery, to Foster Fair Competition, and to Provide for the Construction of Certain Useful Public Works, and for Other Purposes, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, 22-34.

Connally challenged Richberg's later statement that the bill would provide fair competition:

What is fair competition? [Connally asked.] This fair competition is a fine, mouth-filling phrase that tickles our ears, but what is fair? Who is going to say? Is it fair from the standpoint of the corporation? Fair from the standpoint of the corporation might be all that the traffic will bear, catch the consumer, gouge his eye out and bite off his ear. But what is fair, now? This is too broad a term for me to understand in all its ramifications. Maybe you, having drawn the bill, know what it means.²⁷

Connally seemed to realize that he was fighting a lost cause. He told the two men: "The only thing on your side is that the times are so out of joint and the country is so out of shape that many Congressmen are grasping at anything that seems to offer a hope for stopping the depression."²⁸ Only two members of the Senate Finance Committee opposed the bill, and only twenty-four Senators voted against it when it came to the floor in June. Connally was in the minority both times. But his opposition to the Administration-sponsored measure, which Roosevelt chose to ignore, was one of the few such instances throughout the New Deal. His vote was not essential to the success of the NIRA, and Roosevelt considered him too valuable an ally to chastise needlessly.²⁹

²⁷U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Finance, Hearings, on S. 1712 and H. R. 5755, Bills to Encourage National Industrial Recovery, to Foster Fair Competition, and to Provide for The Construction of Certain Useful Public Works, and for Other Purposes, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, 22-34.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Schlesinger, Coming of the New Deal, 554; U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, LXXVII, Pt. 6, 5424.

While the Agricultural Adjustment Act and the National Industrial Recovery Act drew little of his attention, Connally did sponsor important New Deal legislation which would aid his State and section. In Texas, petroleum, cattle, and cotton were vital elements of the economy, and in the case of each, prices were dangerously low in the early 1930's. To pleas for relief from Texas and other States, he responded with three laws or parts of laws that represent his chief contributions to the early New Deal.

The first of these is known as the Connally Hot Oil Act. The need for the law stemmed from the discovery in 1930 of the fabulous East Texas oil field and the resulting collapse of crude oil prices as production reached new heights. By 1933, crude oil was selling for as little as twenty-five cents a barrel, whereas the normal value was over a dollar.³⁰ Attempts by the State government to control production failed miserably, as oil companies, large and small, ignored allowances set by the Texas Railroad Commission and sold their illegally produced oil in other States.³¹

Connally discussed the oil problem with the President. Roosevelt urged that a solution be found and made a part of the pending National Industrial Recovery Bill, to

³⁰"For a period in 1931 . . . production mounted to a million barrels daily (one-third of the nation's requirements), and the price declined to ten cents a barrel." Rupert Norval Richardson, Texas: The Lone Star State (Englewood Cliffs, 1952), 398.

³¹Ibid., 398-399; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 162-163.

which Connally was opposed. But the President persisted, and Connally agreed to follow his strategy. The President appointed Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes to work on the problem for the Administration, which also displeased Connally.³² Ickes advocated a stronger measure than that proposed by Connally. The Secretary wanted a law which authorized the president to appoint a federal agent with the power to set the production of each individual oil well in the entire nation. Under this plan, Texas' share of production would be drastically reduced. The Senator favored leaving control of production in the hands of the States and using the power of the federal government only to enforce the various State laws.³³

As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, Connally had a decided advantage over Ickes during the hearings on the bill. When the original recovery bill came before that committee, Connally succeeded in amending the House version in the manner that suited him despite Ickes' testimony. The Connally amendment, labeled by an irritated Ickes as "useless," empowered the president to prohibit the interstate or foreign transportation of any petroleum

³²Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 163.

³³Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Vol. I: The First Thousand Days, 1933-1936 (New York, 1953), 49-50; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 163.

produced in violation of the law of any State.³⁴

But the opposition persisted. Roosevelt favored the stronger idea, and he authorized Senator Elmer Thomas to introduce a substitute amendment to the recovery bill when it reached the floor of the Senate.³⁵ The clash between Connally and Thomas occurred June 8, 1933. Thomas argued that broad powers to control production were essential to the president since some States made no attempt to restrict production. Aided in the debate by Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas, Thomas was hampered by instructions from Roosevelt not to press the issue too far for fear of endangering the success of the entire bill.³⁶ As a result, the Thomas amendment failed, and Connally's plan cleared a major hurdle.³⁷ The Senate proceeded to pass the recovery bill as reported by the Finance Committee June 9, ironically with Connally voting against his own proposal.³⁸ The House of Representatives readily accepted the Senate version, and the

³⁴U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Finance, Senate Report to Accompany National Industrial Recovery Bill, Rept. No. 114, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, 2; Ickes, Secret Diary, I, 47; clippings from Dallas Times Herald, June 6, 1933, and Washington Star, June 6, 1933, TCP, con. 596. Connally credits Jack Blalock, Houston lawyer, with helping write his amendment. Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 163.

³⁵Ickes claimed authorship of the substitute amendment. Ickes, Secret Diary, I, 49.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, LXXVII, Pt. 6, 5294-5299.

³⁸Ibid., 5294.

National Industrial Recovery Act, containing the Connally Hot Oil Amendment, was signed by the President June 16, 1933.³⁹

The effect of the law was immediate, as the price of crude oil rose quickly to over a dollar a barrel.⁴⁰ The law, however, did not go unchallenged. In January, 1935, the Supreme Court held Section 9(c)--the hot oil section--of the National Industrial Recovery Act unconstitutional in the case Panama Refining Co. et al v. Ryan et al. "If [this law] were held valid," said the Court, "it would be idle to pretend that anything would be left of the limitations upon the power of Congress to delegate its law-making function." Connally's amendment to the National Industrial Recovery Act was thus guilty of an unconstitutional delegation of power, the same accusation he had leveled against the National Industrial Recovery Act. The Court, however, suggested to Connally how he might write an acceptable law. Instead of giving the president such broad powers as found in Section 9(c), the Court indicated that it would approve a specific delegation of authority to the executive branch.⁴¹

³⁹U. S., Statutes at Large, LXXVII, Pt. 6, 200. Roosevelt put the Connally proposal into effect first by executive order two days after the Senate approved the bill and nearly a week before it became law. See Panama Refining Co. et al v. Ryan et al, 293 U. S. 405 (1935).

⁴⁰Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 164.

⁴¹Panama Refining Co. et al v. Ryan et al, 293 U. S. 430 (1935).

Between January 7 and 18, 1935, Connally introduced three bills into the Senate. The third one, which was acted upon, incorporated suggestions made by Senator Thomas and provided for the appointment of a government oil administrator who would exercise the enforcement power prohibiting interstate shipment of illegally produced oil.⁴² The Committee on Mines termed it "a substantial but somewhat elaborated re-enactment of section 9(c)," and urged its acceptance by the Senate.⁴³

Connally found it more difficult to secure passage of the Hot Oil Act in 1935 than in 1933. The emergency atmosphere had disappeared, and those who originally opposed the law were now joined by those who opposed it as simply unnecessary. In the House of Representatives, numerous objections were raised. The Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce amended the bill by limiting the federal government's involvement to only the regulation of production as opposed to refinement and processing. Instead of allowing a permanent law, the House committee demanded a temporary one. Finally, it made more specific the duties and limitations of the executive in enforcing and suspending

⁴²U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 1, 254, 407, 635-636, 694.

⁴³U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Mines and Mining, Senate Report to Accompany Regulation of Shipment in Interstate and Foreign Commerce of Petroleum Bill, Rept. No. 14, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, 1; U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 1, 649.

the law.⁴⁴ For the most part, Connally and the Senate accepted the House changes, although they did achieve a minor victory while the bill was in conference by getting the House expiration date of June 1, 1936, changed to June 16, 1937. The President signed the bill February 22, 1935.⁴⁵

In later years the fight for a permanent hot oil law continued. Secretary Ickes, Roosevelt's oil administrator, supported these moves,⁴⁶ while the courts defended the validity of the law against numerous attacks.⁴⁷ In 1937, after extensive hearings on an attempt to make the act permanent, an amendment to the 1935 law extended it to

⁴⁴U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, House of Representatives Report to Accompany Regulation of Petroleum Shipments in Interstate and Foreign Commerce Bill, Rept. No. 148, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, 1-5.

⁴⁵Ibid., 3; U. S., Statutes at Large, XLIX, Pt. 1, 30-33; U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 3, 2458. William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940 (New York, 1963), 161, 162n, discusses the Connally Hot Oil Act as a part of "'minor' legislation of the Second Hundred Days" which attempted "to salvage something from the NIRA experience." Actually, the Connally Act of 1935 was enacted before the Schechter decision invalidated the NIRA, Section 9(c) of the NIRA having already been invalidated by Panama Refining Co. et al v. Ryan et al in 1935.

⁴⁶Harold L. Ickes to TTC, January 13, 1937, TCP, con. 145; Harold L. Ickes to TTC, August 15, 1941, TCP, con. 557.

⁴⁷TTC, Press Release, containing excerpts from the 1936 annual report of the Attorney General of the State of Texas, January 16, 1937, TCP, con. 643.

1939.⁴⁸ In 1939, another amendment continued it to 1942.⁴⁹ Finally, in 1942, Connally secured the repeal of the time clause from the 1935 law, and the Connally Hot Oil Act became permanent.⁵⁰

Connally was also largely responsible for the Jones-Connally Act of April 7, 1934. This measure simply proposed to define beef and dairy cattle as "basic commodities," bringing them within the scope of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933. He and Congressman Marvin Jones of Amarillo, Texas, introduced in January similar bills into their respective houses. Hearings on the House bill began almost immediately before the House Committee on Agriculture, of which Jones was chairman.⁵¹

⁴⁸The Senate favored making the law permanent, but the House objected. U. S., Statutes at Large, L, Pt. 1, 257; U. S., Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on Finance, Hearings on S. 790, to Repeal Section 13 of the Act Entitled "An Act to Regulate Interstate and Foreign Commerce in Petroleum and Its Products Produced in Violation of State Law, and for Other Purposes," Approved February 22, 1935, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937; Statement of Senator Tom Connally Before the Sub-Committee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce of the House of Representatives, April 26, [1937,] (typescript), TCP, con. 144; Henry D. Ralph, "Continuance of Connally Law Is Endorsed at Hearings," Oil and Gas Journal, XXXV (February 18, 1937), 9-10.

⁴⁹U. S., Statutes at Large, LIII, Pt. 2, 927.

⁵⁰Ibid., LVI, Pt. 1, 381.

⁵¹U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 2d Sess., 1934, LXXVIII, Pt. 1, 59; U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Agriculture, Hearings, on H. R. 6133 and H. R. 7153, to Include Cattle as Basic Agricultural Commodity, 73d Cong., 2d Sess., 1934, 1.

Testimony on the bill revealed that cattlemen were divided sharply on the need for the proposed bill. Typical of those speaking against it was Senator Robert D. Carey of Wyoming, who expressed the common fear that a processing tax on cattle would cause producers to realize even less profit than they were making without the assistance of the Agricultural Adjustment Act.⁵² Connally appeared before the committee to argue in favor of the bill. He pointed out that while cattlemen were solidly opposed to inclusion in the Act of 1933, there had since "been a radical and vital change of opinion among cattlemen"--at least in his own section.⁵³ He told the committee, "I have telegrams from the presidents of the Texas and Southwest Cattle Raisers Associations to the effect that . . . perhaps 95 per cent of the cattlemen in my State want cattle included in the Agricultural Adjustment Act as a basic commodity."⁵⁴ He also pointed out that other basic commodities were benefiting from the agricultural program and argued that cattle could and should be helped as well.⁵⁵

The original House bill took several forms before the Agriculture Committee reported it to the House.

⁵²U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Agriculture, Hearings, on H. R. 6133 and H. R. 7153, to Include Cattle as Basic Agricultural Commodity, 73d Cong., 2d Sess., 1934, 30-35.

⁵³Ibid., 43.

⁵⁴Ibid., 35-36.

⁵⁵Ibid., 37.

Unquestionably Senator Connally worked closely with Congressman Jones in the various redraftings. The finished version had two purposes. In addition to defining beef and dairy cattle as basic commodities, it authorized expenditures of up to \$250,000,000 for emergency aid to the cattle industry.⁵⁶ Production control was actually secondary to surplus removal as an object of the Act.⁵⁷

When the House passed the Jones bill, Connally abandoned his original Senate bill and worked for Senate approval of the Jones-Connally bill. In his explanation on the floor of the Senate, he noted that both the Secretary of Agriculture and representatives of the cattle industry who had met in Washington recently favored its enactment. Most of the debate centered around the discretionary power of the Secretary of Agriculture in levying a processing tax against cattle.

Connally admitted that although the bill was vague as to when a tax would be levied, he defended its vagueness. He explained that the Secretary of Agriculture would call in representatives of the beef and dairy industries for

⁵⁶U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Agriculture, Report to Accompany H. R. 7478, to Amend the Agricultural Adjustment Act So As to Include Cattle As Basic Agricultural Commodity, Rept. No. 453, 73d Cong., 2d Sess., 1934; Murray R. Benedict, Farm Policies of the United States, 1790-1950: A Study of Their Origins and Development (New York, 1953), 309, 309n.

⁵⁷Edwin G. Nourse, Joseph S. Davis, and John D. Black, Three Years of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (Washington, 1937), 42-44, 47-48.

consultation before levying a processing tax. To this Senator Carey retorted, "I wish I had the faith that the Senator from Texas has in what the Secretary of Agriculture might do."⁵⁸ Connally nevertheless persisted. He warned the Congress:

the cattleman has been paddling his own canoe, and he has paddled it to the point where cattle have been at the lowest price for years and years and years. If he continues to paddle it, the chances are the cattlemen will get no corresponding advance in their prices along with the prices of other commodities under the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

Thus, he concluded, cattlemen must be aided.⁵⁹

Connally faced opposition on two fronts. Cattlemen feared that a processing tax might be passed back to the producer in the form of lower prices. Also, most conservatives opposed expansion of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, and they questioned the law's effectiveness in helping cattlemen. Senator William E. Borah of Idaho had evidence to show that in the case of hogs, the tax had been passed back to the producer instead of being passed on to the consumer. He feared that this would occur in the case of cattle.⁶⁰ Connally pointed out that it would be unfair to aid the farmer without asking him to accept the possibility of a processing tax to cover costs--even if some of it came

⁵⁸U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 2d Sess., 1934, LXXVIII, Pt. 4, 3815-3818.

⁵⁹Ibid., 3818.

⁶⁰New York Times, March 13, 1934, p. 20.

directly out of his pocket, as it probably would.⁶¹ He conceded that the law might not work at all, but he asked that it be tried. "It is experimental," he said, "and we never move the world forward an inch except by the process of experimentation."⁶²

As the debate on the bill continued, Connally was insured needed support when various Senators began adding other commodities to the bill. Eventually peanuts, tobacco, rye, flax, barley, and sorghum joined cattle as new basic commodities, and in a greatly amended form the Senate approved the bill March 10, 1934, by a vote of thirty-nine to thirty-seven.⁶³

A month later the House and Senate worked out the differences in their respective versions, and the Jones-Connally Act was signed. In addition to enlarging the scope of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the bill provided for the expenditure of \$50,000,000 for the purchase and slaughter of diseased cattle as one means of improving the industry.⁶⁴ And in order to make the law as effective as possible, the Secretary of Agriculture was authorized to act if any of the specified commodities were "in the current

⁶¹U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 2d Sess., 1934, LXXVIII, Pt. 4, 3908.

⁶²Ibid., 5715.

⁶³New York Times, March 11, 1934, p. 18; Benedict, Farm Policies of the United States, 320n; Nourse, Black and Davis, Three Years of Agricultural Adjustment Administration, 42.

⁶⁴U. S., Statutes at Large, LXVIII, Pt. 1, 528.

of or in competition with, or [were] so as to burden, obstruct, or in any way affect, interstate or foreign commerce."⁶⁵

The effect of the act in the drought-stricken Southwest, where the cattle industry was in great peril, was highly beneficial. In the western States where opposition to the bill was stronger than support, cattlemen took advantage of the law once it went into effect. Some 8,280,000 cattle were saved from starvation and thirst, while a 20 per cent market surplus was eradicated through the destruction of 8.3 million head of cattle. The drought of 1934 removed the need of marketing agreements and a processing tax, and the passage of the supplemental Emergency Appropriation Act of June 19, 1934, insured the success of the program by adding \$525,000,000 in funds.⁶⁶ According to Connally, the Jones-Connally Act "put a floor under the cattle market and enabled [the industry] to eventually get back on its feet."⁶⁷

Cattle was not the only agricultural commodity important to Texas that suffered low prices in the 1930's.

⁶⁵Ibid.; Benedict, Farm Policies of the United States, 305n.

⁶⁶TTC, Excerpts from Speech of Senator Tom Connally, Texas, Before the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raising Association at San Antonio, Texas, March 8, 1938, type-script, TCP, con. 554; U. S., Statutes at Large, XLVIII, Pt. 1, 1056; Benedict, Farm Policies of the United States, 309, 309n.

⁶⁷Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 162.

Cotton also needed help. To aid in raising agriculture prices in general, Connally and others again advocated the adoption of an export debenture plan. Dissatisfied with the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929, the Grange continued to support this proposal, increasing its demands for such an experiment when Roosevelt took office.⁶⁸ One debenture bill was introduced in March, 1933, by Congressman Luther Johnson of Texas, but Congress failed to act on it.⁶⁹ Finally, in 1935, Connally and Congressman Marvin Jones cooperated in a new proposal which substituted a bounty on exports for debenture certificates.

A general revision of the Agricultural Adjustment Act was being considered to head off a possible invalidation of the law by the Supreme Court.⁷⁰ Connally and Jones supported an amendment at this time which encouraged farm exports to relieve surpluses on the domestic market and to cause higher prices. In addition, their amendment provided for expenditures to divert agricultural products "from the normal channels of trade and commerce." Surpluses purchased by the government would then be used for relief of the poor or sold abroad, and would not compete with regular markets.

⁶⁸Theodore Saloutos and John D. Hicks, Agricultural Discontent in the Middle West, 1900-1939 (Madison, 1951), 423, 452.

⁶⁹U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 1st Sess., 1933, LXXVII, Pt. 1, 90.

⁷⁰U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Agriculture, Report to Accompany H. R. 8492, Rept. No. 1241, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, 1.

A third provision permitted government purchase or lease of submarginal agricultural and grazing lands--provided funds were still available after the first two provisions were carried out. Unmanufactured cotton was excepted from the amendment, although manufactured cotton was included.⁷¹

After it passed the House, the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry deleted the amendment before reporting the bill, at the insistence of the Treasury Department. Connally then led a fight to restore the plan.⁷²

Two major criticisms confronted Connally. First the Treasury Department objected to the plan. Because it called for setting aside 30 per cent of the proceeds from import duties for the purpose of subsidizing exports, the plan would upset the entire national budget, Treasury officials said. Second, Senator Arthur H. Vandenburg of Michigan argued that by encouraging the exports of agricultural commodities, the United States would be charged by other nations that it was dumping its surpluses on the world market and unreasonably depressing prices. He argued that new and serious problems would arise for the State Department in negotiating trade agreements with other countries.⁷³

⁷¹Ibid., 6-7; U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 10, 11399; Rainer Schickele, Agricultural Policy: Farm Programs and National Welfare (New York, 1954), 211.

⁷²U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 10, 10930.

⁷³Ibid., 11393-11397; New York Times, July 21, 1935, Sec. III, p. 10.

To these and various minor objections, Connally answered:

I do not care if the Cabinet or the State Department or anybody else advises against this amendment, I am in favor of trying out the export bounty plan. It has been before the country for years. It has been before the Senate on two different occasions. If it will not work, we had better find it out. If it does work, we may then develop it and elaborate it as the exigencies of the time may require.

"If it does work," added Senator Borah in support, "it will far more than take care of any loss to the Treasury." Connally agreed.⁷⁴

Connally was especially hampered by the lack of Democratic support. Both Chairman Ellison D. Smith of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry and Majority Leader Joseph T. Robinson opposed his amendment. It lost by a vote of thirty-four to forty-one.⁷⁵

But Connally was not defeated. Behind the export bounty plan was the entire cotton textile industry, which helped carry on the fight. A conference committee met to settle the differences between the House and Senate, and although Connally was not appointed to the committee, Congressman Jones was.⁷⁶ Upon his insistence, the amendment was reinstated in the bill and subsequently accepted by both houses, and Roosevelt signed the law August 24,

⁷⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 10, 11396.

⁷⁵Ibid., 11400.

⁷⁶Ibid., Pt. 11, 12004, 12047; New York Times, July 21, 1935, Sec. III, p. 10; ibid., July 24, 1935, p. 32.

1935.⁷⁷ The provision failed, however, to have much more effect than a similar idea which was a part of the Agricultural Adjustment Act as originally enacted. Wheat farmers benefited to some extent, while surpluses of tobacco, flour, prunes, pears, walnuts, and pecans were not measurably reduced. Cotton surpluses were not diminished as a result of this new provision.⁷⁸

During the years 1933-1935, Connally worked hard, paced by the recovery-minded Roosevelt Administration. He spent a great deal of time getting Texas' share of government jobs,⁷⁹ discussing public works projects with Harold Ickes, and presenting Texas relief projects to Harry Hopkins.⁸⁰ He was in part responsible for the establishment of Big Bend National Park.⁸¹ Much of the time he was literally on the run.

⁷⁷U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 12, 13026, 13239; U. S., Statutes at Large, LXIX, Pt. 1, 775-776.

⁷⁸Carl T. Schmidt, American Farmers in the World Crisis (New York, 1941), 188-189.

⁷⁹Among the more significant recommendations Connally made were: R. A. Tullis to the Federal Farm Board, Ernest O. Thompson to the Oil Control Board, Marvin Jones to the Court of Customs Appeals in New York, Hampson Gary to the Corporation of Foreign Security Holders, and Carl Estes as Administrator of the Civil Works Administration. See Louis McH. Howe to Morris Sheppard, March 20, 1933, FDR Papers, PPF 1549; Memorandum, ca. June 22, 1933, FDR Papers, White House Alphabetical File (1941-1945[sic]), Box 792; Memorandum, August 3, 1933, FDR Papers, White House Alphabetical File (1941-1945), Box 792; Memorandum, August 19, 1933, FDR Papers, White House Alphabetical File (1941-1945), Box 792; Louis McH. Howe to TTC, November 10, 1933, FDR Papers, PPF 1599.

⁸⁰Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 153-157.

⁸¹New York Times, February 24, 1935, Sec. IV, p. 8; U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 3, 2822.

In evaluating Connally's contribution to the early New Deal, one might ask what would have happened had he not been on the scene. Would things have differed? Could someone else have done as good a job or better?

His role in advocating the devaluing of the gold dollar seems an important contribution. Roosevelt used the power effectively as an inflationary weapon. Although Connally was not alone in his support of this means of inflation, he was certainly its leading exponent in the Senate. His opposition to the National Industrial Recovery Bill was ineffective, but his objections were sustained by the subsequent decision of the Supreme Court. Some kind of federal control over the unhealthy oil industry would have been enacted without Connally, and possibly in the exact form of the Connally Hot Oil Act, since the Houston lawyer Jack Blalock in large measure wrote the bill. But had it not been for Connally's strong resistance to Administration pressure, the "dictator" plan advocated by Ickes might have become law. Connally also played an important part in passing the Jones-Connally Act of 1934, and in enacting the export bounty plan in 1935, though it might be argued that Congressman Jones deserves as much if not more credit in both cases. Had Connally not been the junior Senator from Texas, there were other men with equal potential in Texas politics. He certainly was not indispensable.

But care must be taken not to minimize his contribution. He was a loyal Democrat, and seldom failed to

support a New Deal proposal. In terms of service, it should be remembered that Connally was yet a "new" Senator. He brought to the Senate legislative experience, legal ability, and maturity, and compiled a record during the early New Deal alone that would make almost any Democrat proud.

CHAPTER VI

SENATE CAMPAIGN, 1934

When he sought re-election in 1934, Tom Connally found himself in a much stronger political position than six years earlier. His part in the early New Deal had made him better known across the State, and the success of the monetary and relief legislation which he had supported and helped create had made him popular both with the Texas voters and the national Democratic establishment. He was riding the tide of a popular movement, and his chances for re-election were excellent.

Two candidates announced that they would oppose Connally. One was Guy B. Fisher, an opponent of the Roosevelt Administration. Fisher's supporters were few, however, as Connally already knew. Although Fisher began his campaign over a year ahead of the election, it was only a token one.¹ "You need not worry about Guy Fisher. . . .," one of Connally's supporters wrote him shortly after Fisher announced. "He moves pretty slow."² Another correspondent

¹Austin Statesman, July 2, 1934; Wichita Falls Record News, July 28, 1934.

²R. W. Wier to TTC, May 22, 1933, TCP, con. 94; Austin Statesman, July 2, 1934; Wichita Falls Record News, July 28, 1934.

wrote: "I presume that the reason he has announced is that he didn't use all of his literature in his race for Congress [in 1932] and deems it expedient to utilize it in his race for United States Senator."³ Indeed, his hand-outs did include brochures from his previous campaign with the old date and office sought marked out and the new information stamped over it.⁴ Connally gave the Fisher campaign little thought.

A more serious opponent and one with potential power was Joseph W. Bailey, Jr., son of Connally's long-time political enemy.⁵ Besides a good name, Bailey had several other political advantages. Only two years earlier he had been elected Congressman-at-large from Texas, meaning that he had conducted a successful state-wide campaign more recently than had Connally.⁶ In addition, Connally had come under recent attack by those who did not benefit from his handling of Civil Works Administration patronage in Texas.⁷ So in this campaign, the incumbent's usual advantage of patronage became a burden. A third Bailey

³Mark McGee to TTC, May 25, 1933, TCP, con. 94.

⁴One such brochure is in TCP, con. 94.

⁵Joseph W. Bailey, United States Senator from Texas, 1901 to 1913, died April 13, 1929.

⁶Gainesville Daily Register, July 19, 1934; Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally (New York, 1954), 173.

⁷New York Times, January 21, 1934, Sec. IV, p. 7.

advantage was his residence in populous Dallas County, where the "home-town boy" was naturally popular. Further support for Bailey came from the State's "wet" element, especially around San Antonio, who remembered Connally's "pussyfoot" position as a moderate "dry" during the State's struggles over prohibition.⁸ He also received the endorsement of former Senator Earle B. Mayfield.⁹

Bailey announced his candidacy in the fall of 1933 and opened his formal attack on Connally the following May with a speech at Henderson. In contrast to Fisher, Connally and Bailey conducted an especially hard-fought contest, described by one journalist as "war to the knife and the knife to the hilt."¹⁰ Connally remained in Washington throughout the spring where he was active on behalf of Texas cattlemen and farmers.¹¹

In his well organized and well financed campaign, Bailey leveled a vicious and personal attack on Connally. Connally never mentioned his opponent by name, and notice was often taken of Connally's calm tone when talking about

⁸J. R. Hunnicutt to TTC, June 28, 1933, TCP, con. 94; newspaper clipping, April, 1933, TCP, con. 596; clipping from San Antonio Light, June 28, 1933, TCP, con. 94.

⁹Tyler Morning Telegraph and Tyler Daily Courier-Times, November 28, 1933, typescript copy, TCP, con. 94; clipping from McAllen Monitor, April 8, 1934.

¹⁰Quoted in New York Times, January 21, 1934, Sec. IV, p. 7.

¹¹New York Times, March 11, 1934, p. 20; Wichita Falls Record News, July 12, 1934.

Bailey and other critics. "Senator Connally slings no mud. Others should follow his excellent example," maintained the Cuero Record.¹² But Bailey and his supporters, denounced the Senator at every opportunity. One of Bailey's favorite targets was the Bankhead Cotton Control Act, which Connally had supported. The Congressman claimed that the law was unneeded and dangerous regimentation, while the Senator replied that it was largely responsible for raising the price of cotton from three or four cents a pound to ten or twelve cents. Bailey did his best to keep the issue of prohibition before the voters, seeking the vote of the "wets" by reminding them that Connally had voted against repeal. Connally maintained that the issue was settled.¹³

In his first campaign for the Senate, Connally had challenged Senator Mayfield to a joint debate. When Mayfield had refused, Connally reportedly said, "If a candidate will not debate the issues he is not entitled to hold office." Now Bailey issued a similar challenge to Connally. When he refused, Bailey contended that "according to his own statement, he does not deem himself worthy of election."¹⁴

Bailey and his supporters employed at least two deceitful tactics against Connally during the campaign.

¹²Quoted in Seth Shepard McKay, Texas Politics, 1906-1944 (Lubbock, 1952), 286.

¹³Ibid., 283-285.

¹⁴Handbill, TCP, con. 94.

From Washington Bailey issued a press statement saying that he would not oppose Connally if Roosevelt objected. Then he arranged a meeting with the President and alerted newsmen. When he left the White House, he told reporters, "Well, I'm still in the race," creating the impression that he had the President's endorsement. He said he asked the President two questions: first, whether he preferred Connally or Bailey as Senator; and, second, if Vice President Garner were to issue a statement in behalf of Connally's candidacy, could that be taken as the voice of the Administration? Bailey refused to quote the President's answers to newsmen, but he repeated with a smile, "I'm still in the race."¹⁵

This episode proved difficult for Connally to overcome. And in the light of Roosevelt's tremendous popularity in Texas, it was a serious matter. The President was almost as perturbed as Connally, however, and let it be known that he was not responsible for stories which reached the newspapers about his relationship with Bailey. He said that if he should approve or disapprove any particular candidate, he himself would make his position very plain.¹⁶ Not long afterward, Roosevelt went out of his way to praise Connally at a White House gathering as an "old friend" and "stalwart supporter" while obviously ignoring Congressman Bailey, who

¹⁵ Clipping from Decatur Messenger, March 29, 1934, TCP, con. 94; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 174.

¹⁶ Memorandum, March 27, 1934, FDR Papers, PPF 1549.



Anti-Connally Campaign Cartoon, 1934

was also present.¹⁷ Roosevelt used his influence again later when he instructed Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins to see about "helping him a bit in Texas between now and the Primaries."¹⁸ The Secretary replied that she thought she had already "satisfied" Connally, but she would inquire if more help were needed.¹⁹ Connally thus succeeded in identifying himself much closer than Bailey with the Roosevelt Administration, although Bailey continued to present himself as a New Deal Democrat.²⁰

A second device used by Bailey attempted to prove Connally a liar. As a part of his campaign, the Senator ran advertisements in numerous Texas newspapers in which the Congressional Record was cited as proof of how the candidates had voted on selected legislation. These citations were to the temporary Congressional Record. Bailey took advantage of this by carrying with him a copy of the permanent Congressional Record, in which the page numbers differed from the temporary edition. Then, in the course of a speech, he would call an unsuspecting listener to the platform to verify for the audience that no such vote was recorded on the stated page as Connally had maintained.

¹⁷Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 174.

¹⁸F. D. R. to Secretary of Labor, carbon of memorandum, June 11, 1934, FDR Papers, PPF 1549.

¹⁹Frances Perkins to Franklin D. Roosevelt, memorandum, June 14, 1934, FDR Papers, PPF 1549.

²⁰Austin Statesman, July 13, 1934; Austin American-Statesman, July 22, 1934; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 174. By 1936 Bailey was opposed to Roosevelt.

Thus Connally appeared dishonest.²¹

The Senator finally began an active campaign June 30, just a month before election day. Although he spent only twenty-four days making speeches, it was an intense campaign.²² He began at Greenville, in northeast Texas, where he had been weak in 1928 and where Bailey was thought to be strongest. He reminded the voters in this first speech that he had authored two pieces of farm legislation providing needed relief to Texas--the Jones-Connally Act and an amendment raising the tariff on cattle.²³

For the most part, the Administration did what it could to aid Connally. He experienced embarrassment when Postmaster General James Farley transferred an airmail terminus from Dallas to Fort Worth without first consulting or warning him. But on other occasions, both Farley and Secretary of the Interior Ickes provided assistance by telling him where money was about to be spent on Texas relief programs. Connally could then make the announcement first in a political speech. For example, during a speech at Orange, he announced that Roosevelt had just approved an \$800,000 irrigation and drainage project for the county.

²¹Wichita Falls Record News, July 27, 1934; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 175.

²²Wichita Falls Record News, July 27, 1934; Austin Statesman, June 29, 1934.

²³Austin Statesman, June 29, 1934; Austin American-Statesman, July 1, 1934.

It was especially well timed since at that very moment the streets were flooded by a rainstorm. In another speech, he expressed his confidence that the federal government would "participate liberally" in the forthcoming Texas centennial celebration.²⁴

In his first full week of campaigning, Connally made a conspicuous trip to the Rio Grande Valley. There he and Josephus Daniels, Ambassador to Mexico, inspected irrigation projects and discussed international water problems with local civic leaders. The attention given this by the press, not to mention personal contact with South Texas politicians, aided his cause greatly.²⁵

Connally next moved into the Houston area, and then he took an extended tour of the Texas Panhandle. There he spoke mostly about agricultural relief and monetary reform, emphasizing his own legislative record.²⁶ At Wichita Falls, still a major oil center, he took full credit for the passage of the Connally Hot Oil Act and its stabilizing effect. West Texas in general had given him wide support in his first campaign, and in 1934, with both his opponents from the eastern half of the State, he was even more popular. The Senator was pleased with his West Texas tour. "It was

²⁴Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 176; Austin Statesman, July 18, 1934.

²⁵Austin Statesman, June 20, 1934.

²⁶Austin Statesman, July 10, 1934; Wichita Falls Record News, July 12, 1934.

wonderful. On every hand I received assurances of a tremendous victory out there," he said. Then, toward the end of the campaign, he toured East Texas for a second time, speaking at Bonham in the north, Galveston in the south, and numerous places in between. He permitted his friends to make cracks about Bailey as "somebody else's boy," but he talked only about himself and his record--mainly in the area of farm relief.²⁷ He ended his campaign with a rally in Austin, while Bailey made his final appeal at Gainesville.²⁸

In an attempt to attract the votes of Czecho-Moravian voters living in Texas, Connally distributed handbills printed in their native language. He pointed out the inexperience of his opponent, his over-zealous ambition and his "hot blood." In a peculiar appeal that fits even less into the general pattern of this and other campaigns by Connally, the handbill admitted that Bailey had ability and it encouraged him to "wait until the expiration of the term of the well-known fanaticist of prohibition--Senator Morris Sheppard. Then he [Bailey] will have enough chance for [election]."²⁹

²⁷Clipping from Houston Chronicle, July 16, 1934, TCP, con. 598.

²⁸Gainesville Daily Register, July 27, 1934.

²⁹It is more likely that this handbill was written by a supporter, for it is doubtful that Connally was personally responsible for such a statement. He and Sheppard differed on many issues and voted against each other many times. But they considered themselves friends, politically and personally, and no other such attack by one on the other has been uncovered. Usually when they did not agree, they

Before the end of his campaign, Connally received several important endorsements which certainly strengthened his campaign. One came from William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor. Green addressed a public letter to the Executive Secretary of the Texas Federation which said: "Senator Connally has not only supported labor, but also the farmer, and the masses of the people I wish you to know that the American Federation of Labor extends hearty indorsement to the candidacy of Senator Connally. . . ." ³⁰ The Grand President of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks also circulated a letter in which he said of Connally:

There is no question as to his fidelity to the cause of the common people. He has at all times spoken, acted and voted particularly to the best interests of organized railroad labor and has never hesitated to oppose legislation which would be detrimental to the cause of the common people. It would indeed be a calamity should he be defeated. ³¹

He received similar endorsements from the Order of Railway Conductors, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen,

simply ignored their difference of opinion. Campaign pamphlet and attached translation by V. Gsovski, "To My Countrymen Electors," TCP, con. 93.

³⁰ William Green to Wallace Reilly, April 2, 1934, TCP, con. 93; also quoted in Tyler Courier-Times-Telegraph, July 22, 1934; Wichita Falls Record News, July 13, 1934, contains a similar letter from William Green to George H. Slater, another Texas labor leader.

³¹ George M. Harrison to Texas Lodges [of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks], May 15, 1934, TCP, con. 93.

Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Brotherhood of Maintenance and Way Employees, and Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. And his name appeared in the Political Bulletin of the Joint Labor Legislative Association in Austin with the notation that "as a member of the State Legislature and of the United States Congress for the past thirty-three years he has been a steadfast friend of Labor."³²

Toward the close of the campaign, Connally also received the public support of Vice President John Nance Garner. Theirs was a political friendship of over a quarter century, and the endorsement was no surprise. But it was nevertheless important. In a letter made public with the consent of the author, Garner wrote: "I do not believe there is a man in Texas who could represent the interests of this state as well as he In my opinion it would be a great misfortune to fail to return Tom Connally to the Senate."³³

In spite of rumors that there would be a light turnout on election day, the voting was heavy and strongly favorable to Connally:³⁴

³²Arthur J. Lovell et al to the Officers and Members of the State Legislative Boards and the Divisions and Lodges of the O. R. C., B. of L. F. & E., B. R. T., and B. M. W. E., State of Texas, May 8, 1934; A. Johnson et al to the Chairman and Secretary of the State Legislative Board and all of the B. of L. E. Divisions in the State of Texas, July 6, 1934; Joint Labor Legislative Association, Political Bulletin, June, 1934, TCP, con. 93.

³³John Nance Garner to W. A. Keeling, quoted in Tyler Morning Telegraph, July 24, 1935; New York Times, January 21, 1934, Sec. IV, p. 7; Wichita Falls Record News, July 14, 1934.

³⁴New York Times, July 8, 1934, Sec. IV, p. 7; Alexander Heard and Donald S. Strong, Southern Primaries and Elections, 1920-1949 ([Tuscaloosa,] 1950), 172.







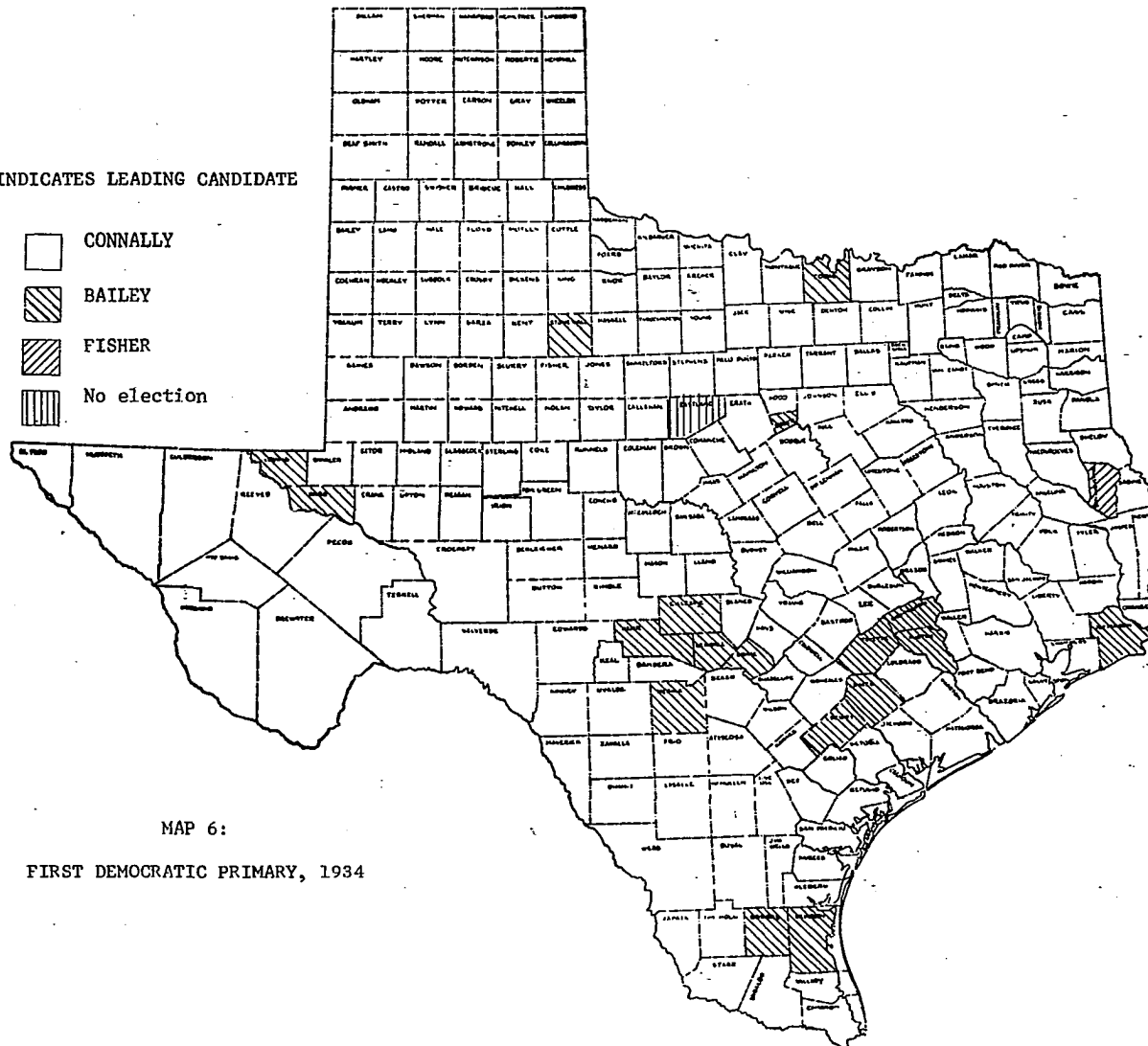
Pro-Connally Campaign Cartoon, 1934

Candidate	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Tom Connally	567,139	58.8
Joseph W. Bailey, Jr.	355,963	36.9
Guy B. Fisher	<u>41,421</u>	<u>4.3</u>
Totals	964,523	100.0

Connally led in or carried all but 20 of the 254 counties. (See Map 6, p. 148.) Fisher carried only San Augustine County, where he resided. Elsewhere he polled very few votes. Bailey ran a strong second in most of the rest of the State, but he lost practically every heavily populated county--including Dallas, his home. The three West Texas counties which he carried were insignificant in total vote. The Central and South Texas counties which voted for him were among the typically Republican and boss-controlled counties, respectively, reflecting genuine anti-Connally sentiment. Bailey also carried Cooke County, doubtlessly because it was his birthplace and long-time home of his father. There is, however, no readily apparent explanation for his strength in tiny Somervell County and populous Jefferson County. But over-all, Bailey proved much weaker as an opponent than had been anticipated. The magic of the Bailey name undoubtedly drew some votes for the young Congressman, but to many old-time Bailey supporters he lacked a great deal of equaling his famous father.

LEGEND INDICATES LEADING CANDIDATE

-  CONNALLY
-  BAILEY
-  FISHER
-  No election



MAP 6:

FIRST DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY, 1934

Connally's widespread strength can be explained by a combination of factors. Having served well for one term, he was given a second partly as a matter of custom. For his role in the popular New Deal government, most voters were willing to reward him with a second term. Moreover, he had the backing of organized labor, the support--sometimes indirect but highly significant--of the Roosevelt Administration, and the personal endorsement of Vice President Garner. He was virtually unbeatable in 1934.

As in 1928, the November general election in Texas was largely a matter of form for candidates who had won the Democratic nomination in the summer primary. The Republicans nominated U. S. Goen of El Paso for Senator in their primary. Like other candidates of that party in Texas, Goen made no active campaign. He had been nominated in a primary that drew a total of 1,554 votes--a reflection of the fact that the Texas Republican Party existed more as an organization to hand out federal patronage than as a machine to work for the election of its members to office.³⁵ But in 1934, the Republican ticket drew even fewer votes than usual. Voting was light throughout the State, but Connally knew he would win without further campaigning.

³⁵McKay, Texas Politics, 289; Paul Casdorph, A History of the Republican Party in Texas, 1865-1965 (Austin, 1965), 144.

The size of his victory over Goen and two other opponents is indicated by the following table:³⁶

Candidate	Party	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Tom Connally	Democratic	439,375	96.7
U. S. Goen	Republican	12,895	2.8
W. B. Starr	Socialist	1,828	0.4
L. C. Keel	Communist	<u>310</u>	<u>0.1</u>
	Totals	454,408	100.0

Connally carried every county in the general election. Even the three counties which voted for the Republican candidate against Connally in 1928 voted for him by a wide margin in 1934. Of the traditionally Republican counties of Central Texas, only three--Gillespie, Guadalupe and Kendall--gave Goen even a strong minority.³⁷ Even El Paso County, Goen's home county, voted overwhelmingly for Connally.³⁸ With such an impressive victory, especially in the Democratic primary, he was now prepared to return to his duties in Washington and play a vital role in the later years of the New Deal.

³⁶ Heard and Strong (comps.), Southern Primaries and Elections, 172. U. S. Goen is listed in this reference book as "U. S. Green" by error.

³⁷ The Connally-Goen vote was: Gillespie, 1783-937; Guadalupe, 3038-1061; Kendall, 801-335. Ibid., 173.

³⁸ The vote was 5034-158. Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

THE LATER NEW DEAL

Only once during the early New Deal did Tom Connally oppose the Roosevelt Administration on a serious matter. In 1933, he had viewed the National Industrial Recovery Act as unconstitutional and voted against it. But during the period commonly known as the "Second New Deal," which coincided largely with Connally's second term in the United States Senate, the Texan found himself more and more often at odds with the President on issues small and great.

Throughout his first two terms, and for a part of his third, Connally was technically the "junior" Senator from Texas. But from almost the beginning of his Senate career, and especially after the Texas vote in support of the repeal of prohibition in 1933, he enjoyed greater influence in the State's political affairs than did his senior colleague, Morris Sheppard.¹ One journalist, describing

¹Sheppard campaigned hard for the losing side in the prohibition referendum in 1933, and thereafter his influence was decidedly less in political affairs. He was, however, overwhelmingly re-elected to the Senate in 1936. It may be observed in the newspapers of the period that not only did Connally command a great deal more space than Sheppard, but also that frequently when the two men were

Texas political struggles in Austin and Washington in terms of a poker game, noted that "Sen[ator] Sheppard does not play cards."² He might have added, "Connally does."

As the "Second New Deal" got under way shortly after Congress met in 1935, Connally happily supported a number of important measures which were basic to the Administration's program. Not in every case was he personally active in seeking passage of the bills, but he gave them his backing and his vote. This was partially to repay the Administration for its support in his own recent campaign for re-election and partially to help maintain a solid front for the Democratic Party as the 1936 presidential election approached. But in some measure his support came because he basically favored the legislation being considered. He voted with the heavy majority of sixty-eight to sixteen in the Senate to approve the Emergency Relief Appropriation Bill of 1935.³ This provided for the Works Progress Administration which greatly benefited Texas. When the Senate approved the Soil Conservation Bill, no record

mentioned in the same story, it would read "Senators Connally and Sheppard" rather than "Senators Sheppard and Connally," For voting statistics on Sheppard, see Alexander Heard and Donald S. Strong, Southern Primaries and Elections, 1920-1949 ([Tuscaloosa,] 1950), 174-177.

²Clipping from Austin American-Statesman, February 10, 1936, TCP, con. 92.

³U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXXIX, Pt. 4, 4366.

vote was taken, but indications are that Connally favored the bill and probably voted for it.⁴ He voted in favor of the National Labor Relations Bill,⁵ the Social Security Bill,⁶ the Public Utility Holding Company Bill,⁷ and the Farmers' Home Corporation Act,⁸ all of 1935. And although no record votes were taken on them in the Senate, he undoubtedly supported what became the Banking Act of 1935 and the Frazier-Lemke Farm Mortgage Moratorium Act.⁹

Connally's public career was momentarily eclipsed in August by the death of his wife. Louise Connally seldom involved herself openly in the Senator's life as a politician and lawmaker, preferring rather to remain in the background and live a quieter life. But their marriage had been a happy one, and Connally's love for his wife was in no way less because she participated little in his public life. Statements such as "Tom loved his Louise dearly" are commonly

⁴He made no remarks on the bill during debates--a strong indication that he did not oppose the bill. There was a motion in the Senate to recommit the bill, which would have been a perfect opportunity to express opposition, but again Connally was silent. Ibid., Pt. 5, 5664; ibid., Pt. 6, 6011-6018.

⁵Ibid., Pt. 7, 7681.

⁶Ibid., Pt. 9, 9650.

⁷Ibid., Pt. 8, 9065.

- ⁸Ibid., Pt. 9, 9960.

⁹Connally expressed disgust with the Supreme Court in ruling the Frazier-Lemke Act of 1935 unconstitutional. Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally (New York, 1954), 185.

made by those who knew them and observed them during their nearly twenty-one years of marriage.¹⁰

Mrs. Connally, known to have suffered a heart condition for some years, fell ill in downtown Washington while shopping for a trip home to Marlin. She arrived at the Senator's office gasping for breath, and shortly fell into a coma. Connally was summoned from his desk in the Senate Chamber, where he was engaged in clearing up details on the final day of the session. He arrived at his wife's side only minutes before she died without her having regained consciousness.¹¹

The following handwritten note was received by the Senator among the many messages of condolence:

Dear Tom--

I am deeply shocked my dear fellow--The very sad news has just come. You are much in the thoughts of

Your affectionate friend

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT¹²

Connally replied:

United States Senate
Washington D. C.
Aug. 28, 1935

Dear Mr. President:--

Your generous and touching note has done much to console me while crushed by sorrow and grief.

¹⁰Interview with Mrs. Frances McKay Andrews, June 3, 1967.

¹¹Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 178-179.

¹²FDR to TTC, [August 26, 1935,] Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers, PPF 66, PPF 55.

No one except a noble man and a great man could have written such a tender message.
 For my motherless son and myself I want to express our gratitude with affectionate regards.

TOM CONNALLY.¹³

Following the funeral and burial services in Marlin, Connally withdrew briefly from the public scene. In the company of Congressman Luther M. Johnson, husband of one of Mrs. Connally's cousins; Dr. N. D. Buie, husband of one of Mrs. Connally's sisters; and Ben Connally, the Senator's only child, he took a vacation of approximately a week near Saltillo, Mexico. The trip did little to relieve his feeling of depression. One of his few public statements for several weeks came as he passed through Laredo on his way to Mexico. Reporters there quizzed him as to his feelings on the death of Senator Huey Long of Louisiana, a Southern Senator whom Connally had never admired and with whom he had tangled on numerous occasions in the Senate. Connally disappointed reporters when he refused to say more than "The violent death of Senator Long is regrettable. Assassination is never justified as a political weapon."¹⁴

For over a month Connally continued in a state of depression. Finally he shook off his feeling of remorse,

¹³TTC to FDR, August 28, 1935, Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers, PPF 1549.

¹⁴Clipping from Marlin Democrat, September 13, 1935; clipping from Laredo Times, September 10, 1935, TCP, con. 600.

accepting an invitation to attend the inauguration of Manuel L. Quezon, first President of the Philippines. Not only did the ocean voyage and gaiety of the occasion give him needed relief, it also provided the Senator with his only first-hand look at the Orient. He was impressed at the apparent poverty of the Japanese countryside which contrasted boldly with the nation's industrial development. He was also disturbed by the hunger and unrest he observed during stops in China.¹⁵ The day would come, and sooner than Connally could possibly have imagined at the time, when he would reflect on what he had seen and wonder why he and other Americans had not better read the signs in the East earlier.

Little was accomplished in the second session of the Seventy-fourth Congress, which met in 1936. For the most part, Republicans attempted to embarrass the Democrats as much as possible during the months prior to the elections of 1936, and the Democrats worked to maintain political stability through the conventions and campaigns. For his part, Connally gave most of his attention to problems of farm relief and taxation.

The Supreme Court's decision of January 6, 1936, invalidating the Agricultural Adjustment Act, opened again the subject of government control over agriculture and the nature of farm relief. The Administration pushed for the

¹⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 179-180.

widening of the Soil Conservation Act of 1935, which though it had seemed relatively unimportant at the time, suddenly loomed as the way to continue crop production control.¹⁶

Connally favored giving the Administration what it wanted: the power to continue subsidizing farmers through cash payments--now for cooperating in conservation programs which would limit production of crops as cotton, corn, wheat and tobacco. But Connally tried to write his own modified version of the future plan into earlier laws, he now sought the farm bill of 1936.

"If you want a farmer[']s getting a better price," the Senator told his colleagues, "vote for this amendment. But if you just want to give a little star dust for political purposes, don't." Connally received some support for his controversial plan from both sides of the aisle. It would have authorized bounties on farm exports equal to half the import tariff on the commodity. It was, he said, a "reversal" of the industrial tariff.¹⁷ Connally reminded the Senate that it had passed a similar provision before. "If it was good enough to help Mr. Hoover out of the bog in 1929," he argued, "it ought to be good enough now . . . to keep us on the highway."¹⁸

¹⁶Basil Rauch, The History of the New Deal, 1933-1938 (New York, 1944), 213-214.

¹⁷New York Times, February 14, 1936, p. 6.

¹⁸Ibid., February 15, 1936, p. 2.

widening of the Soil Conservation Act of 1935, which though it had seemed relatively unimportant at the time, suddenly loomed as the way to continue crop production control.¹⁶ Connally favored giving the Administration what it wanted: the power to continue subsidizing farmers through cash payments--now for cooperating in conservation programs which would limit production of such crops as cotton, corn, wheat and tobacco. But just as he had tried to write his own modified version of the export debenture plan into earlier laws, he now sought to include it in the farm bill of 1936.

"If you want to insure the farmer['s] getting a better price," the Senator told his colleagues, "vote for this amendment. But if you just want to give a little star dust for political purposes, don't." Connally received some support for his controversial plan from both sides of the aisle. It would have authorized bounties on farm exports equal to half the import tariff on the commodity. It was, he said, a "reversal" of the industrial tariff.¹⁷ Connally reminded the Senate that it had passed a similar provision before. "If it was good enough to help Mr. Hoover out of the bog in 1929," he argued, "it ought to be good enough now . . . to keep us on the highway."¹⁸

¹⁶Basil Rauch, The History of the New Deal, 1933-1938 (New York, 1944), 213-214.

¹⁷New York Times, February 14, 1936, p. 6.

¹⁸Ibid., February 15, 1936, p. 2.

His arguments failed to convince enough of his colleagues, however, many of whom feared retaliation by foreign governments against efforts of the United States to subsidize farm exports. The Administration also opposed Connally, saying that the quota system used by some countries to restrict American imports would make the proposed export debenture program impracticable.¹⁹ The Senate defeated the Connally amendment by a vote of forty-two to thirty-two.²⁰ On the Senate's final passage of the bill known as the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment bill, Connally nevertheless cast his vote in favor of the Administration and for the relief that the bill afforded the many farmers of his State.²¹ It became law March 1.

On other legislative matters relating to agriculture, Connally was largely responsible for the prevention of a law which would have prohibited meat packers from buying directly from cattle raisers. The bill, proposed by Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas, would have required meat packers to buy only at public auction. Connally feared that such a law was an unfair restriction against the farmer, one that would require him to market his cattle through a

¹⁹Rauch, History of the New Deal, 213.

²⁰New York Times, February 15, 1936, p. 2; U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 2d Sess., 1936, LXXX, Pt. 2, 2052.

²¹U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 2d Sess., 1936, LXXX, Pt. 2, 2165.

middleman, and one which would cut into the profits of the farmer rather than raise the price he received for his cattle. Connally grudgingly supported a less objectionable law sponsored by Senator Louis Murphy of Iowa, which gave the Secretary of Agriculture power to supervise packer-owned stockyards. It passed as a substitute for the original bill, largely as a result of Connally's efforts.²²

Connally also met head-on an attempt by Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg to embarrass the Democratic Party on the eve of the National Democratic Convention by exposing the number of "farmers" who had received in excess of \$10,000 per year in payments under the Agricultural Adjustment Act. Vandenberg introduced a resolution which would have required Secretary of Agriculture Wallace to make available such a list of names. Because the Democrats could not afford to vote against the resolution, they introduced a number of amendments intended to embarrass the Republicans. A Connally amendment required the Tariff Commission "to furnish the Senate forthwith" the names of the three largest corporations benefiting from the protection of such items as aluminum, steel, cameras, and chemicals.²³ The Commission

²²New York Times, April 3, 1936, p. 48; ibid., April 6, 1936, p. 4.

²³The entire list of items read as follows: "(1) Aluminum; (2) steel and iron; (3) photo cameras and films; (4) chemicals and dyes; (5) electric appliances and equipment; (6) cellophane and rayon; (7) plate glass; (8) cast-iron pipe and fittings; (9) articles or wares manufactured of tin. U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 2d Sess., 1936, LXXX, Pt. 6, 6174.

was further instructed to inform the Senate the dollar benefit each industry received and an estimate on the percentage of effectiveness.²⁴ While Vandenberg demanded to know how many farmers benefited in a large way from the AAA, Connally asked the Michigan Senator why he had not also demanded to know about the "untold millions Andrew W. Mellon reaped from the aluminum trust or the salary of \$100,000 and the bonus of \$1,635,000 Eugene Grace drew from the Bethlehem Steel Company."²⁵ Connally's amendment, along with several others, was accepted, and the enlarged Vandenberg resolution was passed.²⁶ The effect of it all on the outcome of the 1936 presidential contest was slight at most, although Connally received hearty approval of his efforts from some of his own constituents. A San Antonio voter wrote:

I want to commend you highly for your very prompt action in proposing the publication of the names of high tariff beneficiaries, and I trust you will fight[,] as never before, to approve the Vandenberg resolution with your own amendment attached. Democrats have nothing to be ashamed of when making public the names and amounts of AAA benefits, but when the country learns the names and amounts paid to special privilege in the shape of robber tariffs for the last half century, the average voter can

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵New York Times, April 28, 1936, p. 11.

²⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 2d Sess., 1936, LXXX, Pt. 6, 6193-6194.

then see and understand WHY certain industries are so bitterly opposed to the re[-]election of Mr. Roosevelt.²⁷

Besides farm legislation, another issue which received Connally's attention was the Administration's tax bill of 1936. In order to obtain new revenues to help pay for the recently enacted veterans' bonus bill and to help pay the cost of the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, President Roosevelt favored levying a new tax based solely on the undistributed profits of industry. The House of Representatives approved the President's request with only a few alterations, but in the Senate, it met heavy opposition. After listening to scores of industrialists and their representatives testify, several members of the Senate Finance Committee favored a more moderate tax against industry than the President had requested. Connally proposed one of several plans, all of which were similar. After lengthy discussions, the committee endorsed his plan. It called for retention of the existing corporate income tax structure plus a moderate surtax of 12½ per cent on undistributed profits.²⁸ Connally and other members of the committee were swayed by such arguments as that of the railroads, which were unable to make major repairs and

²⁷W. E. Price to TTC, April 29, 1936, TCP, con. 123. Although this is but a single example, it might be noted that not one letter was found in the Connally Papers which criticized the AAA payments.

²⁸New York Times, May 8, 1936, p. 1.

improvements with the earnings of a single year. To accumulate their earnings under the Administration's proposal would be to subject the railroads to a heavy tax penalty. Even the small businessman would seemingly be forced to depend on the common money market if he hoped to expand. Finally even the President seemed willing to accept a compromise, including a time limit on the operation of the undistributed profits tax so that if the law did not work as anticipated it would automatically be repealed.²⁹ Not only was the moderate Connally plan accepted, but also the Texan worked in a special feature which served to protect his own constituents in the oil business. He secured a provision which limited to 30 per cent the tax on the proceeds of the sale of an oil well, no matter how high the tax might otherwise have been under the terms of the capital gains provision.³⁰

Connally did not consider himself in rebellion against the President as he worked to enact a tax law that differed from what the President had requested. He had plenty of company, especially in the Senate, in opposing a simple undistributed profits tax. The press, however, gave some attention to the differences between the President and various members of the Democratic Party in Congress, despite protests from Democratic leaders such as Pat Harrison of

²⁹Ibid., May 9, 1936, pp. 1, 4.

³⁰Ibid., May 30, 1936, pp. 1, 6.

Mississippi that a "revolt" did not exist.³¹ Nevertheless, Connally found, for one reason or another, that his influence at the White House diminished during the spring of 1936.

When an opening occurred in a federal district court in Texas that year, Connally promoted the candidacy of his former campaign manager and long-time friend, J. Percival Rice. Texas Governor James V. Allred supported the nomination of T. Whitfield Davidson, a former president of the Texas Bar Association. Roosevelt appointed Davidson, and then did his best to smooth over his shunning of Connally's advice with a note to the Senator in which he stated that "this could be called a personal appointment on my part."³² Connally was not at all pleased with his lack of effective control over the State's patronage, nor was it the last time Connally would disagree with the President.

More important to Connally than any intra-party fight, however, was the success of the Democratic Party on the national level. The Roosevelt Administration had given ample help to Connally in his campaign for re-election in 1934, and as the presidential election year of 1936 neared, the Texas Senator enthusiastically supported the Roosevelt-Garner ticket. At the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Connally seconded the nomination of the

³¹Ibid., May 9, 1936, pp. 1, 4.

³²FDR to TTC, January 21, 1936 (copy), FDR Papers, PPF 1549, 208-L; clipping from Austin American-Statesman, February 10, 1936, TCP, con. 92.

unopposed Roosevelt and was pleased by the renomination of Vice President Garner.³³ His only disappointment at the Philadelphia Convention was the abolition of the century-old rule requiring a candidate to receive two-thirds of the votes cast for nomination. Here his strain of Southern conservatism overcame his usual acceptance of whatever Roosevelt wanted. He saw in the move an attack on the traditional Southern power within the Democratic Party and resented it greatly. He made a personal appeal to the convention's Rules Committee to reject the change, but to no avail.³⁴

In the campaign that followed the convention, Connally happily gave his services where ever needed. Roosevelt included him in the strategy sessions at Hyde Park which preceded the campaign, and the national committee assigned him a rather heavy speaking schedule which carried him to ten States between late September and early November.³⁵

Besides presidential politics, Senator Connally

³³Connally was chairman of the Texas delegation, another indication of his superior political power in the State as compared with that of Senator Sheppard. Democratic Party, National Convention, Official Report of the Proceedings . . . (Philadelphia, 1936), 166, 275-278. Speech of Senator Tom Connally of Texas Seconding Nomination of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 26, 1936 (mimeographed), TCP, con. 555.

³⁴Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 182-183.

³⁵Ibid.; New York Times, September 25, 1936, p. 2.

also involved himself in a Texas congressional election during the summer of 1936. Thomas Blanton, the Abilene Congressman who had been one of Connally's opponents for the Senate in 1928, appealed to the Senator, whom he had supported in the run-off primary against Earle Mayfield, to help him in his bid for re-election to Congress. It was the Senator's opinion that open aid, such as personal appearances and public speeches, would hinder rather than help his West Texas friend. But he agreed to contribute some support by sending his personal secretary and manager of his Marlin office, Robert Jackson, to make speeches in Blanton's behalf. This created much concern on the part of Blanton's opponents, who objected noisily. It was quite out of keeping for Connally to become involved in the campaigns of other State politicians, and as a rule, he stayed completely clear of such affairs. While the campaign was going on, and while Jackson was in the Abilene district making speeches, Connally "went fishing." Not until several days later did he make an effort to answer the complaints sent to him by his Marlin office, and then he denied that he had sent Jackson to West Texas. Writing to the leader of Blanton's opposition at Eastland, Texas, Connally said: "Let me say that my secretary was taking his vacation and stopped off in Sweetwater to visit friends of his while en route to El Paso where his mother resides. I did not know that he made a speech there and, of course, did not know he expected to do so."

Similar messages of denial were sent to other leaders of Blanton's opposition. The significance of the affair is not that Connally aided in the re-election of Blanton but rather that he broke an admirable rule not to become involved in local political affairs other than his own, and, even more significant, that he was guilty of being something less than candid in his denial that he had ordered Jackson to make the campaign tour. It is one of the few times that Connally was proved dishonest in either his actions or his statements.³⁶

If Congressional activity had been comparatively uneventful during the 1936 session, the First Session of the Seventy-fifth Congress which convened in January, 1937, made up for it. And whereas Connally previously had served as a faithful supporter of President Roosevelt when it really mattered, suddenly the Texan found himself one of the principals in a major fight against his party chieftain--a fight that threatened to destroy not only the political friendship of the two men but also the very essence of the Democratic Party.

³⁶Thomas L. Blanton to TTC, July 26, 1936; TTC to Thomas L. Blanton, August 4, 1936; Thomas Blanton McCord to TTC, telegram, August 7, [1936]; Robert M. Jackson to Eleanor Crow or TTC, telegram, August 7, 1936; TTC to Robert M. Jackson, telegram, August 8, 1936; Eleanor Crow to Thomas Blanton McCord, telegram, August 8, 1936; J. W. Cockrill to TTC, August 10, 1936; TTC to J. W. Cockrill, August 24, 1936; TTC to Thomas Blanton McCord, August 24, 1936; TTC to Earl Conner, August 24, 1936, TCP, con. 92.

Stories of Roosevelt's intense displeasure of decisions made by the United States Supreme Court in 1935 and 1936 were common, and rumors were afloat around Washington that following the election of 1936, the President intended to do something about removing the obstacle to his New Deal programs. The possibility of an open attack by the executive on the judiciary frightened Connally, but he found some relief in the President's annual message to Congress in January, 1937, when Roosevelt failed to outline a specific plan to deal with the Court.

It was not until early February that Roosevelt finally made his move. He summoned the principal Congressional leaders to a conference February 4, and sent a message outlining his proposed court reform to the Congress the next day. It called for the appointment of an additional Supreme Court justice for every existing one over seventy years of age who refused to retire, up to a maximum of fifteen justices. In addition, it proposed less controversial reforms in the lower courts which called for more rapid expedition of cases. Normally, Connally, as a member of the Senate Finance Committee and Foreign Relations Committee, would not have been so closely connected to a matter of this nature. He had become a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, however, just prior to this move by the President. This was all the more extraordinary because seldom was a Senator named to three major committees concurrently. The

unusual appointment explains Connally's extra concern for this major judicial matter.

Connally first denounced the proposed court reform in a speech to the Senate February 9, just four days after Congress received the President's message. He recognized the need for judicial reform, but he opposed the scope and method proposed:

I am opposed to an increase in the Supreme Court to fifteen judges in the method and under the circumstances proposed. In the matter of the inferior courts I am of the opinion that there can be reform in the matter of expediting business and providing for government representation in cases in which the government is interested and favor proper action in that regard.³⁷

It would have suited Connally to isolate the worst feature of the President's proposal--that dealing with the retirement of Supreme Court justices--and enacting the other needed and less controversial requests. This was in direct contrast to the attitude of his colleague, Senator Sheppard, who told the Senate on the same day, "I am in favor of the President's proposal in its entirety."³⁸

According to Mark Goodwin, Washington correspondent for the Dallas Morning News, the letters and telegrams being received by members of the Texas delegation were "almost

³⁷New York Times, February 10, 1937, p. 13; Dallas Morning News, February 10, 1937.

³⁸Ibid. Actually the Dallas Morning News carried the quote as follows: "I have in no way changed my position and shall continue to support the President's plan in its entirety."

unanimous" in opposition to court reform.³⁹ Delegations from other States, however, reported perhaps a 70 to 30 per cent split against Roosevelt. "These communications," reported Goodwin, "are largely from attorneys and local bar associations, with a sprinkling of merchants and other laymen, and a few women."⁴⁰

In late February, Connally journeyed to Texas to attend the funeral of Congressman James P. Buchanan. While he was in the State, he was invited to speak to the Legislature on the traditional occasion of Texas Independence Day. He used the occasion, against the advice of some members of the Legislature, to make clear the difference between himself and the President and to justify his stand against the proposed court reform.⁴¹

The theme of his address was that his opposition to Roosevelt came in spite of his long and faithful service to the New Deal Administration and his personal admiration for the President. "If this were a matter purely of personal friendship, I should be standing beside the President of the United States," he maintained. But he saw in the proposed change the establishment of a dangerous precedent that would

³⁹Dallas Morning News, February 10, 1937.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Robert M. Jackson to W. W. Glass, February 24, 1937, TCP, con. 92; clipping from Houston Post, February 27, 1937, TCP, con. 602; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 187. According to a report in the Dallas Morning News, March 2, 1937, Connally was requested to address himself to this subject by State Senator T. J. Holbrook of Galveston.

"rise up to face us in all of the long years of the future."

He continued with this warning:

Let some reactionary administration obtain power, and it would immediately say: "The Democrats stacked the Court, and now we have as much right to restack as they have had, and we will thereby add enough Judges so that we will have a responsive Court, a Court that will do the bidding of this reactionary administration, and with the instrumentality of that Court we will overthrow and repeal by judicial enactment all of the liberal laws placed on the statute books by this administration in the 4 years that have already gone."

Do you want to establish that sort of a precedent?⁴²

Connally continued his lengthy address, which was spoken largely without notes, advocating protection of the independence of the court system by rejecting the President's plan.

The membership of the Texas Legislature consisted of many persons who supported each side of the argument. The Senate had passed a resolution condemning the proposed reform bill by three votes, while the House had narrowly defeated a resolution supporting the measure. But Connally had to be admired for speaking his convictions so plainly. One editorial which appeared after Connally's speech praised him for his courage in speaking out. "To vote for the Roosevelt court plan while he has that conviction would leave

⁴²The speech, as taken down by a stenographer, was printed in its entirety in the Congressional Record. U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Pt. 9, 489-495.

him foresworn."⁴³ Another editor, R. T. Craig of the Athens (Texas) Review, wrote the following public letter:

It must be gratifying to a large number of Texans to learn of Senator Tom Connally's stand on the President's proposal to stack the Supreme Court. The stand of Connally rather refutes the statement of the Texas Congressman who rushed to the radio to holler "it is the same old crowd that has always fought the President that is now opposing his court bill." No one has been a more staunch supporter of the President than Connally. In fact if we had any criticism to make of Connally's tenure of office it would be that he has followed the President too far.

But when the real crisis arose Tom Connally proved his metal. Possibly it will cost him a tender of a judgeship or some other office that no one believes he would accept. But it will add to the estimation of Texans who have long considered him presidential timber.⁴⁴

Back in Washington, Connally joined an ad hoc steering committee made up of opposition Senators.⁴⁵ The purpose of this organization was to devise a strategy to defeat the bill and to organize the opposition in the face of the Administration's forces. In the Judiciary Committee, seven were known to favor the bill, seven to oppose it, and four seemed undecided as the hearings began. The opposition steering committee decided first to hear from the affirmative witnesses,

⁴³Dallas Morning News, March 4, 1937; ibid., February 11, 1937.

⁴⁴R. T. Craig to the News, Dallas Morning News, February 16, 1937.

⁴⁵It included Josiah Bailey (North Carolina), Harry Byrd (Virginia), Edward R. Burke (Nebraska), Walter F. George (Georgia), Bennett Clark (Missouri), Millard Tydings (Maryland), Frederick Van Nuys (Indiana), David J. Walsh (Massachusetts), Peter G. Gerry (Rhode Island), Burton K. Wheeler (Montana), and Connally. Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 189.

arguing with them at length, and then hopefully, as objections to the bill were better advertised, to call in witnesses for their side until Roosevelt would be willing to give up the fight.⁴⁶

The hearings drew large crowds which expected grueling cross-examinations. They began March 10, the day after President Roosevelt's second emotion-filled appeal to the people by radio. Popular opinion seemed to be on the side of the President at that point, so the opposition Senators avoided heated personal confrontations with the witnesses. Rumors circulated the day before the first session that Connally had been tapped to lead the cross-examination of the first witness, Attorney General Homer S. Cummings, and the hearing room was packed. Late in the session, Connally finally asked his first question, and a hush fell on the room. But the audience and reporters were disappointed as Connally refused to engage in a battle of words. After a few questions, which proved nothing, Connally sat back.⁴⁷ So it was, with only a few exceptions, with most of the government witnesses who followed.

One witness, Justice Ferdinand Pecora of the New York State Supreme Court, attempted to embarrass Connally

⁴⁶Ibid., 189-190.

⁴⁷U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings, on S. 1392, to Reorganize the Judicial Branch of the Government, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, Pt. 1, 30-34; New York Times, March 11, 1937, p. 15.

before the committee by reminding him of his objections to the appointment of Charles Evans Hughes to the Supreme Court in 1930. Connally had spoken against Hughes and voted against his confirmation on the ground that he was biased in favor of big business and would not be an honest judge. It was basic to Connally's position that the Senate must examine the economic philosophy of nominees to determine their fitness. Why, Pecora asked Connally, is it not just as right for Roosevelt to object to biased judges and seek new ones with good biases as it was for Connally to object in 1930? Connally retorted that he "was opposed in 1930 to the addition of one man with prejudices and predilections, and that he was all the more opposed to adding six such men now."⁴⁸

Opposed as he was to Roosevelt's tampering with the Court, Connally was not opposed to altering its make-up through constitutional amendment. Following the March 25 appearance of Young B. Smith, Dean of the law school of Columbia University, before the Judiciary Committee, Connally announced that he was drafting an amendment which was substantially the same as that advocated by Dean Smith.⁴⁹

⁴⁸U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on S. 1392, to Reorganize the Judicial Branch of the Government, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, Pt. 2, 433-434, 441-442; New York Times, March 21, 1937, p. 41.

⁴⁹U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on S. 1329, to Reorganize the Judicial Branch of the Government, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, Pt. 3, 720-721.

The amendment offered a change in the make-up of the Court, while maintaining at least the appearance of the status quo in the organization of the Court. It would require justices to retire at the age of seventy-five and would fix the number of justices at nine. Thus, it would force the resignation of no less than five members of the Court while at the same time making it impossible for any president to "pack" the Court in the manner Roosevelt was attempting. He proposed further to require that States call conventions to consider the amendment, thus placing the question before the people, "where it belonged."

Although Connally did not say when he intended to introduce his resolution, he maintained that his was the most sensible solution to the question yet proposed. He made it clear, however, when talking to reporters, that this did not represent a weakening of his stand against the President's reorganization plan. He even hinted that he might refrain from introducing his resolution after drafting it, pointing to a number of pending compromise proposals which could be adopted before Connally was prepared to act. He also understood that before his amendment could become law, Roosevelt would have to give consent to it as a substitute proposal.⁵⁰ An editorial appearing in the Dallas Morning News, which had steadfastly opposed the Roosevelt

⁵⁰New York Times, March 27, 1937, pp. 1, 4.

proposal, suggested that Connally might go even one step further and allow the Court to have the power to also remove one of its own members "whose mental or physical powers may have failed so much before reaching automatic retirement age so as to justify the action."⁵¹

Among Southern Senators in March, 1937, Connally found himself in a minority in his opposition to Roosevelt. He and five others⁵² opposed the reorganization proposal while twelve⁵³ favored it. Only four⁵⁴ of the twenty-two Southerners refused to make their views public.⁵⁵ But Connally's opposition was more significant than that of normally conservative Southerners like Carter Glass, because heretofore he had been such a staunch supporter of the Roosevelt Administration. Furthermore, unlike most, he was a member of the Judiciary Committee which considered the bill. There he was one of seven Democrats opposed to the bill out of a total of eight on the committee. And all seven opponents had previously been regular supporters of the more

⁵¹Dallas Morning News, April 1, 1937.

⁵²Carter Glass and Harry Byrd (Virginia), Josiah Bailey (North Carolina), Ellison Smith (South Carolina), Walter George (Georgia).

⁵³Kenneth McKellar and Nathan Bachman (Tennessee), Robert Reynolds (North Carolina), James Byrnes (South Carolina), Claude Pepper (Florida), John Bankhead and Hugh Black (Alabama), Pat Harrison and Theodore Bilbo (Mississippi), Joe Robinson and Hattie Caraway (Arkansas), and Morris Sheppard (Texas).

⁵⁴Richard Russell (Georgia), Allen Ellender and John Overton (Louisiana), and Charles Andrews (Florida).

⁵⁵New York Times, March 28, 1937, Sec. IV, p. 10.

important liberal legislation of the New Deal.⁵⁶

So far as Texas politics was concerned, Connally was not following a clearly popular path. Harold Ickes noted in his Secret Diary that Connally admitted in private that 90 per cent of the people in Texas supported the President's plan.⁵⁷ Although that estimate was unquestionably an exaggeration, the President did have a great deal of support in Texas, and Connally ran some risk of endangering his own political life by opposing the court reorganization bill. The liberal Congressman Maury Maverick of San Antonio, for one, seemed anxious to take advantage of Connally's unpopular stand to challenge him for the Senate seat in 1940.⁵⁸ A special election held April 10, 1937, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Congressman Buchanan served to show the attitude of a segment of Texas voters. Lyndon B. Johnson, recently resigned State director of the National Youth Administration, gave unqualified endorsement to the President, while six of his opponents were anti-New Deal in general and at least two of his stronger opponents denounced the court reform bill specifically. The voters of Texas' Tenth District, at least, did not favor the position taken by Senator

⁵⁶New York Times, May 19, 1937, p. 22; William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (New York, 1963), 234.

⁵⁷Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Vol. II, The Inside Struggle (New York, 1954), 141.

⁵⁸Ibid., 105.

Connally. Johnson received almost twice as many votes as his nearest opponent and won the election over the field of seven other candidates.⁵⁹

All the signs, however, were not bad. For Connally, a re-election campaign was still over three years away, leaving plenty of time for him to redeem himself if he lost in the present battle and more than ample time for the voters to forget any "mistake" on his part. There was also a growing concern in the South about the possibility of antilynching legislation, and many Southerners--including some Texans--were beginning to wonder about the wisdom of altering the conservative nature of the Supreme Court.⁶⁰ The Gladewater Times reviewed the situation in an editorial and concluded that Connally was in no serious political difficulty:

ONE DIFFERENCE DOESN'T MAKE TOM ANTI

Texans are not going to turn against Tom Connally just because he took the wrong side in the Supreme Court issue That Texas and

⁵⁹This was the only congressional election to occur during the debate on the court reform bill anywhere in the United States, and considerable attention was given it by the national press. Lyndon B. Johnson maintained in an interview years later that the court bill was "the major issue" of the campaign. See Lionel V. Patenaude, The New Deal and Texas (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, 1953), quoted in George B. Tindall, The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945 (Baton Rouge, 1967), 622; Booth Mooney, The Lyndon Johnson Story (New York, 1964), 24-27; Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, Lyndon B. Johnson: The Exercise of Power (New York, 1966), 7-8; New York Times, April 13, 1937, p. 21; Dallas Morning News, April 11, 1937.

⁶⁰Clipping from Dallas Times Herald, April 19, 1937, TCP, con. 104; George B. Tindall, The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945 (Baton Rouge, 1967), 621.

the whole country is strongly Rooseveltian [can] be seen But Texas is also strongly Connally-minded, and will continue to be in favor of the jovial, friendly, able Senator Tom unless he makes the issue anti-administration.

. . . He is perhaps still one of the strongest administration friends in Washington, despite his mistake in taking the tory side of the court issue. We still believe him the common man's friend.

. . . He's regular and will remain so.⁶¹

Connally and others like him expressed a great relief when the Supreme Court upheld the Wagner Labor Relations Act April 12. He maintained for the benefit of the press that the decision represented "the definite end" of the need for reorganization,⁶² but in reality he knew that there was bitter fighting ahead.

Finally the hearings before the Judiciary Committee came to an end. On the night before the Committee was to make its recommendation, Connally met with a group of fifteen Democratic Senators who opposed the bill to analyze their situation and plan their strategy. They had confidence that the committee would report the bill unfavorably, and they pledged themselves to work to the end against it on the floor.⁶³ The next day, the opposition was favored by news of the resignation of Justice Willis Van Devanter just as the committee assembled for its final vote, although

⁶¹Clipping from Gladewater Times, June 8, 1937, TCP, con. 602A.

⁶²New York Times, April 13, 1937, p. 1.

⁶³Newspaper clipping, May 18, 1937, TCP, con. 599.

the report was not credited with changing the minds of any of the committee. Seven Democrats, including Connally, were joined by three Republicans, and the committee voted ten to eight to report the bill to the Senate unfavorably.⁶⁴ With his usual ability to see the lighter side of things, Connally caused an outburst of laughter from the committee by noting that the Administration had received another five to four decision.⁶⁵

A rumor circulated briefly in mid-May that Connally might be weakening in his opposition to the court plan. Secretary Ickes noted that the Senator had been in communication with Secretary of Commerce Daniel Roper who in turn reportedly told Postmaster General James Farley "that if he [Farley] sent for Connally he might be able to work something out with him."⁶⁶ If there was any truth to the rumor, nothing was ever "worked out." Interviewed at the home of his son in Houston the next month, Connally told reporters that the Supreme Court plan was "dead." Connally admitted that a compromise might yet be worked out--even one that would admit as many as two new justices--but the Senator "firmly disapproved" even that.⁶⁷

By the time the bill was reported from committee,

⁶⁴New York Times, May 19, 1937, p. 1.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 19.

⁶⁶Ickes, Secret Diary, II, 141.

⁶⁷Clipping from Houston Post, June 14, 1937, TCP, con. 602A.

its chance for success had been seriously weakened, but its foes could not afford to let down their guard prematurely. Connally was still among those heading the opposition when the bill reached the floor of the Senate in July. Continually he made the point that the bill's sponsors were simply trying to force the resignation of certain justices, which was in violation of the spirit of the Constitution. He said that the bill was only a little less brutal than one that would cause a justice not to receive his salary and thus be forced to retire. "The Senator from Texas concedes that the Senate has the brutal physical power to do what is proposed, of course. . . . We have the power, but not the right."⁶⁸ He firmly continued his opposition not only to the original bill but also to a substitute brought in by Majority Leader Joe Robinson that would have put two new justices on the bench. "It is just as bad as the original plan," he maintained, "if not worse."⁶⁹

Another serious blow to the Administration came July 14, with the unexpected death of Senator Robinson. Without his leadership, the chances of the bill's success declined further. The opposition moved to recommit the bill to the unfriendly Judiciary Committee and thus to kill

⁶⁸U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Pt. 6, 6888-6890.

⁶⁹New York Times, July 6, 1937, p. 18; clipping from Fort Worth Press, July 15, 1937, TCP, con. 602.

it. This was accomplished July 22 by a vote of seventy to twenty,⁷⁰ and thus the battle ended.

In the way of an epilogue, Connally finally came forward with a resolution proposing a constitutional amendment which would make unnecessary a future battle such as the one just concluded. The principal features of the proposed amendment were that the number of justices would be fixed at nine, voluntary retirement would be permitted at age seventy, compulsory retirement would be required at seventy-five, only one justice would be permitted on the bench from any one judicial circuit, and no justice could become a candidate for any federal legislative or executive office. The amendment would not apply to the existing court.⁷¹ How serious Connally was in proposing this constitutional amendment is not clear.⁷² No action was taken on it other than to refer it to committee.⁷³

Whereas Connally was pleased with the defeat of the court reorganization bill, he was not fully satisfied

⁷⁰U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Pt. 7, 7381.

⁷¹Draft of proposed Constitutional amendment, type-script, ca. 1937, TCP, con. 137; Statement of Senator Tom Connally of Texas Regarding Joint Resolution Introduced by Him with Respect to the Supreme Court of the United States, August 20, 1937, mimeographed, TCP, con. 554; New York Times, August 21, 1937, p. 6.

⁷²No mention of it is made in his autobiography.

⁷³U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Pt. 8, 9413-9415.

with the outcome of two subsequent events. Joe Robinson's death required in effect two new appointments: a majority leader to be elected by the Democrats in the Senate and someone to replace Van Devanter on the Supreme Court. Connally went through the form of nominating Judge J. C. Hutcheson of Houston for the Court appointment, knowing full well that his own recent opposition to Roosevelt precluded chances that any nominee of his would be considered. When Senator Hugo Black received the President's nomination, Connally was disappointed, primarily because of Black's former association with the Ku Klux Klan. But he supported the nomination in the Senate out of party loyalty, voting for confirmation both in committee and on the final ballot.⁷⁴

On the matter of a new Senate Majority Leader, Connally favored the selection of Pat Harrison over the Administration's candidate, Alben Barkley. His preference was based largely on personal feelings. Tremendous pressures were applied by the President on a number of Senators to support Barkley, who favored the court reform bill. An effort to elect Harrison failed by a vote of thirty-seven to thirty-eight, with Barkley winning.⁷⁵

Connally's position on the court reform bill marked the beginning of a shift in his political image from liberal

⁷⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Pt. 8, 9102-9103; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 192-194; New York Times, August 17, 1937, p. 1.

⁷⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 193.

to conservative. A further shift occurred as a result of debates on various antilynching bills that appeared before the Congress in the later years of the New Deal. On this issue, Connally was even more outspoken, and he was in a position of greater responsibility in carrying on the filibusters that resulted.

His position on the issue was made clear from the beginning and it never changed. He unquestionably felt that segregation of the races was both legal and moral. Within that framework, he then maintained that Negroes had certain rights, including the right to be protected from mob violence. He considered lynching of anyone, Negro or white, murder and a violation of State law. But, he maintained staunchly, this was the concern of only the States, and interference by the federal government as called for in the various antilynching bills was a violation of States' rights. He frequently pointed out the continuing decline in lynchings which had set in by the time legislation was being considered in the mid-1930's, and maintained that the States were able to handle the situation.⁷⁶ Thus, to him, not only was antilynching legislation unconstitutional, it was also unnecessary.

Politically, Connally's position was much safer on this issue than on the court issue. For one thing, President

⁷⁶Ibid., 170.

Roosevelt was less personally interested in the antilynching bills that came before Congress. "At the most, his was a position of benevolent neutrality" ⁷⁷ And in Texas, northern-sponsored antilynching bills were anything but popular among the mass of white voters, and Negroes were not yet permitted to vote in Democratic primaries. Besides, lynching never reached the panic proportions in Texas that other Southern States experienced. ⁷⁸ Connally was defending a position which he sincerely believed was right, and he was absolutely politically safe in doing it.

The first extensive debates on an antilynching bill began after consideration of the court reform bill in the summer of 1937, although bills had been before the Congress almost constantly since 1934, when Senators Robert Wagner and Edward Costigan had introduced a measure prepared by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. ⁷⁹ Efforts were made in 1937 to attach antilynching provisions to an unrelated bill dealing with railroads. Connally blasted these efforts with the same arguments that he would use repeatedly for several years to come:

⁷⁷Frank Freidel, F. D. R. and the South (Baton Rouge, 1965), 97.

⁷⁸No lynchings occurred in Texas in 1931, one in 1932, two in 1933, one in 1934, one in 1935 and none afterwards. Jessie Daniel Ames, The Changing Character of Lynchings: Review of Lynching, 1931-1941 (Atlanta, 1942), 49. Copy in TCP, con. 113.

⁷⁹Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 186.

"This is a geographical bill. This is a political bill. This is a vote-getting bill. This is a bill advocated by Senators who are determined that they are not going to let the Republican Party get all the colored vote."⁸⁰ Eventually even Walter White, Secretary of the NAACP, admitted this was true so far as some of its supporters were concerned.⁸¹ Meanwhile, Connally pointed out in one of his more telling arguments on the political nature of the bill, that it specifically exempted "gangsters" and "racketeers" or "any incident in connection with any 'labor dispute'" from its terms. But Connally was opposed to the bill no matter whom or what it included:

. . . Congress has no right to legislate upon this question, because it relates purely and entirely and exclusively to the police powers of the States. If you can do this, why can you not pass a Federal law with regard to assault, fist fights, excessive motor speeds, or any other kind of criminal act . . .

. . . I am just as much in favor of protecting the life of a colored man in my State as I am in favor of protecting the life of a white man; but I am also interested in preserving the integrity of the Constitution and the integrity of the States. I do not want to take from my State the responsibility that is ours.⁸²

After debating the bill for over three weeks, and accomplishing practically nothing, a truce was arranged by the

⁸⁰U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Pt. 8, 8759.

⁸¹U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings, on H. R. 801, to Prevent the Crime of Lynching, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, 66-67.

⁸²Ibid.

Democratic leadership in the Senate between those for and those against the bill. It was to be laid aside until after action on the pending farm bill. Thus it was carried over to the next session.⁸³

A special session of Congress was called in the fall of 1937 to deal with crop control legislation. By the agreement of the previous session, the antilynching bill would be debated only after the farm bill had been completed. But once Congress was in session, Senator Wagner and supporters of antilynching legislation made efforts to have his bill called up, causing Connally and his allies to swing into action with a filibuster. Few, if any, new arguments against the bill were produced by the Southerners, but their efforts succeeded not only in stopping debate on the antilynching bill ahead of schedule, but also action on it during the special session.⁸⁴

When Congress reconvened January 3, 1938, Senator Wagner renewed his efforts in behalf of the bill, known by that time as the Wagner-Van Nuys bill, saying that "the measure would be kept under consideration until it came to a vote." Senator Connally answered, "a number of Senators undoubtedly will want to make extensive remarks concerning the bill," which was taken as a warning that a major filibuster might be organized if necessary.⁸⁵

⁸³Ibid., Pt. 8, 8759.

⁸⁴Ibid., Pt. 2, 1934.

⁸⁵New York Times, January 4, 1938, p. 1.

Senator Barkley did his best to keep peace between the warring factions of his party and to prevent a filibuster from developing. He quickly tired of Connally's efforts to hold up action on the Wagner-Van Nuys bill, and after a little over two days' debate, he warned that if the stalling continued, he would seek limits to debate through stricter enforcement of the rules. It was clear to everyone that a cloture resolution could not pass, and Connally confidently predicted "that night sessions or any enforcement of the more rigid rules would not deter his forces from their expressed determination to prevent the bill ever reaching a vote." "We have plenty of ammunition," he said.⁸⁶ There was simply no stopping the Southerners under Connally's leadership.

Actually Connally took little part in most of the long-winded and irrelevant speeches. His role as leader of the group, however, required his close attention to the proceedings. He would ask leading questions of those who were talking when they ran short of ideas, and he would interrupt for quorum calls when his speakers seemed to be tiring. And to keep the discussions from getting too boring, and to entertain the galleries from time to time, he employed his famous parliamentary knowledge and sarcastic wit to the limit.

After nearly a week of filibuster, Senator Barkley

⁸⁶Ibid., January 9, 1938, p. 1.

began tightening his enforcement of the rules, but Connally and his associates were ready to play by the strictest of rules. They claimed to be gaining strength through their opposition, and they promised to talk indefinitely.⁸⁷ And to heighten the tension and to produce as much embarrassment to the proponents of the bill as possible, Connally and Senator Allen Ellender threatened in mid-January to introduce a number of racial amendments to the bill and to force roll-call votes on them in order to show that the northerners were not really friends of the Negro as they claimed to be.⁸⁸

After over two weeks of filibustering, Connally showed no signs of weakening. He maintained further that his group was in no way responsible for delaying other legislation which was in need of consideration. They would be more than happy to permit other pending legislation to replace the antilynching bill at any time. "But if the leadership wants to subordinate everything else to this bill, then that is their responsibility." Legislation no less important than the appropriation bill and an administrative reorganization bill was waiting to be considered.⁸⁹ Beginning January 24, Barkley began holding night sessions

⁸⁷Ibid., January 14, 1938, p. 8.

⁸⁸Ibid., January 15, 1938, p. 3.

⁸⁹Ibid., January 23, 1938, p. 5.

in order to increase the pressure on the filibusterers,⁹⁰ but they stood firm. As the talkathon entered its second month, a second cloture motion was defeated, and although it picked up some votes over the previous attempt, it was still a long way from the necessary two-thirds. The sponsors of the bill weakened at last. They finally saw that they could not dislodge the Southerners, and they came under increasing pressure to withdraw their bill so that other business could be attended to.⁹¹ February 22, with Wagner, Van Nuys and Connally all voting in the majority, a motion passed by a vote of fifty-eight to twenty-two to proceed to the pending appropriation bill, thus ending the filibuster and killing the antilynching bill for that session.⁹²

By his opposition to Roosevelt's court reform plan in 1937 and his continuing leadership in the antilynching fight, Connally strained his relationship with Roosevelt to its weakest point of his entire Senate career. Although he was not himself a candidate for re-election in 1938, he did experience some of the punishment loosed by Roosevelt in his political "purge" of that year. A federal judgeship had opened in southern Texas, and Connally proposed that it be filled by Walton D. Taylor of Houston. Roosevelt, however,

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid., February 17, 1938, p. 12.

⁹²U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 3d Sess., 1938, LXXXIII, Pt. 2, 2210.

chose to ignore the Connally nomination, an action that was not without precedent. What was significant, however, was the manner in which the nomination was announced by the President.

Roosevelt traveled across northern Texas by train in July, 1938, as a part of the midterm campaign. He was accompanied by both Senator Connally and Governor Allred. When the train arrived in Wichita Falls--Allred's hometown--Roosevelt summoned his guests to the rear of the train, where he announced his nomination of Allred to the judgeship. A reporter at the scene snapped a telling photograph of the occasion. After requesting Connally to present himself on the train's rear platform during the stop-over, the President totally ignored the Senator during his presentation speech to the crowd. Connally reacted to the treatment by clinching the iron rail with both fists and staring angrily forward. His anger was obvious to any who looked at him. He took his punishment at the time, and later he made no attempt to block the confirmation when it came before the Senate. He did, however, insert in the Congressional Record a letter which he wrote to the Senate Judiciary Committee in which he registered his displeasure with the nomination. He pointed out that the appointment was irregular to the degree that Allred was from northern Texas and the judgeship was in the southern district. Normally, though certainly not always, judgeships were filled

by residents of the district. Fortunately the incident was soon forgotten, and it did not permanently damage the relationship between the President and the Senator.⁹³

The 1938 antilynching filibuster represented the climax of the antilynching bill fight, but in every Congress between then and the outbreak of World War II, numerous bills were introduced.⁹⁴ Senators Wagner, Van Nuys, and Capper co-sponsored one such bill when Congress convened in January, 1939.⁹⁵ Immediately Connally warned, "Any attempt to revive this bill will result in wasting half the time of this Senate and accomplishing nothing. It will not pass."⁹⁶ The threat of a filibuster was enough to prevent further action in 1939.

The next January, the same situation presented itself, as Wagner and Van Nuys again threatened to seek an antilynching law. Connally replied to them by summoning reporters and announcing, "As far as I am concerned, there will be no antilynching legislation. There may be a bill, but that is not legislation."⁹⁷ But this was an election year, making at least discussion of the subject of great

⁹³New York Times, July 11, 1938, p. 4; ibid., July 12, 1938, p. 1; ibid., July 12, 1938, p. 4; TTC to H. P. Guerra, September 11, 1938, TCP, con. 92; U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 1st Sess., 1939, LXXXIV, Pt. 2, 1490.

⁹⁴Copies of twelve separate bills introduced into the 1939 session are filed in TCP, con. 128.

⁹⁵Introduced first into the House of Representatives by Joseph A. Gavagan of New York as H. R. 801.

⁹⁶New York Times, January 21, 1939, p. 3. Similar comments were repeated on the floor of the Senate. See U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 1st Sess., 1939, LXXXIV, Pt. 1, 559-560.

⁹⁷New York Times, January 2, 1940, p. 12.

political importance to some of the Northern Democrats. Thus, they were not frightened away so easily as they seemed to have been the year before.

Congressman Joseph A. Gavagan of New York first renewed the fight over the still pending bill of the previous session.⁹⁸ After a week of debate and a few minor amendments, the bill passed the House January 10 by a vote of 252 to 131.⁹⁹ The next day it was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.¹⁰⁰ In spite of a promised filibuster if the bill got to the Senate floor, hearings were conducted under Van Nuys' chairmanship. After five days of hearings that stretched over a month, in which Connally questioned some witnesses unmercifully, the committee reported the bill favorably and unamended by a vote of eleven to four, with Connally in the minority. Undaunted, he announced, "This bill will be resisted to the utmost. The Mannerheim Line won't even be a starter to the fight we'll put on."¹⁰¹

The need for Connally's threatened filibuster never arose, however. The presence of the bill on the Senate

⁹⁸U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, LXXXIV, Pt. 1, 127-137.

⁹⁹Ibid., 253-254.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 264.

¹⁰¹Ibid., Pt. 4, 4108; U. S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings, on H. R. 801, to Prevent the Crime of Lynching, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940; U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Report to Accompany H. R. 801, Rept. No. 1380, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, 1-7; clipping from Dallas News, March 27, 1940, TCP, con. 127.

calendar achieved most of what Wagner and his associates desired in the way of attention and opportunity. With Roosevelt's nomination for a third term during the summer of 1940 and the apparent need for solidarity within the Democratic Party, Senate Majority Leader Barkley announced quietly that the House bill would not be called up. "To do so would invite the usual filibuster by Southerners,"¹⁰² he noted, it might endanger the Democratic candidates in the general election the following month. Thus, amidst unusual calm, the antilynching bill died, ending Northern politicians' unsuccessful efforts that extended back to the early days of the New Deal.¹⁰³

Connally's stand against antilynching legislation differed vastly from his stand against the President's court reform bill, although both tended to change his political label from liberal to conservative. The big difference was that the President was not personally involved in the antilynching squabble. In addition--and partly as a result--Connally was on very safe ground at home on this stand. Whatever loss in popularity he may have suffered over the

¹⁰²New York Times, October 9, 1940, p. 15.

¹⁰³Five separate antilynching bills were introduced into the House of Representatives during the first session of the 77th Congress, which convened January, 1941, but all of them, including one by Congressman Gavagan, died in the Committee on the Judiciary. One such bill was introduced into the second session, which convened in January, 1942. No such bill was introduced into the next Congress, which convened in January, 1943.

court bill he easily regained by his States' rights stand against the antilynching bill. The timing seemed perfect as the Senator came up for re-election in campaign of 1940.

Connally's loudest and most publicized efforts of the latter years of the New Deal may have been those against court reform and antilynching legislation, but at the same time he continued his efforts to help the farmer. On the important Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, Connally voted "yea."¹⁰⁴ But as in the case of the 1933 law, he played no leading part in securing its passage. He supported the adoption of an amendment to a 1938 cotton crop control bill which provided that compliance could be determined on the basis of acreage planted rather than harvest yield, thus speeding up the dispersal of some \$130 million in payments to the farmers.¹⁰⁵ He had supported the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937, but he continued to press for larger appropriations. Talking to a meeting of Farm Security Administration officials in Texas, he said:

While the beginnings of the Federal program [established by the Bankhead-Jones Act] are quite modest, while the amount of money appropriated for the current year is not as large as I should have wished, it is our hope that the success of the project may be such as to justify increased appropriations from year to year.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 3d Sess., 1938, LXXXVIII, Pt. 2, 1881.

¹⁰⁵New York Times, May 5, 1938, p. 8.

¹⁰⁶TTC, Press Release, August 4, 1938, TCP, con. 554.

A few weeks later, speaking before the Gulf Coast Council of Agriculture, he maintained that Southern agriculture deserved further relief through elimination of discriminatory freight rates, and he promised to work toward that end.¹⁰⁷

In the following session, he introduced a bill similar to several others which were aimed at correcting this practice.¹⁰⁸ Also, in 1939, he proposed the distribution of three million bales of surplus cotton through the Commodity Credit Corporation and the Works Projects Administration in the form of mattresses and "other cotton articles for home consumption" to the needy.¹⁰⁹ He further worked to protect the cotton farmer by introducing a bill to forbid government administrators from calling in loans or from making deductions from price-adjustment payments as a penalty for the production of poor grade cotton.¹¹⁰ The farmer--especially the cotton farmer, with whom Connally always identified--received a great deal of the Senator's attention throughout the period, although farmers received fewer benefits than the Senator would have liked.

One of Connally's few personal defeats on the

¹⁰⁷Ibid., August 25, 1938, TCP, con. 554.

¹⁰⁸New York Times, February 21, 1939, p. 30.

¹⁰⁹TTC, Press Release, January 18, 1939, TCP, con. 554; clipping from Kyle (Texas) News, January 27, 1939, TCP, con. 123.

¹¹⁰U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 1st Sess., 1939, LXXXIV, Pt. 3, 3144.

legislative front during the later years of the New Deal came in 1939, when Congress considered amendments to the Social Security Act. He proposed that the federal government increase its aid to States for old-age assistance so that for every dollar up to fifteen which the State provided, the federal government would provide two. In Texas, that would have provided an income for the aged of \$45 per month rather than \$30. In the Finance Committee, the more conservative members, such as Senator Byrd, opposed the measure on the grounds that it would require an additional expenditure of \$80 million a year by the federal government.¹¹¹ The committee rejected the proposal by a vote of ten to five.¹¹² When the bill reached the floor of the Senate, however, Connally succeeded in getting his amendment reinserted by a vote of forty-three to thirty-five.¹¹³ But the conservatives were not to be outdone. When the bill went to a conference committee, the provision was again rejected, even though Connally and Senator George, who also favored the idea, were both appointed conferees for the Senate.¹¹⁴ Both houses then accepted the deletion and the bill passed.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹New York Times, July 12, 1939, p. 5.

¹¹²Ibid., July 7, 1939, p. 3.

¹¹³Ibid., July 13, 1939, p. 1.

¹¹⁴Ibid., August 5, 1939, p. 1.

¹¹⁵Ibid., August 6, 1939, p. 1.

The total effect of Connally's legislative efforts, however, was positive. His move toward the conservative camp, especially in the matter of antilynching legislation, kept his popularity high among the bulk of Texas voters. And although his stand against Roosevelt's court reorganization bill was not clearly popular at first, Connally's political strength was not impaired by it in the end. On most other cases he stood with the Administration, for the farmer and usually for the laborer and the downtrodden. Toward the Negro, Connally had a patronizing attitude, and his sympathy for the worker was more theoretical than it was practical. Organized labor was extremely weak in Texas during the 1930's, and Negroes were even less significant as a political force. Connally did oppose the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 on the grounds that it served only the well organized groups, that it recognized no wage differential for Southern labor, and that it--like the NIRA before it--permitted Congress to delegate legislative authority to a board not subject to its direct control. But organized labor was itself not in full agreement as to the usefulness of the law.¹¹⁶ As if by design, Connally found himself in no heated controversy with the Administration or with any powerful State political interests as his second term neared its end and the 1940 campaign approached.

¹¹⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Pt. 7, 7865, 7866, 7892, 7957.

Connally's popularity with the voters was no secret. That the more capable and ambitious politicians of the State sensed it was underscored when none of them sought to challenge the still-junior Senator. Rumors had suggested at one time or another during the past six years that Congressman Maury Maverick, former Governor and Judge James V. Allred, and Governor W. Lee O'Daniel were each considering the race. But in the end, only two candidates opposed Connally for the Democratic nomination. One was Guy B. Fisher, who had lost miserably to Connally in 1934, carrying only his home county, San Augustine. He fared only slightly better two years later when he sought to unseat Senator Sheppard in the Democratic primary of 1936. A weak candidate and a loser, he announced for a third time. The other opponent was A. P. Belcher of Erath County. His candidacy posed even less of a challenge than that of Fisher.

Connally's most serious threat in 1940 was his health. In February, he collapsed while attending a banquet in Washington. He was sixty-two years old at the time, and reportedly suffered from a chronic heart condition. But his opposition made little effort to exploit this. His collapse and brief stay in a Washington hospital was well covered by the national press at the time, but it was absent from discussion during the campaign.¹¹⁷ He was

¹¹⁷New York Times, February 17, 1940, p. 7.

sufficiently recovered by April 18, however, to undertake the entertainment of seventy-two ladies for breakfast in his bachelor apartment!¹¹⁸ Perhaps that was proof enough of his stamina.

Due to a combination of factors, Connally's efforts for renomination fell far short of those extended in previous campaigns. He was well known, his opposition was exceedingly weak, his health was poor, and there was pressing business in Washington. Whereas in 1928 he was but one of the many Congressmen and in 1934 he was but one of many Senators, in 1940 he found himself suddenly closer to the center of action as world tensions mounted because of the belligerent activities of Germany and Japan. Connally was the third-ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and therefore was deeply involved in neutrality, preparedness, and defense legislation. It was not so easy for him to leave Washington to campaign as it had been in previous years.

His campaign was left almost entirely in the hands of others. The Senator did not return to the State for even a single speech or public appearance. Whether a cause or a result, it was an exceedingly dull race. Except for a minimum amount of advertisements in the newspapers, Connally made but one appeal to the voters. Tuesday before the

¹¹⁸ Austin Statesman, April 18, 1940.

Saturday election, he spoke over a seven-city radio hook-up by transcription. But that was all that was necessary to insure victory.¹¹⁹

When the votes of the Democratic primary were tabulated, Fisher had carried only two counties: San Augustine and Newton. (See Map 7, p. 201.) The first was his home county; the other was adjacent to it. In both cases, Connally ran a strong second. In sparsely populated Donley County in the Texas Panhandle, both men received 179 votes. As for Belcher, he failed to carry a single county. Only in Erath, his home county, did he run even a strong second. A comparison of the vote is shown in the following table:¹²⁰

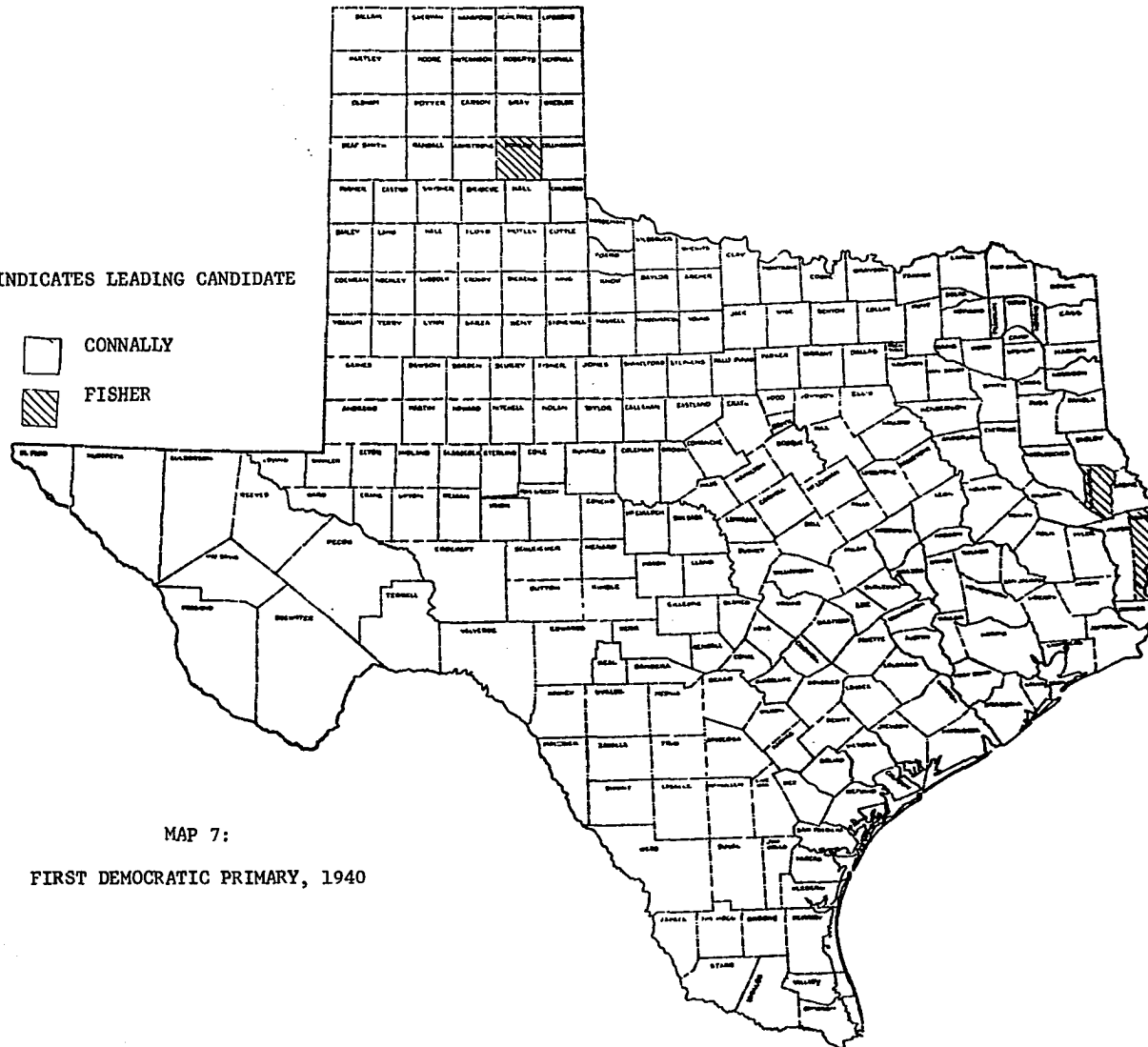
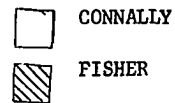
Candidate	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Tom Connally	923,219	84.8
Guy B. Fisher	98,125	9.0
A. P. Belcher	<u>66,962</u>	<u>6.2</u>
Totals	1,088,306	100.0

The general election in November was, as usual in Texas, a mere formality. The Republican candidate, George I. Shannon, ran unusually strong by comparison with past Republican nominees for United States Senator, but his strength was actually nothing more than a reflection of

¹¹⁹Wichita Falls Record News, July 27, 1940.

¹²⁰Heard and Strong, Southern Primaries and Elections, 174-177.

LEGEND INDICATES LEADING CANDIDATE



MAP 7:
FIRST DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY, 1940

anti-third-term sentiment against President Roosevelt and the Democratic ticket. Connally carried every county of the State against both the Republican nominee and Homer Brooks, candidate of the Communist Party. Their vote is compared in the following table:¹²¹

Candidate	Party	Vote Received	Per cent of total
Tom Connally	Democratic	978,095	94.2
George I. Shannon	Republican	59,340	5.7
Homer Brooks	Communist	<u>408</u>	<u>0.0</u> ¹²²
	Totals	1,037,843	99.9

Connally was only slightly more concerned about presidential politics in 1940 than he was about his own campaign. In principle, he opposed a third term for anyone, and he preferred Vice President Garner for the Democratic nomination. He was more practical, however, than the Vice President, and when Roosevelt finally showed his hand, Connally fell in line. He attended the national convention in Chicago, where for a brief moment he engaged in a move to name Sam Rayburn as the vice presidential candidate, but it was stopped abruptly when word was circulated that Roosevelt favored Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace. Following the convention, Connally

¹²¹Ibid., 177-179.

¹²²More exactly 0.04.

extended his services, as usual, as a campaign speaker, touring several States in behalf of the Democratic ticket. He was "reconciled to the idea that the Democrats had better make sure of winning. . . and prevent the Republican isolationists from taking control."¹²³ Foreign affairs moved more to the fore for Connally as well as for the nation.

¹²³Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 235.

CHAPTER VIII

NEUTRALITY, DEFENSE, AND THE APPROACH OF WAR

Foreign affairs had always been of some concern to Connally during his years in Congress, although he had been primarily interested in domestic questions. But as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee from 1917 to 1929 and as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee after 1931, he was continually aware of the issues in that field. In the early weeks of the Roosevelt Administration, he urged the passage of an Administration-sponsored resolution which would place an embargo on arms shipments to any aggressor nation. When it became apparent that the Foreign Relations Committee intended to expand the resolution to include nations attacked as well as aggressors, the Administration requested that the subject be dropped, and it was.¹

Connally applauded Administration efforts to improve relations with Latin American nations. He was pleased with the results of the Montevideo Conference in 1933 when the United States pledged to refrain from interference in the

¹Tom Connally, as told to Alfred Steinberg, My Name Is Tom Connally, (New York, 1954), 205-206.

internal affairs of other nations. "This," he maintained, "was a wholesome change from the policy of previous administrations."² The following year he eagerly supported the treaty with Cuba that abrogated the Platt Amendment, ending United States control of Cuban affairs.³ Connally also supported the Administration on the question of recognizing Soviet Russia and on the passage of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. On the latter he worked for passage both in the Senate Finance Committee and on the floor of the Senate. "I was for it," he said, "as strong as horse radish."⁴ After its passage, and at the request of President Roosevelt, he explained to a national radio audience that the law would in large measure remove the issue of tariff policy from congressional politics without Congress abdicating its responsibilities and controls in the field. It would strengthen the president, and thus the nation, in bargaining with other nations for trade concessions. In short, it would provide an efficient way of dealing with the tariff.⁵

As an old Wilsonian, Connally never completely gave up hope of United States membership in the League of Nations, although by the 1930's he realized the possibility was

²Ibid., 207.

³Ibid.; U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 2d Sess., 1934, LXXVIII, Pt. 9, 10116.

⁴Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 207-208; U. S., Congressional Record, 73d Cong., 2d Sess., 1934, LXXVIII, Pt. 10, 10395.

⁵Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 209.

remote. Nevertheless, he looked upon American participation in the World Court as desirable in itself as well as a possible step toward joining the League. He was briefly optimistic about the future of both goals in early 1935 when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee overrode the desires of Chairman Key Pittman and reported to the Senate a bill calling for participation in the court. On Friday, January 25, there seemed to be enough votes in favor of participation to get the necessary two-thirds majority. But Majority Leader Robinson insisted that the vote be postponed until the following Tuesday. In the meantime, opponents of the bill staged a large-scale propaganda campaign against it, and when the final vote was taken, the World Court proposal was short by seven votes--fifty-two to thirty-six.⁶

Connally was disappointed by this defeat, but when a special committee was formed to inquire into the activities of munitions makers at the time of the outbreak of World War I, he was incensed. He resented not only the attempts by the committee members, especially Gerald Nye, Bennett Clark, and Arthur H. Vandenberg, to gain attention for themselves through sensational "half-truths and utter falsehoods," but also their efforts to malign the memory of Woodrow Wilson by implying that he had been dishonest with the American people in leading them into war.

⁶ Ibid., 210-211; U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 1, 1146.

In reply to the Nye Committee findings, and partially to minimize their effect, the Administration advocated a law to tax wartime profits to such an extent that no future business would be likely to encourage United States involvement in a war merely to increase its profits. Such a law was first introduced into the House of Representatives by John J. McSwain of South Carolina in February, 1935,⁷ where it was passed and sent to the Senate in April.⁸ There it was submitted in turn to three committees--the Special Committee on Investigation of the Munitions Industry, the Committee on Military Affairs, and the Committee on Finance--but no final action came before the session adjourned.⁹ The following year, during the Second Session of the Seventy-fourth Congress, the Finance Committee finally reported the bill as redrafted by the special subcommittee headed by Connally. In making his report to the Senate, he said:

It was the purpose of the committee so to draft the measure as not entirely to destroy the profit motive in time of war, because it seemed desirable that industrial plants and others supplying war materials might continue to function with their regular organizations; but it has been our purpose so to levy the rates of taxation as to take out of their profits that particular factor which is attributable

⁷U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 2, 1703.

⁸Ibid., Pt. 5, 5326. Connally maintained in his autobiography that he introduced such a bill into the 34th Congress, but there is no record of it in the Congressional Record.

⁹Ibid., 5446; ibid., Pt. 6, 6839; ibid., Pt. 9, 9257.

to a state of war and to allow them only normal and ordinary returns.¹⁰

The bill did not reach the floor for general debate. By that time the Nye Committee's influence was beginning to fade, and interest in the war-profits bill also declined. It would reappear later when war seemed closer at hand.

As questions of foreign affairs loomed more important during the second half of the 1930's, and as the question of American isolation versus internationalism became more serious, the isolationists in the Senate definitely had the upper hand. The aggressive isolationist leadership captured headlines, while the Administration forces and non-isolationists like Connally were still more concerned with domestic affairs. Labor laws, public works projects, court reform, and antilynching held attention despite events in Europe and the Far East. On the critical Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Chairman Pittman could hardly be characterized as an aggressive leader. Some even held him responsible for selecting Nye to head the munitions investigation.¹¹ Furthermore, Pittman had also opposed the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act and membership on the World Court.¹²

¹⁰Ibid., 74th Cong., 2d Sess., 1936, LXXX, Pt. 9, 9191.

¹¹Cordell Hull was one. He contended that Vice President Garner would have appointed anyone Pittman might have named. See Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (New York, 1948), 215-216, 398. Fred L. Israel, the principal biographer of Pittman, provides evidence, but not proof, that Pittman was not responsible. Fred L. Israel, Nevada's Key Pittman (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1963), 138n.

¹²Israel, Nevada's Key Pittman, 129, 134-135.

The next ranking Democrat on the committee was Majority Leader Robinson. He was far too busy with the mechanics of the Senate to provide effective leadership for the internationalists. The next member was Walter F. George, followed by Pat Harrison. Both of these men gave most of their attention to the Senate Finance Committee. Likewise, the next two Democrats on the committee in order of rank, Robert Wagner and Hugo Black, were interested primarily in labor legislation. Connally ranked seventh among the Democrats, too low to be of great influence, and like most members, more involved with domestic questions than with foreign affairs.¹³

Connally considered himself more of an internationalist than the President. In one meeting they had on farm legislation, the conversation drifted to the world situation. Connally suggested that the President might consider a stronger internationalist position, but Roosevelt reportedly replied, "The time isn't yet ripe We have to get our own economic house in order before we can do anything in the foreign field." To this Connally claimed to have warned, "Unless you take a direct hand in leading our foreign policy the isolationists are going to fill the vacuum."¹⁴

¹³Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 216.

¹⁴Ibid., 218. -

The isolationists did assume the initiative soon thereafter, and whether or not as a result of Connally's prodding, the Administration finally became more active in foreign affairs legislation. Two bills, both written by members of the Nye Committee, came before the Foreign Relations Committee in the spring of 1935. One prohibited loans to belligerents and the other denied Americans passports to war zones. Connally was opposed to both measures, which passed from the Committee to the Senate in June. He further disapproved of Secretary Hull's compromise plan offered in July. The Hull proposal was less objectionable to the Administration because it gave the President discretionary powers to apply sanctions against belligerents, but Connally held that the compromise would simply encourage the isolationists to continue their efforts. They could claim that the President too was concerned about aiding belligerents, and in fact they did soon demand a law that would require a complete arms embargo.¹⁵

Hull's proposal was rejected by a committee vote, and the isolationists' more extreme neutrality bill went before the Senate late in August. Connally was horrified at the narrow limits it placed on the president once he proclaimed a state of war in existence. In the first place,

¹⁵Ibid., 219; Hull, Memoirs, 410. Some of the details of the bill's history are given in Israel, Nevada's Key Pittman, 137-144.

the Senator felt that it was "a serious invasion of the President's powers to initiate and direct our foreign policy."¹⁶ Secondly, as he told the Senate during the debate on the bill, the provision applying an arms embargo to both sides was dangerous:

Mr. President, that is not neutrality; that is a form of unneutrality. That is a form of declaration which announces that the United States will take the side of the strong and the powerful against the weak, the unprepared, and the defenseless. Why not leave that determination to the President of the United States when and if, in his conduct of our foreign relations, it becomes a sound American policy for him to take a position in a crisis of that kind?¹⁷

He asked what the United States would do in case Canada were attacked. Refuse to sell her needed supplies?¹⁸ He objected during the brief debate and complained, "I do not believe that the Committee on Foreign Relations or the Senate itself has had sufficient time for deliberation and proper consideration of the joint resolution."¹⁹ In the end, Connally accepted the embargo provision and voted for the joint resolution known as the Neutrality Act of 1935. But he did so with serious reservations, and only because it was a temporary measure, to expire February 29, 1936.

Connally personally hoped that the resolution might still fail by reason of presidential veto. The Senate

¹⁶Ibid., 220.

¹⁷U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., 1935, LXXIX, Pt. 13, 14432.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

completed Congressional action Saturday, August 24, and adjournment was scheduled for Monday, August 26. Veto would have been an easy matter, either through the normal manner or by pocket veto. Connally later reported that he had intended to encourage the President's veto, but the following Monday, as the Senate was about to adjourn, his wife's death occurred. Affairs of state were forgotten as he left Washington to make arrangements for her burial in Marlin. When he later learned that Roosevelt had vacillated about signing or vetoing the resolution, he wondered what difference it might have made if he could have added his slight influence to the argument for veto.²⁰

The fight was renewed when Congress came back into session in January, 1936. Connally was pleased to learn from the President that Secretary of State Hull was preparing a bill that would limit the sale of all goods to belligerents to their pre-war levels. When this was presented to the Foreign Relations Committee, however, numerous objections were raised. Such a law would seriously restrict

²⁰Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 220-221. Charles Callan Tansill relates that when the bill came to Roosevelt, "Secretary Hull indicated several provisions that were distasteful to him [?]. But the President waved aside these objections and approved the bill" Charles Callan Tansill, Back Door to War: The Roosevelt Foreign Policy, 1933-1941 (Chicago, 1952), 221. A biographer of Cordell Hull, on the other hand, writes that "Roosevelt signed the bill with the gravest misgivings." Harold B. Hinton, Cordell Hull: A Biography (Garden City, New York, 1942), 292. For his part, Hull remembered pointing out shortcomings in the bill but claims to have suggested to the President that he sign the bill rather than provoke a fight with Congress. Hull, Memoirs, 413-415.

American exports and profits. Hull's proposal died in the committee, which instead reported out another compromise bill broadening the terms of the first law and extending it to May 1, 1937. Connally was displeased both with the extension of the date and the expansion of the terms.²¹

Again the isolationists put forward charges that Woodrow Wilson had lied to the United States in 1917 about the causes of war, and the present legislation was needed to insure that the United States would not again be needlessly dragged into war. Connally could not resist the temptation to defend his great hero of the past:

Mr. President, I was not an intimate of President Woodrow Wilson. I was only a new Member of the House of Representatives when the war began; but, without that intimacy, I as one of his admirers--not always as a supporter in every detail of his policies, but one of his admirers--desire to express my own resentment of the coarse, common insult which the Senator from North Dakota [Gerald Nye] has heaped upon one of the great figures in American History.

I am not speaking as a Democrat. Let us for the moment forget partisanship. Whether you loved Woodrow Wilson or whether you hated him, whether you agreed with him or whether you opposed him, when the history of this Republic shall be written, his titanic figure will tower above some of the puny pigmies who now bark at his memory as Pike[']s Peak towers above the fog and the bog of [an] Arkansas swamp. . . .²²

²¹Ibid., 221-222; Hull, Memoirs, 465; Israel, Nevada's Key Pittman, 145-148.

²²U. S., Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 2d Sess., 1936, LXXX, Pt. 1, 502. A more verbose, more colorful, and slightly stronger version of these remarks is given in Connally's autobiography and was reported in abbreviated form by the New York Times. Connally was known frequently to alter

With considerable reservations and frustration, Connally again supported the Neutrality Act, judging that the mood of Congress and the nation would not permit repealing or weakening it at that time.²³ With more encouragement from the Administration, he would likely have voted against it. But like the President, he did not think it politically wise at the time to make a strong stand against the Neutrality Act even though he did not favor it.

In 1936, the Spanish Civil War began, presenting a problem not covered by the Neutrality Act. Connally spoke to Roosevelt at Hyde Park just previous to the 1936 national elections, and learned, to his disgust, that Roosevelt favored extending the Act to cover the Spanish Civil War. When the resolution came before Congress in early January, Connally did not press his opposition, but rather voted with the eighty-one to zero majority that passed the resolution in the Senate.²⁴ Then, during the next few weeks, the matter of extending the 1936 Neutrality Act past its expiration date had to be considered. The only change in the law as it became permanent in March was a provision that belligerents

the record after making strong personal comments from the floor. He mistakenly attributed this speech to his arguments of 1935 instead of 1936 in his autobiography. See Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 214, and New York Times, January 17, 1936, p. 8.

²³No record vote was taken in the Senate, but his vote against attempts to amend the resolution with stronger isolationist terms indicates his general support of the Administration in not opposing the bill.

²⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 75th Cong., 1st Sess., 1937, LXXXI, Pt. 1, 80.

could buy goods from the United States if the terms were "cash and carry." Connally's contribution to debates on the Neutrality Act were negligible, since the fight against the court reorganization bill held his attention almost entirely during these weeks. Upon the Senate's first approval of the extension, he was absent and did not vote, but it was announced that if present he would have voted "aye."²⁵ The Senate version differed slightly from that of the House, and when the Senate voted on the compromise resolution in late April, Connally supported the law with the majority of forty-one to fifteen.²⁶ This is one time when Connally was not following his convictions in casting his vote.

The status of American neutrality remained unchanged through 1938 and 1939. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which was already fairly weak when it came to initiating neutrality legislation, was further weakened by the serious and extended illness of its chairman, Senator Pittman. Connally conferred with President Roosevelt March 16, 1939, about the possibility of repealing the arms embargo act, and the decision was reached that such a move should begin in the House of Representatives. The House, under the leadership of Sol Bloom, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, passed a bill that would have changed the existing situation little if any, but Connally had some hope of amending it in

²⁵Ibid., Pt. 2, 1807.

²⁶Ibid., Pt. 4, 3962.

the Senate committee so that the arms embargo would be repealed. When he moved that the committee proceed to the bill, however, no one seconded his motion. Immediately, Senator Clark moved that the committee put off all consideration of neutrality legislation until the next session of Congress. The isolationists carried the motion, with Connally voting in the minority.²⁷

A week later Connally was once again involved in discussions with President Roosevelt over neutrality legislation. Roosevelt asked that the arms embargo be repealed, expressing a fear that war might erupt in Europe at any moment. The Neutrality Act would obviously work to the detriment of the democracies of Europe, and Roosevelt admitted that it had been a mistake to pass the law in the first place.²⁸ It was at this conference that Senator Borah insisted that there would be no general European war in 1939, despite intelligence reports to the contrary. Roosevelt failed at this meeting to bring pressure on Congress to repeal the Neutrality Act before it adjourned. Although Connally would have been pleased if he had, Connally showed no initiative in the matter himself.²⁹

Shortly after Congress adjourned in 1939, the general European war did erupt, and it became abundantly clear

²⁷Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 226-227.

²⁸Ibid., 227; Hull, Memoirs, 693.

²⁹Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 227-228.

how foolish the American Neutrality Act really was. Connally was one of the Congressional leaders attending a White House conference that preceded the special session September 21. Following the conference, Chairman Pittman asked Connally to lead the floor fight for repeal of the Neutrality Act. Pittman was definitely ailing, and others who ranked higher than Connally on the Foreign Relations Committee were passed over for the task for various reasons.

After listening to the requests of the President, Connally drafted a bill which would permit "cash and carry" sale of arms to belligerents. "The important thing," he told reporters, "is the carrying in foreign ships of supplies for belligerents. The method of payment, whether in cash or credit, is not vital."³⁰ He experienced little difficulty in getting the bill approved by the committee; the trouble came on the Senate floor. The isolationists proposed numerous amendments including one which would have prohibited the sale of offensive weapons but not defensive weapons. Connally, now working with the full cooperation of the Senate leadership, answered each challenge as it was presented. Senator Rush Holt of West Virginia tried to embarrass Connally by pointing out the Texan's voting record on the Neutrality Act since 1935. "The Senator [Holt] is at liberty to read my record as he chooses," Connally replied. "I

³⁰New York Times, September 20, 1939, p. 16.

have already told the Senate that I was sorry that I voted for the embargo when it was first passed--that I made a mistake--and I don't mind anybody knowing that I intend voting to correct that mistake."³¹ After a month's debate, the bill finally emerged much as Connally had written it, passing by a vote of sixty-three to thirty.³² It passed the House easily and became law November 4, 1939. This was Connally's first personal contribution to foreign affairs legislation. And he was justly proud when, at the signing ceremony at the White House, Roosevelt told him, "This is the most important action that has taken place in our foreign policy during my administration."³³

As the European war moved into 1940, Connally became a central figure in Washington as one of a group of Senators who held weekly conferences on foreign affairs with the President. As he grew closer personally to Roosevelt, it is less surprising that he carefully avoided getting too involved in any of the anti-third-term political campaigns, especially that of Vice President Garner. Roosevelt continued to look to Connally for help in getting administration policy passed through the Senate, although Connally was still not a high-ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

³¹Ibid., October 24, 1939, p. 12.

³²Ibid., October 28, 1938, pp. 1, 2; U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1939, LXXXV, Pt. 1, 1024.

³³Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 228-230.

Following the announcement that France was going to ask Germany for an armistice, Roosevelt asked Connally to secure a resolution from the Senate to the effect that French property in the Western Hemisphere could not be transferred to another non-American country. This was accomplished June 17 by a unanimous vote.³⁴ Undoubtedly it could have been accomplished by any other Senator, but it was significant that the President requested Connally to act as his spokesman.

Acting on another suggestion from the President, Connally introduced a bill requiring the registration and fingerprinting of aliens, permitting the deportation of certain aliens, requiring the registration of foreign-controlled agencies and organizations, and making unlawful any attempt to interfere with the operations of the Army, Navy, and Coast Guard.³⁵ It was approved June 27.³⁶ Then he renewed his interests, which went well back into the 1930's, of increasing the size and strength of the navy. In 1938, he had called for the "biggest, most powerful navy in the world," because, as he said, "If we had the world's best navy no power would dare attack the shores of the United States."³⁷ Now, in 1940, with Britain under attack from Germany, the

³⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, LXXXVI, Pt. 8, 8394.

³⁵Ibid., 8340-8347, 8952; New York Times, June 16, 1940, p. 23.

³⁶U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, LXXXVI, Pt. 8, 9127.

³⁷New York Times, November 9, 1938, p. 24.

United States had less reason to rest on the strength of the British navy, and Connally began urging the establishment of a two-ocean navy. Again, at the request of the President, he undertook to convince the general public through a national radio broadcast that this move was necessary. Public opinion was sufficiently stirred that the Administration had no difficulty in getting Congress to begin the giant naval-armament program.

As time passed, Connally became more interested in defense and preparedness measures. In August, 1940, a major military appropriation bill held the attention of the Senate, and Senator Vandenberg, still the obstructionist leader of the isolationists, attempted to amend the bill with a provision that would create a joint committee of Congress to supervise the President's expenditure of funds already appropriated. Connally belittled the idea, showing how ridiculous it would be if such a committee sat arguing about petty details at a time of crisis. The amendment was defeated.³⁸

Another of Connally's interests in 1940 was the war-profits tax which he had first proposed, without success, in 1936. Not only would such a tax discourage business from desiring war in order to make extra profits, but also it would provide a means to help finance a war if one were to occur. He kept the idea alive by introducing similar bills

³⁸U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, Pt. 6, 6591-6592.

in 1937, 1938, and 1939, but no vote was ever taken.³⁹ Only in 1938 did it get out of committee. In June, 1940, as the possibility of American involvement in the war increased, Connally reintroduced the measure in the form of an amendment to the general tax bill. It provided for a complex system of taxation which would go into effect automatically if war were declared.⁴⁰ A more drastic war tax was also submitted by Senator Homer T. Bone of Washington which would have virtually confiscated incomes above a moderate level in times of war. When comparing the two bills, Connally admitted that his proposal "milks the old cow right down to the point of exhaustion," but it differed from the Bone amendment in that "it don't exhaust her." The Connally amendment, which was really the work of many persons, was accepted in the Senate by a vote of fifty-one to twenty-eight.⁴¹ But in spite of Connally's efforts in the Senate, Congress removed the war-profits provision before final passage. A second tax bill, one dealing with excess profits, came before Congress later in the summer of 1940, and Connally again succeeded in getting his proposal attached as a rider.⁴² But

³⁹New York Times, February 2, 1937, p. 12; ibid., January 30, 1938, p. 7; TTC, Press Release, April 13, 1939, TCP, con. 554; New York Times, April 14, 1939, p. 8.

⁴⁰U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, LXXXVI, Pt. 8, 8304; New York Times, June 16, 1940, p. 23.

⁴¹New York Times, June 20, 1940, p. 1; U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, LXXXVI, Pt. 8, 8630.

⁴²U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, LXXXVI, Pt. 11, 12312.

it too failed to survive the conference committee, and the idea died.⁴³

Right in the midst of the presidential campaign, after Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie had been nominated by their respective parties, Congress considered the Selective Service Bill. Senators Robert Taft, Burton Wheeler, and Vandenberg led the opposition. They demanded that only volunteers be added to the army. The position of the Administration was that this would not suffice. The volunteer system would not increase the size of the army fast enough. Following a formal speech by Vandenberg on the strengths and virtues of the volunteer system, Connally rose for rebuttal, statistics in hand. Keeping in mind the home States of his chief opponents, he noted that Ohio, Montana, and Michigan, as well as Senator Nye's North Dakota, all had volunteer enlistment records of less than one per ten thousand eligible men. In fact, Michigan had the lowest rate in the Union. Prior to the Connally speech, the Democratic Whip had feared the Administration bill would be defeated, but on the final vote, it passed fifty-eight to thirty-one.⁴⁴

Connally's star continued to rise. His leadership

⁴³New York Times, September 20, 1940, p. 1; ibid., September 26, 1940, p. 22; ibid., September 30, 1940, p. 9.

⁴⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 76th Cong., 3d Sess., 1940, LXXXVI, Pt. 10, 11142; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 238-239.

abilities in foreign affairs were recognized by the President and by his colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In November, 1940, Chairman Pittman died, advancing Connally to the position of fourth-ranking Democrat.⁴⁵ Above him were Pat Harrison, Walter George, and Robert F. Wagner. Harrison was already chairman of the Finance Committee, and did not intend to give up that for Foreign Relations. Wagner was chairman of the Banking and Finance Committee. Senator George ranked second on the Finance Committee and would logically succeed to the chairmanship, but his main interests were in tax matters. He hinted to Connally as the two traveled back from the Pittman funeral that he might pass up the chairmanship of Foreign Relations in favor of Connally. When the time came, however, he changed his mind and assumed the head position. Connally remained the fourth-ranking Democrat, but in effect was next in line to be chairman and in practice assumed much of the burden of leadership on the committee.⁴⁶

Following Roosevelt's post-election vacation cruise in the fall of 1940, Connally was called to the White House once again. Roosevelt explained in some detail the need for increasing aid to Britain through a lend-lease program. The President requested that Connally steer through the Senate a bill providing such a program. Connally carried a full share

⁴⁵Due to death and departure, Joseph Robinson and Hugo Black were no longer in the Senate.

⁴⁶U. S., Congress, Official Congressional Directory, 77th Cong., 1st Sess., 1941, 179; Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 241.

of the burden in quizzing witnesses who appeared before the Foreign Relations Committee. Alf M. Landon, former governor of Kansas and the 1936 Republican candidate for president, pleaded for "limited" aid with greater congressional controls attached than the proposed bill called for. Connally, who was usually jealous of congressional prerogatives, argued that Congress would still be in control because of its controls over expenditures.⁴⁷ To Judge Herbert A. O'Brien, chairman of the New York Committee to Keep America Out of War, Connally reiterated his own desire to keep America at peace and reminded the witness that only Congress could declare war.⁴⁸ To candidates friendly to the lend-lease bill, he often failed to ask a single question, although when Wendell Willkie, 1940 Republican presidential candidate appeared to testify in favor of the bill, Connally said to the committee, "I think Mr. Willkie has made a very fine American statement before this committee. I personally am very much obliged to him for coming here."⁴⁹ After a month of hearings, the Committee approved the bill by a vote of fifteen to eight.

Debate in the Senate proved more heated than the hearings had been. Senator Burton K. Wheeler charged, "This is not a bill to keep war away. It is a bill to permit the

⁴⁷U. S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings, on S. 275, a Bill Further to Promote the Defense of the United States, 77th Cong., 1st Sess., 1941, Pt. 2, 670.

⁴⁸Ibid., 643.

⁴⁹Ibid., Pt. 3, 897.

President to carry on undeclared war."⁵⁰ Senator Bennett Clark echoed this with the charge that the bill was nothing more than a war bill. Connally replied that the President did not need this law to go to war; he could get the nation into a war any time he wanted to with his powers as commander-in-chief. This proposal, Connally maintained, was to keep the United States out of war if at all possible.⁵¹ At last the isolationist opposition was overcome and the Lend-Lease Act passed the Senate by a vote of sixty to thirty-one.⁵² Connally served the President well in getting the measure approved.

Connally worked closely with Roosevelt through the spring and summer of 1941, keeping informed about developments in foreign affairs. Without exception, he approved the actions and policies of the Administration, including the application of the Lend-Lease Act to Russia following Germany's invasion of that country in June. He also approved the Administration's decision to take over the Danish possessions of Greenland and Iceland, after Denmark was occupied by Germany.⁵³ Connally was unquestionably one

⁵⁰New York Times, March 9, 1941, p. 21.

⁵¹Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 242-243; U. S., Congressional Record, 77th Cong., 1st Sess., 1941, LXXXVII, Pt. 2, 1152-1160.

⁵²U. S., Congressional Record, 77th Cong., 1st Sess., 1941, LXXXVII, Pt. 2, 2097.

⁵³Connally, My Name Is Tom Connally, 244-245.

of the most faithful and most important supporters the Administration had in the Senate as American involvement in the war drew closer.

Since the fight over American neutrality had begun in 1935, Connally had taken an increased interest in foreign affairs. His concern for inflation, farm relief, oil regulation, and his opposition to court reform and antilynching legislation had continued to hold most of his attention through the 1930's, but his interest was definitely shifting with the needs of the times.

So far as basic changes in domestic policies were concerned, the days of the New Deal were at an end. He advanced to the chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the eve of war. Senator Harrison died June 22, 1941, leaving one of two chairmanships open to Connally. Senator George was given his choice of the Finance Committee or Foreign Relations Committee, and he chose to head the former. Thus Connally advanced in name to a position he had held in practice for some months. Connally, in his last pre-war effort for the Administration, aided in the Senate passage of an amendment to the Neutrality Act which permitted merchant ships to be armed and allowed American vessels to enter the war zones. The bill passed the Senate 50 to 37 and the House 212 to 194.⁵⁴

⁵⁴U. S., Congressional Record, 77th Cong., 1st Sess., 1941, Pt. 8, 8680, 8891.

As one of the Senate's chief spokesmen for the Roosevelt Administration on foreign policy during the war years, and throughout the Administration of Harry Truman that followed, Connally would become a far more famous person than he was by 1941. But that should not detract from his significance during the years of the New Deal and the contributions he made--positive and negative--in the domestic affairs of the nation. As depression, unemployment, and peace gave way to war, an era came to an end for Tom Connally as well as for a nation.

CHAPTER IX

CONNALLY AT MID-CAREER

When the United States entered World War II, Tom Connally had served a little over half of his Senate career. Already it was one of more than average significance. Connally was fortunate in many ways. His election to the Senate in 1928 was really more than he should have expected as a little known Texas Congressman against an incumbent Senator of only one term. He was fortunate that other more famous and more powerful Texas politicians did not seek the seat and heighten the competition. For surely had John Nance Garner, Sam Rayburn, Pat Neff, or Dan Moody also been a candidate against Earle B. Mayfield that year, Connally would not have attained a run-off position. And that likely would have ended his political career.

Once elected to the Senate, however, he had the good luck of being the only Democrat to enter the Senate that year, thus greatly increasing his potential seniority from the beginning. Of course to explain his subsequent rise within the Senate and party framework, it is imperative to understand that Connally had immense natural ability, skill,

and drive, or he could never have capitalized on his opportunities.

Connally stood out in any crowd of his contemporaries. He was superior to many of his colleagues and inferior to few. His political friends valued him, his political enemies respected him, and the general public that was aware of him admired him. He was a Southerner, but as V. O. Key, Jr., has pointed out in describing Connally, "Not all southern politicians are rabble-rousers."¹

He was the champion of the cotton farmers and the Texas oil industry. He was a believer in States' rights, but he was also a believer in States' responsibilities. He was a strong supporter of much of the reform legislation of the 1930's, and, although he was a great admirer of President Roosevelt, he was a blind follower of no one. His support of inflationary legislation and work programs, his support of agricultural control and subsidy, his "Hot Oil" Act, and his support of social security legislation, indicate that he was interested in and sympathetic with the whole gamut of relief, recovery, and reform for which the New Deal became noted. But there was an obvious limit to his support of Roosevelt's programs. His opposition to the National Industrial Recovery Act, to the President's court reform proposal, and to politically motivated antilynching legislation

¹V. O. Key, Jr., with the assistance of Alexander Heard, Southern Politics in State and Nation (New York, 1949), facing p. 260.

all reveal Connally as a man of courage and conviction. However, his convictions did not carry over into the field of Negro rights.

Most of Connally's actions can be explained by remembering his origin, training, and experience. His admiration for his father, who was in Connally's lifetime a central Texas cotton farmer, plus the fact that Connally himself owned a respectable amount of cotton land, explain much of his interest in farm legislation. His training as a lawyer and his education in the midst of States' rights attitudes explain much of his respect for constitutional law and the courts. His lengthy service in the legislative bodies of Texas and the nation explain his loyalty toward legislative prerogatives and his fear or jealousy of executive encroachments.

To evaluate Connally's career, especially in the later years of the New Deal and during the period leading up to American involvement in World War II, it is appropriate to ask what difference Connally's presence in the Senate actually made. In domestic affairs, Connally's biggest effort came in 1937, when he fought both the court reform plan and the attempt by Senator Robert F. Wagner to obtain an anti-lynching law. Without Connally these two proposals doubtless would have failed; there is no evidence to support the idea nor is there reason to theorize that Connally was indispensable in blocking either. But neither is it possible to deny that he carried a major share of the burden in the effort and

did it as well as could have been expected of anyone. In less publicized efforts, Connally contributed to the establishment of Roosevelt's tax policies in the later years of the New Deal, concentrating especially in the field of excess and war profits. Again, however, he was hardly indispensable.

Connally's rise to the chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the very eve of World War II was both remarkable and fortunate. As for the speed of his advancement in seniority, he was, of course, in no way responsible except in that he succeeded in being re-elected to the Senate in 1934 and 1940. But it was indeed significant that a man of Connally's stature was suddenly thrust into the position at such a critical juncture in the history of the United States. What if Key Pittman had lived another year or two, tired, ill, and unable to rise to the moment of crisis and then died in the midst of wartime? What if some less qualified Senator had acceded to the chairmanship? What if one of the isolationist members of the committee had become chairman? It is only possible to conclude that the entire nation benefited from Connally's being there instead.

So much in Connally's background gave him the experience necessary to handle the new job that was his for the remainder of his Senate career.² During his twelve years

²Connally was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when the Democratic Party controlled the Senate (1941-1946, 1949-1953); he was ranking minority member when the Republican Party was in control (1947-1948).

in the House of Representatives he served in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which enjoyed an unusual sense of importance during the period of World War I and the arguments over the League of Nations. And although Connally had to wait two years to gain membership on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee after he entered the Senate, he was given extra duties on that committee in later years by Chairman Pittman when his health began to fail. Thus, responsibility and leadership were not new to Connally when he actually became the chairman himself, and for that the nation profited.

Tom Connally is remembered for many things. He was the Senator who looked like a Senator. He was the author of the "Hot Oil" Act. He was the long-winded leader of the filibuster against antilynching legislation. Then, in the period that lies outside this study, he is remembered as being the author of the "Connally Resolution," by which the Senate went on record as favoring United States membership in the United Nations. For many years people looked upon him as the mouthpiece of the Truman Administration in the Senate, at least in the realm of foreign affairs. Eventually, and quite unfairly, people came to associate him with what was called "the mess in Washington." Finally, he grew old and withdrew from public life.

In his earlier days, Connally was known as a liberal, or at least he liked to think of himself as one. To him, that meant one who was for the common man--especially the

farmer and the laborer. By the end of his Senate career, he was anything but the darling of the liberal wing of the Texas Democratic Party. That is not to say that he was closely associated with the far right, but his strong States' rights stand against the court reform bill and his noisier stand against the various antilynching bills marked him as sympathetic to the views of politicians from the old South and unsympathetic to the rights and dreams of the American Negro community. Connally must, however, be judged at least partly in the light of his own times. He was the product of the late nineteenth century, and had he been or acted differently, it is likely that he would have been far less successful in politics than he was.

Unquestionably Connally was something less than great, but he was a significant man. An editorial in a major 1968 Texas newspaper noted:

Texas has had a powerful "voice" in Washington for 38 years--ever since the late John Garner was elected speaker of the house and later vice president. Then followed the era of Speaker Sam Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson. All three were giants in the political arena.³

Allowing for a certain amount of State pride, there remains a certain element of truth in that statement. Without meaning to suggest that Tom Connally's influence ever approximated theirs, it must be pointed out that on the level of public figures of the twentieth century that rests just below

³Dallas Times Herald, May 1, 1968, p. 1.

that of Garner, Rayburn, and Johnson, no one competes with the Senator from Marlin for fame and significance.

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