

Connally: U. S. Workers Want Industry To Grow

American workers believe in "incentives for industry to grow, to expand, to modernize plants so you can find jobs at high wages," former Texas Governor John Connally declared in a speech in Los Angeles recently at the same time as the national AFL-CIO convention there.

With these words, Connally, who is closely identified with industrialist and business circles, has publicly acknowledged that industrial growth can serve as the basis for a programmatic alliance between big industry and organized labor. As such, he has opened important options for trade union forces opposed to the British-inspired policies of protectionism, slave labor, and hyperinflation which 83-year-old George Meany was ramming through the AFL-CIO convention on the other side of town even as Connally spoke. And at the same time Connally has offered himself as a leader for business forces seeking an alternative to the suicidal option of cartelization, wage austerity, and confrontation with labor being advocated by "right-to-work" forces.

The former Texas governor's move reflects the enormous pressure from both industrialist and labor layers for a viable political strategy to defeat the Carter Administration's no-growth policies. In part, this pressure is significantly the result of the U.S. Labor Party's campaign for a labor-industry progrowth alliance, underway since the 1976 presidential campaign of USLP chairman Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. currently focused on the USLP proposal for immediate expansion of the U.S. government's Export-Import Bank.

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Below, excerpts from an article that appeared in the Dec. 19 Chicago Tribune, by Jon Margolis, headlined, "Connally Exhorts Labor: Bigger Pie Means Bigger Slices."

George Meany was in town, and so were the heads of most of the big unions. They were the official spokesmen for America's working people, and they were here at the AFL-CIO convention to tell the world what those people needed.

But they had a rival. Across town another man who claimed he is the champion of the working man was insisting that what working people really want is just the opposite of what Meany and his legions called for.

Just what do the working people really want and need? Well, according to their new would-be spokesman, they believe in high business profits and low government spending, which adds up to "incentives for industry to grow, to expand, to modernize plants so you can find jobs at high wages."

Many working men and women might be surprised to learn that their new friend is none other than John Connally, lawyer to oil millionaires, part owner (with two Saudi Arabians) of a Texas bank, defender of the present tax laws ("What loopholes?" he said a few years back), opponent of farm labor union organizing, and

administrator of wage and price controls under former President Richard Nixon, which, according to labor officials controlled wages a lot more than prices.

But that's who it is....

Whatever happens in 1980, it is virtually certain that one of the more common political events of 1978 will be John Connally urging votes for Republican candidates and trying to convince the traditionally Democratic working people that what's good for business is good for labor.

As Connally sees it, the Democrats have become the party of "no growth." The Democrats, he said, "want to look inward, they want to appeal to the so-called consumers. They talk about consumerism, they talk about conservation. They've rewritten the three R's to stand for retrenchment, retreat, and resignation."

According to Connally, the Democratic philosophy holds that the period of growth and expansion is over. "They've baked the pie and now they want to share the wealth," he said. "Well, who's going to increase it.?"

His answer, not surprisingly, is the business system and the Republican Party. "Business profits are the way plants are modernized," Connally said.

What Connally would like to see is fewer consumer and environmental regulations and more leeway for business to earn money, invest it in expansion, and thus create good jobs.

He thinks this is good economics. He thinks that Republican advocacy of it is good party politics. He doesn't say so, but he quite likely thinks he own advocacy (sic) of it is good personal politics.

Whether it will work is another matter. It's the Democrats who have been considered the advocates of faster economic growth, and President Carter wants to increase the growth rate through tax cuts and other monetary and fiscal moves.

Though Connally may be pitching his line toward workers, he is doing it in the presence of employers, financiers, and corporate executives. Among those in his Los Angeles audience as Joseph Coors, who resolutely maintains a non-union brewery in Colorado.

"The Democrats," argued Connally, "are the ones who killed the SST, the B-1 bomber, the fast-breeder reactor, and nuclear fusion."

Furthermore, he said, Carter's energy program is basically a conservation program, and "you don't grow by just conserving."

Most of the examples he cited, Connally conceded, are as much symbolic as anything else, but he insists that the symbols are important, for they determine "the mood that you create."

What John Connally wants to do is to create a new mood, or perhaps recreate an old one -- the old frontier mood of growth and expansion based on the assumption that "the future is boundless." He wants to revive the "vitality that American people can always do something bigger and better and richer."

Connally is the exact opposite of California Governor Edmund Brown, Jr., with his talk of the "limits" of modern life. If Brown's political appeal stems from combining this attitude with his low-key, cool style, Connally's comes from combining his call for "vitality" with an aggressive manner.

Connally has what used to be called a manly charm. But it is not simply the big head, the big body, the deep baritone with just enough Texas twang. The secret of his appeal seems to be that this open, outgoing style is matched by the substance of what he says.

"It's an exciting time in which we live," he told his audience in Alabama. "We act as though there are no more frontiers. But there are, in science and medicine and technology." And at another point he said "You have to get bigger and bigger, just for efficiency."

So it is no accident that Connally appeals mainly to businessmen and to the rising entrepreneurs of the South and Southwest who form the bedrock of the Republican Party there.

They like the aggressive things he says and the aggres-

sive way he says them. He does not turn on conservative audiences the way Ronald Reagan does, but he impresses them, and he appeals to a broader group.

Connally has a lot of political problems. He was close to Nixon and Lyndon Johnson. He has a reputation as a wheeler-dealer. He jumped parties in 1973. He was indicted, though acquitted, on a bribery charge in 1975.

Like so many people, he is a bit more complex than he seems. He has made a lot of money and held high positions and his ambition is obvious.

While he can drum up business and promote himself before a crowd, he can also recite poetry and talk a bit wistfully about how he'd like to spend more time at home.

It isn't impossible, then, that Connally would decide not to try for the big prize in 1980. He might just help Republicans next year, and then go home to his ranch, his law practice, and his family.

It's not very likely, either. That would be placing limits on himself, which is hardly what is expected from John Connally.

Labor, Industry: Expand Exim Bank To Strengthen U. S. Economy

The following comments of business and labor representatives show significant support for the perspective put forward in former Texas Governor John Connally's proposals, and for the U.S. Labor Party's proposal to use the U.S. Export-Import Bank to facilitate a high-technology export recovery of the dollar:

LABOR

An official of a large Midwest local of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers:

Many of the Building Trades locals boycotted the AFL-CIO convention because they knew that Meany would come out for protectionism and make-work jobs. We knew it was a power play of Meany, Kirkland and the liberals against the Building Trades Union. Meany has written off thousands of jobs for labor. We agree with the necessity of high technology exports and are very interested in your proposal.

A ranking official of a New England building trades council:

The AFL-CIO convention was a rotten mess. Nuclear energy development and your proposal are what's needed.

An official of a state-wide midwestern organization of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters:

Meany's trade policy is a disaster for the country. Although most Teamsters are Democrats, we think that Carter is not heavily enough wired to handle the job. We support a high-technology export policy. The problem is

Carter and Meany. Your proposal sounds very interesting.

A top official of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters from the Midwest:

We take your proposal very seriously.

A highly placed spokesman in the International Brotherhood of Teamsters of a southwestern state:

High technology exports are essential to U.S. recovery. Your proposal is a very important development.

BUSINESS

The President of a New England industry group backed by labor and known to be committed to developing nuclear energy:

An expanded export policy is crucial to U.S. recovery. We would like to work with you on expanding the role of the Exim Bank.

A businessman from Texas:

A lot of people here are concerned about our balance of payments deficits and that the collapse of the dollar will drag the whole U.S. economy down. This Exim bank proposal is very interesting.

A representative of a Texas firm:

Get me the Exim Bank proposal. I'm sure you would not mind if I turned it over to our local newspaper for editorial comment... (in reference to the Carter Administration's rejection of an offer from Iran to buy several nuclear power plants from the U.S.) My God! That deal would have wiped out our balance of payments deficit!