

All Things to All Men: Rockefeller Wows Foreign Press

August 24 (IPS) — The Western European press — left, right, and center — docilely lined up this week in support (or at least acceptance) of Nelson Rockefeller's nomination to the Vice Presidency.

The liberal newspapers saluted him as a great liberal; the conservative papers hailed him as a staunch conservative; and even the hapless Communist and French Gaullists, most immediately threatened by the Rockefeller offensive, accepted the nomination without a pretense of protest. The only point of disagreement was which area — foreign or domestic policy — Rockefeller will take over from Ford first.

The liberal press in West Germany, France, and Great Britain described "liberal" Rockefeller as not merely capable and experienced, but a veritable philanthropist. The August 22 *Le Monde* went so far as to headline its story "The Empire of Good at the Service of the Republic." The *London Times* stressed Rockefeller's liberal position within the Republican Party and urged that he take on the role of Assistant President, with responsibilities in domestic affairs, while other leading British papers foresaw major Rockefeller input into foreign policy. The *Financial Times* August 23 reported that Rockefeller "expects an assignment connected with the battle against inflation."

Another tribute to Rocky came from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* August 21, and the *Frankfurter Rundschau* the same day printed an editorial on Rockefeller's "liberalism." Next to the editorial the *Frankfurter Rundschau* carried an "objective" piece balancing out Rockefeller's "bad" side. (Attica, charges of "political opportunism") with his liberal credentials (civil rights and education spending in New York State).

On the other end of the spectrum, the ultra-conservative *Die Welt* cited the Attica massacre,

Rockefeller's draconian New York drug laws, and his campaign to slash the welfare rolls — concluding that Rockefeller is in the great conservative tradition and more power to him!

In an anemic article on Ford's Vice-Presidential choice, the French Communist Party's *L'Humanite* could find only one polemic: the battle between "national independence" and "deteriorating imperialism," and even then *L'Humanite* couldn't clarify which camp Rockefeller represents! In substance the PCF press had only two objections to Rocky: he's rich and he's not French. An equally bloodless article appeared in the Gaullist *Le Figaro*.

The only break in the ranks came from *L'Unita*, organ of the Italian Communist Party (PCI). August 20 *L'Unita* published an article by Lelio Basso, an independent socialist close to the PCI, in which Basso dismissed the "triumph of democracy" declarations surrounding Nixon's resignation and pointed to Rockefeller and his cronies as "those with the real authority" who engineered Watergate. Basso is widely known to have had much contact with the European Labour Committees (ELC) and with Labor Committee chairman L. Marcus.

But August 23 the PCI newspaper announced Rockefeller's nomination in an article which became nearly incoherent in its efforts to imply anything and say nothing. The irrationality on *L'Unita's* part can be explained only as a reaction to the ELC's success in penetrating deep into the PCI's base. The Party leadership apparently hopes that publishing an article by a "friend of the Labor Committees" and remaining opaque about its own views on Rockefeller will be sufficient to deflect the insistent demand from the Party's ranks for real communist politics.

Sevareid Support for Orderly (Non-Democratic) Succession

August 21 (IPS) — Longtime CIA journalist and CBS-TV commentator Eric Sevareid had some sinister words to say tonight on Nelson Rockefeller's nomination as Assistant President. According to Sevareid's view, the country seems to run "more smoothly" since the President and Vice President have been appointed by one person, "rather than by a general election"!

Having indicated his preference for tidy Rockefeller-

controlled succession, as opposed to messy bourgeois democracy, Sevareid indulged in a few moments of praise for Ford and Rockefeller, ending by anxiously musing:

"The only difficulty I foresee is if the country goes into a recession, which would make Ford the Herbert Hoover of our era...."