

'A Salute To Nelson' — Republican Leadership

"My friendship with Nelson Rockefeller goes back 17 years, to the time I first entered politics. I was invited to a party at his home. I had never met Nelson Rockefeller before. I was standing against the wall, where there were some of his famous paintings, watching the scene. A friend said, 'Bill get away from the wall, there's \$5000 worth of paint on your sleeve.' I have always been impressed by the Rockefellers since then.

EYEWITNESS REPORT

With this pleasantry, William Brock, present chairman of the Republican National Committee, acknowledged Nelson Rockefeller's reemergence as the "man in charge" of the Republican party leadership — at a dinner billed as a "salute to Nelson" on his retirement from politics! — sponsored by New York state republicans at the Waldorf Astoria last week. Three weeks ago, over the Memorial Day weekend, some of the participants in the Waldorf affair had gathered at Nelson's Pocantico Hills estate; what emerged was an effort by David Rockefeller's big brother to coopt U.S. conservatives into a deal based on scrapping the Carter Administration's "human rights" crusade for immediate thermonuclear showdown with the Soviets, together with its no-energy program, in favor of Project Independence energy boondoggles, wage austerity, and a major short-term military buildup.

Gathered to reaffirm Nelson's strategy at the Waldorf were such Republican notables as former President Gerald Ford, Senate Minority Leader Howard Baker of Tennessee, and party chairman Brock, not to mention Nelson Rockefeller's personal Senator, Jacob Javits of New York, Nelson's personal foreign policy advisor, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and Nelson's personal party hatchetman, New York committeeman Richard Rosenbaum, who helped cover up the New York vote fraud which put Jimmy Carter in the White House.

Once the Roast Filet Perigourdine and the Sherbert Rockefeller were cleared from the tables, the Waldorf air was filled with examples of the Republican cowardice, stupidity, and reflex subservience to Rockefeller muscle responsible for the Memorial Day weekend "deal" in the first place.

Particularly egregious was Sen. Howard Baker, a man not unacquainted with the Rockefeller family's role in the Watergate conspiracy. "Nelson Rockefeller has served his nation honorably in many positions, but especially as President of the United States," intoned Baker, who hurriedly apologized to Gerald Ford a few seconds later: "I meant the President of the Senate, of course."

Ford himself proclaimed that one of the greatest achievements of the Ford Administration was appointing "a man who never wanted to be Vice President of any-

thing" — Nelson Rockefeller — as Vice President — this after widespread suspicion in Republican ranks that Nelson was ultimately behind repeated "blind terror" attempts on Ford's life. "As I knew and believe now, both of us are dedicated to the principles of the Republican party. Even though we were not intimate, I respected his success," said Ford who also lauded Henry Kissinger as "possibly the greatest Secretary of State we ever had."

The former President also launched into a ringing defense of Nelson's \$100 billion "Project Independence" energy boondoggle of 1975, thus strongly suggesting the outline of the deal on energy to be sold to Congress. Project Independence was an incompetent catchall of oil and gas swindles, Nazi Germany's coal gasification projects, and increased nuclear power production, all based on labor-intensive methods supported by wage-gouging and packaged as Schachtian "energy autarky" for the USA. Of this mish-mash Gerald Ford said, "It would have been a great contribution to solving the energy problem now but unfortunately Congress didn't respond. If the present Administration would adopt it now, Congress would respond..."

Ford also signalled his willingness to cooperate with Rocky in future political ventures, at the price of squelching any effort to put the Republican Party on record behind the "American System" of hard commodity credit, technological progress and a commitment to rising standard of living for the U.S. population — the only political-economic policies which can prevent a new depression. "I'm sick and tired of those who want to prove they are purer of philosophy than others," said Ford. "We need a broad foundation for the party to win in 1980... I'm going to be around, Nelson — I think you will be too."

Rockefeller pronounced Ford's presence on the dais "the greatest tribute I have had all night."

Despite the appearance of Republican unanimity behind Nelson, however, the Waldorf affair produced a couple of indications of just how shaky the "deal" with U.S. conservatives really is. One was the conspicuous absence on the scene of any generally recognized spokesman for conservative forces in the party — Ronald Reagan for example. A second was the uneasy recognition by Nelson himself that the success of his efforts is extremely endangered by the looming bankruptcy of Chase Manhattan and its companion large New York commercial banks.

When this reporter approached Nelson to inquire what he intended to do about the collapse of the House of Rockefeller, Nelson replied "I'm the politician of the family, not the banker." He then darted off down the hall to shake hands with various Republicans, muttering "I'm not the banker, I'm the politician."

But where will such men as William Brock stand as the Rockefeller family's "\$5,000 coat of paint" to impress the credulous can no longer cover its bankrupt condition?

— Barbara Dreyfuss