

# Rockefeller Fog

JUN 21 1975

NYTimes

Vice President Rockefeller often says just what is on his mind. While that is sometimes illuminating, it is sometimes distressing. In the past few months, Mr. Rockefeller has offered a most novel reason for supporting the Vietnam war (to keep the dollars flowing to New York State) and for the declining Federal interest in urban minority problems (nobody forced the blacks to migrate from the farms). Now he has had something to say, belatedly, on the subject of assassination.

Although Mr. Rockefeller's commission inquiring into the C.I.A. had insufficient time to complete its study of charges of political assassination for inclusion in its report, the Vice President nevertheless presented some pretty broad implications on nationwide television relating to a couple of people who might have been involved. Mr. Rockefeller said that, while there "was no conclusive information," some of those "allegedly involved" in assassination planning had themselves been assassinated—obviously a reference to President John F. Kennedy and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, as Mr. Rockefeller later confirmed.

The Vice President's remarks compounded the bumbling which has already characterized the Administration's handling of the assassination issue, giving it much more importance than it deserves. If the evidence was too inconclusive for the report, it surely was too inconclusive for loose television conversation. The same can be said for indiscreet comments on the question by Senator Church, whose investigatory committee is now charged with the responsibility for deciding what the public will ever know officially on this subject.

Such indiscretions serve to deflect concern from the more basic questions which should be disposed of before the current interest in the C.I.A. wanes. We strongly believe in the necessity for such an agency; but we also believe that it is necessary for Congress to consider afresh the appropriate role for any intelligence agency, how and in what ways the requirements for such an agency have changed since its inception 28 years ago and the nature and effectiveness of the administrative and Congressional brakes on the C.I.A. Those are hard but basic questions which, though less dramatic than pursuit of the assassination here, go more directly to the effectiveness of the American system of self-government.