

Lines to acquire Caribair, a financially troubled airline based in Puerto Rico. At the time, Nelson owned no Eastern stock, but his brother Laurance is currently the airline's largest individual stockholder (with 1.75%). Laurance had sent Nixon a telegram urging him to permit the merger.

Nelson denied any impropriety, saying: "We have always contributed to Republicans. This is the kind of thing that gets twisted; there's totally nothing wrong with it." In fact, there had been no secret about Laurance Rockefeller's airline stock, and his telegram was a minor lobbying effort.

## "People Helping Each Other"

Sipping a soft drink as he leaned back in his chair, a shirtsleeved Nelson Rockefeller seemed calm enough last week. But his mood, as he talked to TIME New York Bureau Chief Marsh Clark, was pugnacious, his tone emphatic. When Clark asked, "Are you unhappy?" Rockefeller retorted: "I'm not unhappy. I'm only trying to keep you from being unhappy." Highlights of the interview in Manhattan:

### *Why did you make the gifts?*

Everybody helps his friends. It's a great American tradition—all the way back to pioneer days—sharing work, helping to build a house. I've always shared. I've always been very fortunate because I've had the money. When somebody had a problem, I was glad to help. It's very simple.

*Is there not a distinction between a gift to Hugh Morrow, who is on your personal staff, and one to Henry Kissinger, who had left your employ [as a consultant on foreign policy] to become President Nixon's Assistant for National Security Affairs?*

There's no distinction in my mind. They're both very good friends of mine. You've got to see it from my point of view. I wasn't buying things. I wasn't trying to sell some product or get some special treatment.

*But Kissinger and other recipients, such as William J. Ronan [formerly chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, now chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey], are also public officials.*

There was no conflict of any kind. Bill was beholden to the taxpayers in the sense that he took an oath to support the New York constitution. I appointed him [to the M.T.A.] and he followed the policies that I set down as Governor. I was the one who was re-

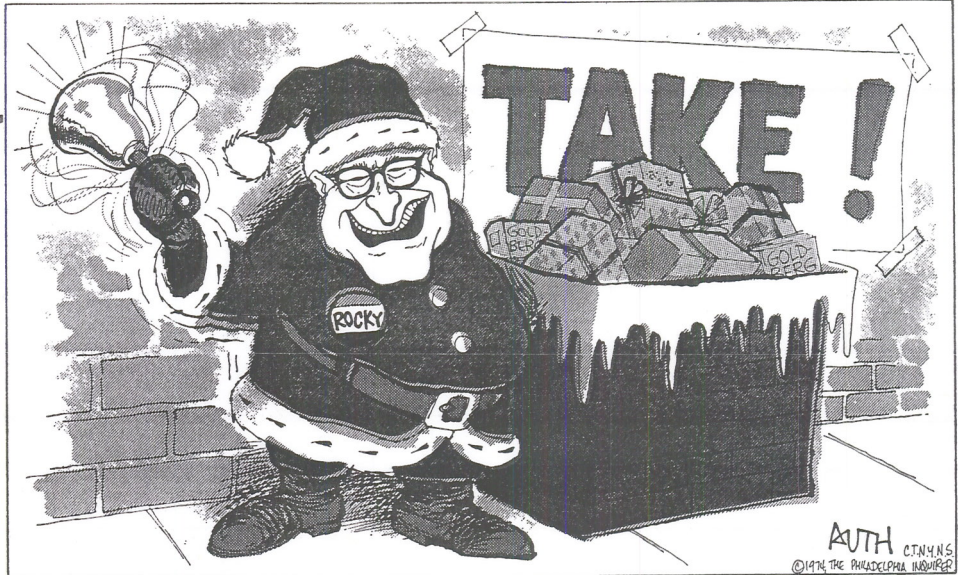
sponsible for the integrity, the efficiency and the quality of those who worked for me. If anything went wrong, the people were not going to look to them but to me, as Governor.

New details were revealed about the ties between Rockefeller's 1970 gubernatorial re-election campaign and the derisive biography *Arthur J. Goldberg: The Old and the New*. Conservative Author Victor Lasky acknowledged that the idea for the book came from New York Attorney John A. Wells, a long-time Rockefeller colleague. Lasky said that he received \$10,000 for the 199-page paperback, but did not know at the time that its publication was financed by \$60,-

000 from Laurance Rockefeller. That was not surprising. In an obvious attempt to disguise its origin, the money was sent to J. Richardson Dilworth, a Rockefeller family adviser, who turned it over, through a Philadelphia law firm, to Literary Productions Inc., which was created to handle the deal. It bought 100,000 copies from the book's publisher, Arlington House, for free distribution in New York during the campaign.

Having apologized to Goldberg and

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sponsible for the integrity, the efficiency and the quality of those who worked for me. If anything went wrong, the people were not going to look to them but to me, as Governor.

As far as Henry was concerned, he had just got divorced and had responsibilities to his children and to his former wife. He was going to be earning much less in Washington than he had been earning. He was doing it for his country. I urged him to take the job. He didn't want it.\* O.K., so I helped him out. He put the money in trust for his children. What's more human than that? It's so simple and open. If I had given him a lunch or a dinner or a necktie, nobody would question it.

*But should people not be concerned when large sums of money are given or loaned to Government officials? Is there a question of probity here?*

Only if I am dishonest. People are upset because they aren't used to them. They're not concerned about small sums, but there's really no difference. You're either within the law and morally right or you've got a conflict of interest and you're morally wrong. It has nothing to do with the amount. There are two New York laws. One says that you cannot give or loan money for favors. The other says that you cannot

\*Others say that Kissinger's reluctance stemmed only from uncertainty over whether he would be able to work well with Nixon.

supplement a [public official's] salary. I did not violate either law [with] any sum of money, large or small.

*Are you upset that the information has been made public?*

I mind only the way in which it has come out, as though I had done something wrong. In fact, I had filed all of the information with the [Senate Rules] Committee more than a month ago. I just want a forum to explain the matter because it is being misinterpreted. As a perfect example of what's happening, I note that three members of the House Judiciary Committee say that they are beginning to wonder whether they can vote for Governor Rockefeller. On what basis do they wonder? I haven't even been before their committee to have a chance to say anything. Do you realize that it's been two months since my nomination and it'll be three months before I get a full hearing?

*Do you now think that the gifts were a mistake?*

Not in the slightest. The questions are: Was it legally wrong? Was it morally wrong? Was it a conflict of interest? My answer to all three is that it wasn't. If people can just get it back to simply people helping each other, which is the tradition of this country and the tradition of my family, and get over the hurdle of the size of the help, then they've got it.