

# The Power of Rockefeller Money

By FRANK LYNN

Nelson A. Rockefeller's money has been a powerful force in New York for many years, whether it was manifested in a \$500,000 gift to a longtime aide, the dispensing of the presidency of

Rockefeller Center to another, the financing of the Republican party in the state,

or the building of the World Trade Center as part of an effort, led by his banker brother, to give New York City a second skyline downtown. "Rockefeller Power" is what many politicians call it. Sometimes, they say, it is altruistic—a reward for a friend or an aide. But many times, they contend, it is completely pragmatic—to promote a Rockefeller goal.

Often, they say, the line between the pragmatic and the altruistic is too fine to be drawn.

Nevertheless, there are many examples of the Rockefeller largesse in one form or another in addition to the new disclosures that he had given Dr. William J. Ronan, chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, \$550,000 in gifts in the form of loan cancellations, that he presented a \$50,000 gift to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, that he bestowed \$100,000 on Hugh Morrow, his press secretary, and that he had given \$86,000 in the form of a loan forgiveness to L. Judson Morhouse, a former Republican state chairman, who also received a pardon from Governor Rockefeller after being convicted on bribery and other charges.

Rockefeller gifts to his associates and aides had long been rumored, but never verified until now. "There was always the notion that once you're in that stable, you're well taken care of," said one politician.

However, it appeared from inquiries yesterday that the largesse might not extend beyond an inner circle of only a few persons.

Several informants said that Christmas gifts from the Governor consisted of such items as desk sets, statuettes and paperweights often engraved with the state seal and apparently always engraved with Mr. Rockefeller's "N.A.R." initials and the initials of the recipient.

## Example of Support

The Vice President designate's interest in his advisers can be seen in the following examples.

Mr. Rockefeller arranged for the appointment of Alton G. Marshall, who had succeeded Dr. Ronan as the Governor's secretary, to become the president of Rockefeller Center, a job with a six-figure salary. It could not be determined, however, if Mr. Marshall received any direct gifts or loans during his tenure as secretary, since he did not return repeated phone calls.

Mr. Marshall's successor as secretary to the Governor, Robert R. Douglass, is now a member of the law firm of Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy, and, in that role, also is a counsel to the Chase Manhattan Bank, which is headed by David Rockefeller.

Mr. Douglass said yesterday that he had not received any gifts from the Governor. However, Mr. Rockefeller had made available for Mr. Douglass's personal use the Rockefeller estates at Pocantico Hills in Westchester County and at Seal Harbor in Maine. Mr. Douglass is often described as "like a son" to Mr. Rockefeller.

## Gifts Held Altruistic as Well as to Win a Specific Goal

Mr. Rockefeller also was a prime mover behind the building of the vast World Trade Center by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. The construction gave considerable impetus to David Rockefeller's plan to rejuvenate downtown Manhattan where David Rockefeller's bank, Chase Manhattan, is situated. Although the twin towers are known as a trade center, the state is renting considerable space in the buildings to make them economically feasible.

Mr. Rockefeller has been a virtual banker for the state Republican party during the last 16 years by financing his own campaigns and by raising considerable money for other Republicans. Four years ago, for instance, Mr. Rockefeller spent \$5-million of his family fortune for his own re-election campaign. However these expenditures will be limited to \$230,000 in the current gubernatorial campaign because of the state's new campaign-financing law.

## Aided Lindsay Bid

The fortune of the former Governor played the key role in convincing John V. Lindsay, who was later to become a bitter political foe, to run for mayor of New York in 1965. Mr. Rockefeller agreed to raise \$500,000, including \$100,000 of his own money, to help finance the Lindsay campaign.

Laurance Rockefeller's seaside home at Caneel Bay on St. John's Island in the Virgin Islands, has been a favorite vacation haunt of many leading politicians, including Senator Hubert H. Humphrey and Spiro T. Agnew when both served as Vice Presidents.

In addition, the Rockefeller fleet of at least three airplanes and a large helicopter has been used to transport politicians, academic leaders and businessmen.

## Many Deny Aid

Two former top aides of Mr. Rockefeller—Emmet J. Hughes, a presidential campaign strategist, and Leslie Slote, who was

a press secretary, denied yesterday that Mr. Rockefeller had helped them obtain their present posts. But other Rockefeller sources said that Mr. Rockefeller's influence was exerted in Mr. Slote's appointment as a vice president of Radio Corporation of America International in London and Mr. Hughes's appointment as a professor at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. Mr. Slote said from London yesterday that Mr. Rockefeller had helped him obtain a mortgage on a Fire Island summer home, but that Mr. Slote is making all the payments.

Four other present or former Rockefeller associates denied yesterday receiving any Rockefeller gifts. They are Ronald Maiorana, former press secretary and now state Racing and Wagering Commissioner; Richard Rosenbaum, the Republican State Chairman who left the state Supreme Court bench to take the political post at Mr. Rockefeller's request; George Hinman, the state's Republican National Committeeman and a lawyer for the Rockefeller interests, and R. Burdell Bixby, a perennial Rockefeller state campaign manager who holds a patronage jobs as chairman of the State Thruway Authority.

Ann Whitman, Mr. Rockefeller's longtime personal secretary who is now working at the Rockefeller Brothers' office at Rockefeller Center, declined to say whether she had received any gifts or loans from Mr. Rockefeller.

Mr. Rockefeller has also been known to make a gift somewhat impetuously, as he did when Meade H. Esposito, the Brooklyn Democratic leader, admired an etching of a wise old owl that hung at the Rockefeller's Fifth Avenue duplex. Mr. Rockefeller presented the etching to Mr. Esposito, who had worked with Mr. Rockefeller in "delivering" Democratic votes for some Rockefeller programs.

The Rockefeller gifts of money and jobs contrasted, several politicians noted, with the parsimony of another wealthy political family, the Kennedys. "You show me a politician who has gotten a dime out of the Kennedys," said a Democrat who is friendly to that family.