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Reactions Varied on Gifts Rockefeller Gave to Aides

By PETER KIHSS

Political leaders took varying views yesterday of former Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller's gifts to associates, but all expressed concern about the potential implications of conflict of interest in government service.

Representative Hugh L. Carey, Democrat-Liberal candidate for Governor, said "gifts given for faithful service would be looked at with less question if they were made a matter of public record at the time." He said holding them in privacy raised questions as to use of large sums for persons in jobs "involving personal judgment with extensive powers."

Governor Wilson, the Republican-Conservative candidate for Governor, was traveling, but a spokesman said Mr. Wilson had never received a Rockefeller loan or gift, but believed that Mr. Rockefeller's gifts were apparently legal.

"What he does with his own money," said Joseph F. Crangle, Democratic state chairman, "is his business, provided the money was not given at a time when the people involved were performing public duties. I just wish he had been more generous with taxpayers' money in taking care of human needs when he was Governor of New York State."

Senator James L. Buckley, Conservative-Republican, said: "Anyone who would raise a question of conflict of interest would be obviously raising a question that is fair game, and I'm sure questions will be raised because of the fact that the Ronan continues to occupy a position of great influence." His reference was to Dr. William J. Ronan, a longtime Rockefeller associate who became chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and is currently chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Dr. Ronan received \$550,000 as gifts from Mr. Rockefeller over a 17-year period.

Rose's View

Alex Rose, a vice chairman of the Liberal party, said: "As an individual who never received gifts of such magnitude, I can look at it philosophically."

"If it is to represent catch-up pay for underpaid service rendered in the past, that's one way of looking at it. If it obligates an individual to curtail his free will, that would be another way of looking at it, and might be undesirable."

In the current campaign, Ramsey Clark, the Democratic candidate opposing Senator Jacob K. Javits, a Republican Liberal, contended it was "insensitive" for Mr. Javits to have accepted a \$15,000 campaign contribution from Mr. Rockefeller while having to vote on Mr. Rockefeller's designation for Vice President. Mr. Javits could not be reached for comment.

A city law since 1960 has forbidden Councilmen or other employes, even unpaid, from accepting any kind of gift or loan from anyone dealing "directly or indirectly" with the city.