

SF Examiner

Not my fault, Rocky insists

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Nelson Rockefeller said yesterday that “there’s nothing wrong, there’s nothing illegal, there’s nothing immoral, there’s no conflict of interest” in the fact that he owes the government \$1 million in back taxes.

He blamed delay and then a speed-up in the Internal Revenue Service for the situation.

“I think they want to make sure nobody can blame them” he said in an impromptu news conference at Memorial Hospital.

Rockefeller said the IRS settlement covered five years, whereas “It should be done a year at a time, but this time they were five years behind. I gave them an extension.

“I do it one year at a time.”

The result of the IRS delay, he said, was that “it puts me in an apparently difficult situation.”

Sen. Jacob K. Javits, R-N.Y., who has received Rockefeller financing in all his campaigns, seemed to agree.

“This is a cumulative thing,” he told broadcasters meeting in Buffalo. “It might be that the taxes plus other things could sink him.”

The “other things” were publication last week of Rockefeller’s gifts to political and other associates and to his brother’s financing of a book attacking former Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg when Goldberg opposed Rockefeller for the governorship.

Rockefeller disagreed with Javits’ assessment.

“If he talked to me about it, he’d see there is no problem about it at all,” he said. “It’s entirely normal.”

It was so normal and “not a disclosure,” he added, that he had not talked to President Ford about it.

“This goes on every year,” Rockefeller said of his IRS dealings, “except now they were under pressure and a little more scrutiny and everybody was sharing the audit with them.

“We have been arguing with them, and we finally came to a settlement.

“All that’s happening is that the public is sharing in every detail what I have been going through all my life and the public is not used to it.

“So now they see a lot of these things on a scale of figures they are not used to.”