

# Rockefeller in the South: Problem Said to Remain

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ATLANTA, Aug. 28—Mention the name "Rockefeller" to most Americans and probably the first thing that comes to mind is money.

Not so here in the South. Mention the name "Rockefeller" to the average Southerner, particularly a Southern Republican, and as likely as not the first thing that comes to mind is a liberal with a left knee that jerks uncontrollably.

It was this latter perception, whether correct or not, that led Vice President Rockefeller to spend the better part of the last two days in Alabama, slapping the backs of Republicans who idolize and would put Ronald Reagan in the White House—or the new Vice Presidential mansion.

Mr. Rockefeller did everything but talk with a drawl to persuade skeptical Southerners that there is no "Rockefeller problem," that he does not have "horns," to use his words.

In Mobile, Ala., he castigated welfare cheats in Mobile. In Columbia, S. C., he defended states rights. At one banquet, he even glad-handed George Wallace.

More than one Southern mind was left reeling, but the Vice President, who said he would like to be part of a winning ticket in 1976, did not hurt himself while in Dixie.

## Problem Said to Remain

"You might say he changed some of our minds from 'hell no!' to just plain 'no!'," Hugh Chapman, a Columbia banker, said after listening to a Rockefeller speech.

Nevertheless, when the Vice President climbed aboard his jet for the trip back up North, he left behind a still serious Rockefeller problem. That problem, by extension, is President Ford's problem, too.

Mr. Ford will almost certainly need the conservative Southern vote if he is to win re-election. But can he get the vote with Mr. Rockefeller on the ticket?

If Mr. Rockefeller is off the ticket, can Mr. Ford draw the moderate-to-liberal Democratic and independent votes a minority party candidate must have to achieve victory?

Or, carrying speculation even further, if Mr. Ford insists that Mr. Rockefeller must be his Vice President, could that cost the President renomination?

Throughout his Southern trip, the Vice President kept insisting that he was "totally relaxed about this thing" and, in fact, was not on a political mission. Perhaps he was only being politic.

Two days before he headed South, members of the Southern Republican State Chairmen's Association labeled him

his replacement on the 1976 ticket.

Earlier, a Gallup Poll showed him only about half as popular with Southern Republicans as Ronald Reagan. And still earlier, he was termed President Ford's "No. 1 problem" by the President's campaign manager, Howard H. Callaway, himself a conservative southerner.

The "problem" that Southern Republicans have with Mr. Rockefeller is probably traceable somewhat to the fact that he was born and reared a Yankee. But mostly it traces to a belief that he ran New York state almost as a welfare state and, equally bad, that he failed to support Barry Goldwater back during the disastrous 1964 campaign.

More recently, the Vice President added insult to Southern injury by refusing to recognize Senator James B. Allen of Alabama during a debate in the Senate—not just any old debate, but a debate over whether the rules governing the filibuster should be weakened. They were.

"This man could be a disaster for us in 1976," Clarke Reed, head of the Southern Republican State Chairmen's Association, said as Mr. Rockefeller toured the South.

"With all the trouble they've got up in New York now," Mr. Reed added, "just look at the target Rocky makes. Boy, what George Wallace could do if he got to demagoguing that one."

George Wallace makes Southern Republican very nervous. Many assume he will be shunned by the Democrats and will run as a third party candidate.

"If Rocky's on our ticket," said William Taylor, chairman of Florida's Republican Party, "Wallace might draw votes away from us and some Democrat could slip in."

## Reagan a Favorite

Southern Republicans frequently mention Mr. Reagan, former Treasury Secretary John B. Connally and Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee as acceptable, conservative-to-moderate replacements for Mr. Rockefeller. But there is considerable feeling that President Ford will continue with Mr. Rockefeller in the interest of ticket "balance."

"I'd like to see a Ford-Reagan ticket myself, but we have to face up to the fact that a one-sided ticket like that—remember the combination of Goldwater and old what's-his-name Miller?—can't possible win," Julius McKay, a Republican councilman in Columbia, said after a brief chat with Mr. Rockefeller.