

Rockefeller Lauds Ford; Silent on Rumor of Offer

By FRANK J. PRIAL

BANGOR, Me., Aug. 9—Former Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York departed from prepared remarks at a Republican fund raising dinner tonight to praise President Ford as a man of "integrity, dedication and abiding faith in America."

Mr. Rockefeller made no mention of persistent rumors that he might be President Ford's choice as Vice President.

"The tragedy of the past two years has ended," Mr. Rockefeller said, "a tragedy that overshadowed the positive achievements of the Nixon Administration, particularly those achievements in pursuit of world peace, which undeniably attained greatness."

"Out of the traumatic experience of these past two years," Mr. Rockefeller said, "has emerged an awareness of the extraordinary strength and stability of the American people, and the renewed awareness of the wisdom of the Founding Fathers and the unique constitutional system they created."

News Conference Canceled

Originally, Mr. Rockefeller had scheduled a news conference this evening preceding the dinner of the Maine State Republican Committee. The news conference was canceled early this morning. Aides to the former Governor said the conference had been called off because it had been so widely misrepresented as a response to Mr. Nixon's resignation and the concurrent rumors about Mr. Rockefeller's Vice-Presidential appointment.

Rockefeller aides said that both the dinner speech and the news conference had been planned three months ago.

Earlier in the day, outside his summer home at Seal Harbor, about 55 miles southwest of here, Mr. Rockefeller met briefly with reporters but declined to answer questions on a possible Vice-Presidential appointment.

Asked why he was one of the few top Republicans who had so far not commented on the Nixon resignation, Mr. Rockefeller said:

"We don't want to thrust ourselves into the scene. The action is all in Washington. This is Jerry Ford's show."

At the same time an aide disclosed the text of a telegram Mr. Rockefeller sent to President Ford immediately fol-



Nelson A. Rockefeller, who was endorsed yesterday for the Vice-Presidency by Hugh Scott, Senate minority leader, at his home in Seal Harbor, Me.

lowing the inaugural address. The telegram said:

"Your speech was a wonderful and inspiring statement to the people of the world. Under your leadership our nation emerges united and strong with renewed faith and purpose. Our prayers and good wishes are with you."

Mr. Rockefeller will spend tomorrow resting at his Seal Harbor home. On Sunday he is scheduled to fly to Chicago to address a Republican Governors Association seminar for governorship candidates. He will fly to New York for meetings on Monday and is scheduled to return to his Maine vacation home Monday night or Tuesday.

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Schlesinger Notifies Forces of New Chief

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9 (AP)—Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger officially notified the armed forces today that they have a new Commander in Chief.

In a message to all commanders worldwide, Mr. Schlesinger said that, as President and Commander in Chief, Gerald R. Ford "will have the fullest support, dedication and loyalty of all members of the Department of Defense."