

NYTimes AUG 21 1974
**Rockefeller Asserts Nixon
Should Not Be Prosecuted**

By LINDA CHARLTON AUG 21 1974
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SEAL HARBOR, Me., Aug. 23 —Nelson A. Rockefeller indicated today that he did not feel former President Nixon should be prosecuted.

The Vice President-designate said he agreed with Hugh Scott, the Senate minority leader, that "he's been hung, and it doesn't seem to me that in addition he should be drawn and quartered."

Mr. Rockefeller made his comment at a 35-minute news conference that he and his wife, Happy, held here at noon today at the dock on their summer place. Later, for the benefit of reporters unable to get here in time for the conference, Mr. Rockefeller alone had a second meeting with the press.

Twice at the first session, the 66-year-old former Governor of New York was asked whether he was reconciled to the idea that, failing the death or disability of President Ford, he was unlikely ever to occupy the White House. Twice, Mr. Rockefeller talked around the question, but the third time it was asked, at the second session, he replied:

"To be perfectly frank, this is not a matter of any concern to me at all. I have wanted to serve this country. I now have an opportunity to serve this country. I can't ask for any more."

But then, asked if 72—his

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age in 1980—was too great an age for a President, he first dismissed the question as irrelevant and then referred admiringly to former Israeli Premier Golda Meir and the late West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer.

He also said that he had accepted President Ford's bid to become Vice President with "no hesitation, no conditions, no questions." He also said that he had discussed his decision with his wife "and nobody else." And he repeated his disavowal of any specific ambitions for his Vice-Presidency.

He said that he and the President had not discussed his functions in the Administration, pointed out that he was required only to preside over the Senate and said again that

he was eager for "whatever additional functions the President may want me to carry out."

His comment on former President Nixon came in response to a question. Asked first for his reaction to President Ford's proposal for "leniency" for draft evaders and deserters, he said that he thought it was "an excellent statement" that "showed great courage." Asked then how he felt about "amnesty" for Mr. Nixon, he replied:

"Shouldn't that be a matter for the courts? Congress said that they do not have the power. I listened to Senator Hugh Scott on the air, and as Senator Scott said, he's been hung, and it doesn't seem to me that in addition he should be drawn and quartered."

Mr. Rockefeller was not asked and did not say whether he had consulted the White House before discussing "amnesty" for Mr. Nixon. In Washington, a White House spokesman said:

"The Governor was not told what to say or what not to say on any issue. Throughout his many years in public life, he has always spoken for himself."

President Ford has not yet taken a public stand on possible prosecution of Mr. Nixon.

As Mr. and Mrs. Rockefeller sat on a bench on the dock against a background of water, boats and gulls, the questioning ranged widely, as it did at the later session under the trees near a guest house on a neighboring estate that has been put into service as a press center.

States His Views

He gave his views on various topics as follows:

¶His assessment of the Nixon years: "They will be viewed as a dichotomy of tremendously important achievements with a tragic ending."

¶Asked if he planned an "independent Vice Presidency in which he would air any disagreements with the President, he said, "If I had any disagreements or any thoughts, my tendency would be to give them to him privately."

¶His assessment of President Ford: "In my opinion [he] has re-established faith and hope, and this country has opened the doors and the windows. He drops in on the Senate, on the House of Representatives. The Black Caucus meets with him, [and] to see Bella Abzug standing right next to the President --my goodness, this has got to be a new era!"

¶Will he accept his Vice-Presidential salary: "I don't know why not. I don't know what it is, but I'll find out."

On the same subject of his

finances, Mr. Rockefeller said that he had been assured by the Congressional committee to which he is making available detailed information that it will release none of it unless he agrees.

Mr. Rockefeller said that he had no idea how long the confirmation proceedings would take, adding, "As long as they want." He did give some indication of the direction in which his Vice-Presidency may move when he talked about what he called a national and international economic crisis.

"We're facing a difficult and dangerous economic situation—inflation, unemployment growing, a very serious moment. Anything I can do to help him [the President], I want to do. We've got a national and worldwide crisis of very serious proportions."

He spoke of the "disastrous effects" of inflation and of problems with energy, food and the balance of payments.

He shied away from many questions about his plans, saying that it was premature to be specific before he was confirmed. However, he did say that it was doubtful if Dr. William J. Ronan, now head of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and a long-time friend and adviser, would become his chief of staff.

Ronan Is Silent

Dr. Ronan, here for a week-end of talks with Mr. Rockefeller, would not speculate on his plans.

Nor did Mr. Rockefeller make it any clearer whether he would campaign for Republican candidates this fall. He said that he would not campaign against any incumbents, but that he did have "some commitments" for political appearances.

Mrs. Rockefeller, wearing red slacks, a blue shirt and espadrilles, seemed as relaxed as her husband.

How did she feel, she was asked, about her husband's nomination? "As a concerned citizen," she said, smiling, "I'm thrilled. As for me personally, it's the beginning of a great adventure."