

Winthrop Rockefeller Views Politics from Arkansas Window

By JAMES R. CAMPBELL
United Press International
Morrilton, Ark. (UPI)—Winthrop Rockefeller's home rambles around the brow of a bluff nearly 900 feet above the Arkansas river valley, its picture windows sweeping a

new battleground of Arkansas party politics.
Here the "Squire of Petit Jean Mountain" presides over a vast and widely varied set of interests. They range from raising purebred Santa Gertrudis cattle to promoting industrial development and, to the chagrin of the Democrats in his back yard, making a two-party state of Arkansas.

Rockefeller came here from New York nearly 10 years ago during divorce proceedings from his first wife "Bobo", the daughter of a Lithuanian coal miner. He never made any secret of his politics. He is just as Republican as his brother Nelson, the governor of New York and a leading candidate for the next GOP presidential nomination.

Politics Ignored
But Winthrop Rockefeller's political persuasion was largely ignored as long as he confined it to the lofty reaches of Petit Jean and his office in Little Rock's Tower building.

It was when he went down into the communities last year to organize local Republican units that the fur started to fly. It flew furiously during the recent legislative session, when a move was mounted to oust him as chairman of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission (AIDC).

Members of the legislature who had Republican opposition for the first time last fall because of Rockefeller were ready to send him packing.

Bombastic Rep. Paul Van Dalsen of Perry county demanded on the floor of the House, "Who the hell does Rockefeller think he is?"

But the ouster efforts failed as the legislature, stunned by the vigor of the public reaction, backed away.

Two-Party Plans
It may not have been a clear-cut victory for Rockefeller, but he feels it certainly was no harm to his two-party plans.

"There's no question about it," he said. "It had to help."

Rockefeller, who admits he came very close to taking on Gov. Orvil Faubus in the gubernatorial race last year, is not saying whether he might try it in 1964.

"But I think they (the legislature) have helped me if I should decide to run," he added.

Rockefeller's Winrock farms, near Morrilton in Conway county, is on a plateau 1,100 feet above sea level.

Rockefeller bought some 900 acres of land on the western side of the plateau in 1953, when it was mostly untended woodland and unproductive soil. Land purchases in 1962 extended Winrock to more than 7,500 acres.

Cattle Grazing
Now a prize herd of about 2,400 Santa Gertrudis graze on lush, green pastures. More than 20 immaculate buildings dot the landscape, providing living and working quarters for the farm's 125 employees as well as housing the animals.

Not only does he run a successful farm, Rockefeller looks like a farmer. Only his diction betrays his New York background.

There is a story that when he first arrived he drove down to Morrilton to look over some tractors. In his work clothes he looked like any of the other farmers in the area, so the story goes, and didn't get much attention until he offered to pay cash for a fleet of tractors.

"I hadn't heard that one," Rockefeller said. "But sometimes visitors here think I'm one of the employees. I usually let them know who I am, though, before they get embarrassed."

Western Dress
It would be a logical mistake. Around the farm he drapes his big frame in western clothing and wears a broad-brimmed hat.

His new Continental has a silver mounted Santa Gertrudis bull mounted on the hood. He likes to drive it around the farm surveying his stock and talking with the employees on a two-way radio.

Smoke curled from the forest in nearby Petit Jean State Park as he drove a UPI reporter and photographer around the farm.

"This is 52," he said into the radio. "Is the fire under control?" It was. Satisfied, he hung up the microphone.

Rockefeller is proud of his Santa Gertrudis, which combine the hardiness of the Brahman with the meat production of the shorthorn.

He offers 20 of his top two-year olds at an annual sale, often attended by movie stars and other celebrities, the second of each May. In 1961, Winrock bull No. 133 sold for \$59,000, still a record price among the breed.

Defends Poll
Rockefeller does not want to be considered an outsider or a interloper in state affairs.

In turning down the Republican gubernatorial race last summer he said, "I have no personal ambitions. It is my considered judgement that I can do more for the Republican party in Arkansas by making it clear that I am not seeking something for myself. Above all I am going to strive, with all the energy I possess, to establish the sacredness of the poll. It is tragic that the theme of voting in Arkansas today is a theme of fear."

He still is trying to organize the "grass roots," and therein lies much of his trouble with the Democratic administration.

Gov. Orvil Faubus, who twice appointed Rockefeller to the AIDC, said in a television appearance March 27 he believed Rockefeller had been an asset to the state.

"That is way I left him on the AIDC," Faubus said. "But when you go into a community and try to deprive someone of his dearest possession,

his political life, you are asking for trouble.

Although the AIDC and politics take up most of his time, Rockefeller has a number of other activities which keep him moving.

He goes to New York so much that, although he hasn't lived there for more than nine years, he still gets his haircuts in a New York barber shop.

He recently was named chairman of the 1963 campaign of the National Mental program in which his wife is a leader. He and Mrs. Rockefeller also are leaders in the Arkansas Arts Center, and Mrs. Rockefeller promoted an "Artmobile" journey around the state to display fine art to school children.

Rockefeller remains chairman of the Board of Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., which restored Williamsburg, Va., a director of Rockefeller Center Inc. and holds positions

on various other boards with members of his family.

He first gained an intimate knowledge of Arkansas when he and Frank Newell of Little Rock were officers in the 77th Division in World War II.

Rockefeller joined the Army as a private 11 months before Pearl Harbor. He was separated in 1946 as a lieutenant colonel after winning the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster and the Purple Heart for a wound received on Okinawa.

He learned the oil business from "the hole up" in Texas

under the tutelage of rough-necks, tool pushers, and drillers. He learned finance on the staff of the Chase National Bank in New York, later worked for Socony-Vacuum and the IBEC Housing Corp.

Rockefeller's friends have said he never really enjoys city life and is happiest at his farm.

There are few farms such as his, with four lakes, a boathouse, swimming pool, magnificent house and a stunning view of the rich Arkansas Valley.

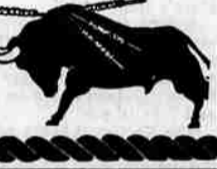
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Hall Gamewell Penninger, violation of basic rule, \$25.

CIRCUIT COURT
Deborah Aline Mitchell vs. Robert E. Mitchell, divorce complaint
Ivanell Harvey vs. Ronald A. Harvey, divorce complaint.

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