

Both Parties Trying To Capitalize On Surprise Rockefeller Withdrawal

WASHINGTON (AP)—Both major parties strove today to capitalize on a stunning political surprise — Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller's withdrawal from the race for the Republican presidential nomination.

Republicans pictured the GOP as a unified party, one which refrains from rending itself apart in brawling convention contests — a party which can now devote all its energies to electing Vice President Richard M. Nixon to the presidency.

Democrats depicted the GOP as controlled by old pro conservatives, who do not give "progressives" like the New York governor a look-in. There was even talk—notably by Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas — of drafting Rockefeller for a high post under "the Democratic president to be elected next November."

Neither party had much to say in public about the problems posed for it by Rockefeller's "definite and final" announcement on Saturday that he would not be a candidate in 1960 for the presidential nomination, and would not accept the vice presidential spot.

One big poser for the Republicans was how to pump any drama into their convention opening in Chicago next July 25. It will be like a mystery novel of which every reader knows the ending. Nothing now sighted on the political horizon can prevent a first ballot nomination for Nixon. The only suspense lies in the choice of his running mate.

And if political custom holds, Nixon and not the delegates will make that choice. He said Sunday, as he left in high good humor to attend the Colts-Giants football game in Baltimore, that it was too early to talk about the 1960 ticket.

The Republican national chairman, Sen. Thruston B. Morton of Kentucky, praised Rockefeller for "so clearly stating his position." Morton said he felt Nixon was well ahead in the GOP presidential nomination picture.

The White House declined comment on Rockefeller's withdrawal.

For the Democrats—with their small army of aspirants who show no signs of withdrawing—the problem is how to pick the best man to take on Nixon without ripping the party seams by fights over religion, North-South issues and other matters.

When they meet in Los Angeles July 11, the Democrats will be laboring under no uncertainty as to whom they must prepare to fight. It will be Nixon, a versatile campaigner who can take a high-level stance or slug it out with the roughest.

Just how this will affect the Democrats' choice of a nominee is up in the air. Backers of each of the actual or potential candidates—they include Sen. John F. Kennedy (Mass.), Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (Minn.), Sen. Stuart Symington (Mo.), Johnson, California's Gov. Edmund G. (Pat) Brown and Adlai E. Stevenson—can be counted upon to argue that their man is just the one to beat Nixon.

Some of the Democratic talk that Nixon would be easier to defeat than Rockefeller has died down since polls showed Nixon faring well. But some of it persists. Sen. Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, the Democratic vice presidential nominee in 1956, told a TV audience Sunday that Democrats will be more united against Nixon than they would have been against Rockefeller, whom Kefauver described as more liberal.

Kefauver said Rockefeller's withdrawal show "old guard Republicans are in complete control."

The guessing about Nixon's running mate covered a wide scope. Names mentioned included:

Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell; Rep. Charles A. Halleck of Indiana, Republican leader in the House; Atty. Gen. William P. Rogers, Morton, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton, Sen. Kenneth B. Keating (N.Y.), Sen. Hugh Scott (Pa.) and Gov. Cecil Underwood (W.Va.), Christopher Del Sesto (R.I.) and William Quinn (Hawaii).

If the usual geographical considerations are given weight, they would rule out such men as Gov. Mark Hatfield of Oregon. It would be highly unusual for a party to choose both its nominees from the Far West.

If the Democrats should nominate Kennedy, a Roman Catholic, for the presidency, the Republicans might turn to Mitchell for "balance." Mitchell is a Roman Catholic from New Jersey.

Many Republicans still yearned for a Nixon-Rockefeller ticket, which they said would be ideal. There was no evidence Rockefeller would countenance this, though he can count upon being the target of pressure from now until convention time. He proclaimed an "absolutely definite" resolve not to accept the vice presidential nomination.

As for the presidential race, Rockefeller said he withdrew because he found that "the great

majority of those who will control" the Republican convention stood opposed to a contest for the nomination. Thus he could only hope to capture the prize through a "massive struggle" in primaries, and this would hamper his work as New York governor.

Reporters at Albany Sunday sought to get Rockefeller to say specifically whether he would support Nixon. He would not go beyond his Saturday statement, which said he expected to "support the nominee" of the convention.

Students of politics look upon the governor as a rare phenomenon, a politician with a coolly objective view of his own prospects. Usually when a man gets presidential fever, desire belouds judgment. But not so Rockefeller. He looked over the situation, with the help of polls and experimental journeys West and South, and decided that the odds in 1960 were too heavy to luck.

Reporters search in vain for signs of a "deal" in the Rockefeller withdrawal. Eyebrows went up a bit when former Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, from Rockefeller's state, travelled here Dec. 20 to attend a party in Nixon's home. There was talk that Dewey might have brought word that Rockefeller was willing to bow out this year, in return for a pledge of Nixon support some time in the future.

But evidence for this was lacking. Nixon's aides said the Rockefeller announcement came as a complete surprise to the vice president. He was said to have expressed disbelief when he first heard of it from Atty. Gen. Rogers.

Nixon's statement that Rockefeller is destined for "continued leadership in the Republican party" in the years ahead led to some guessing that he might be offered a high position—say secretary of state—if Nixon won. But all this was, as yet, speculation.

One possible reason cited for Rockefeller's withdrawal was that he could not build up a set of policies of his own without stepping on the toes of President Eisenhower at a time when the White House is aglow with the prestige of Eisenhower's peace crusades.

Rockefeller already had differed somewhat from Eisenhower on foreign policy, trade, agriculture and on the nuclear bomb testing question.

Just what Eisenhower thought of it all went undisclosed. Pressed for a statement on the Rockefeller withdrawal, Presidential Press Secretary James C. Hagerty said Sunday with a grin:

"There was no Rockefeller statement yesterday, there will be no statement today, and there will be no statement tomorrow."

GLAMOR GIRLS



"This stuff was all guaranteed to be broken by now!"

Typical Mother; Queen Eyes Son In Yule Program

WEST NEWTON, England (AP)—Queen Elizabeth II bowed her head with emotion Sunday night as her son and heir stood at the altar of a 15th century church and made the first official public utterance of his royal life.

The voice of 11-year-old Prince Charles was clear and composed as he read one of four lessons from the Bible at the annual service of nine carols in the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, in this village near the royal family's Sandringham estate.

While his mother, his father

Prince Philip, his sister, Princess Anne, 9, and other royal relatives looked on, Charles held the Bible firmly and read the passage from St. Matthew about the coming of the Three Wise Men to Bethlehem. Queen Elizabeth, who is expecting her third child early next year, seemed close to tears as the young prince spoke.

French Traffic Claims Hundred

PARIS (AP)—Highway accidents claimed 100 lives in France over the three-day Christmas weekend. It was one of the worst holiday traffic tolls in the history of this nation of 44 million.

In a four-day Christmas period last year only 28 deaths were recorded.

FIGURES ANNOUNCED BERLIN (UPI)—Five hundred and 75 East Germans sought political asylum in West Berlin during the Christmas holiday, refugee camp officials announced Sunday.

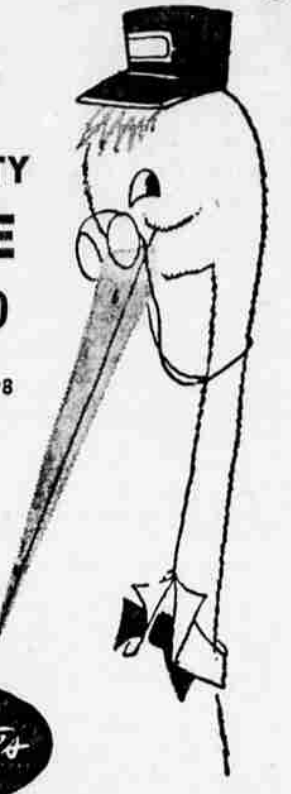
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