
Saturday Review of
THE SOCIETY

**“I Love the Name,” Says Jay Rockefeller,
“I Love Everything About It.”**



Unlike his well-known relatives, however, John D. Rockefeller IV is a Democrat. And right now he's going for broke (well, not quite) to be elected governor of West Virginia this fall.

BY ANTHONY WOLFF

West Virginia is not exactly Rockefeller country. It is a stubbornly poor, feckless place, half pitied and half rejected by the outside world, but most of the time merely ignored. There is reason to wonder, then, at the sight of John D. Rockefeller IV addressing a crowd beside a back-country road in Boone County. He is dressed according to his custom—which is to say he is somewhat overdressed for the warm weather, the informal occasion, and his thirty-five years—in a well-tailored gray suit safely removed from the brink of fashion. With his unmistakable Rockefeller features, he seems every inch (all six-and-one-half feet of him) the image of the sober patrician—ex-

Anthony Wolff is a former senior editor of *Look* magazine and now a freelance writer based in New York City.

cept for the fact that he is balanced dangerously on one leg, stork-like, on the back of a bunting-draped flat-bed band wagon, displaying the clods of West Virginia earth clinging to his up-raised English-made shoe. The mud was picked up a few minutes earlier when Jay alighted from his campaign bus into a roadside puddle. And the purpose of displaying it now is to encourage his listeners to vote out the incumbent governor, who has allowed their roads to fall into such disrepair, and to elect the Democratic challenger, Jay Rockefeller, governor of West Virginia this November.

The governorship might seem success enough for a young man—even a Rockefeller—just six years into a political career, with all his achievements still ahead of him. Indeed, Rockefeller himself does not admit to

“Strip mining,” Jay Rockefeller has often said, “is like a knife slashing through a painting.”

any higher ambitions. But already he is mentioned by would-be Democratic king makers as future presidential material. Even as the thirty-year-old nominee for secretary of state in West Virginia, he was offered the national spotlight to nominate Hubert Humphrey at the 1968 Chicago convention. And last month at Miami, there was a move to add his name to the list of vice presidential nominees.

Jay quickly refused both honors and would no doubt be the first to concede that they would have been a bit premature in a political career that only began in 1966, when he was elected to the House of Delegates, West Virginia's lower legislative chamber. Two years later, after an uneventful freshman term, Jay became West Virginia's secretary of state—a largely ceremonial post whose principal duty requires him to affix the state seal to official documents. The job, however, had the fringe benefit of providing an excellent vantage point on the none too genteel intricacies of West Virginia politics, which Jay set about studying so diligently that he soon became known around Charleston as the “governor-in-waiting.” In the past three-and-a-half years Jay has become the de facto leader of the state's Democratic party, and, not incidentally, he has had plenty of time to size up the man who sits across the corridor from him in the statehouse.

Republican Governor Arch A. Moore, Jr., is considered an old-style West Virginia politician, with a strong public image and a talent for campaign infighting. As a six-term U.S. congressman, he was noted for increasing his margin at the polls each election. In 1968, with the West Virginia Democratic party paralyzed by the indictment of several of its leaders—including former governor Wally Baron—on charges of corruption, Moore was able to overcome the state's two-to-one Democratic registration to become the second Republican governor in Charleston in the last half century.

As governor he has proved a skilled ringmaster of the political circus that often passes for statecraft in West Virginia. His critics claim that he never misses getting his picture taken at ribbon-cutting ceremonies for interstate highway sections that were voted and paid for under previous Democratic administrations. And recently, after the legislature passed a hard-fought bill increasing unemployment benefits, many lawmakers were angered by a letter from Moore to each recipient, taking full credit for the largesse. Then the

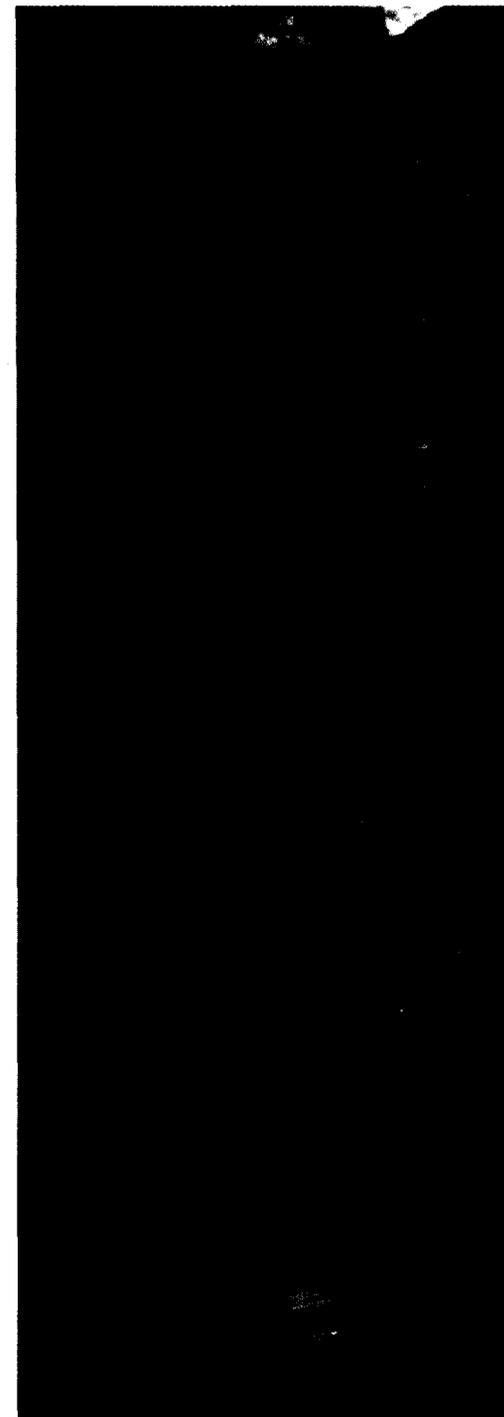
governor, who has nearly full control over the West Virginia budget, somehow managed to announce a \$53 million surplus in an election year—and this in a state where virtually every governmental service is already woefully inadequate.

Ironically, the fact that Moore can run for a second term is due partly to his opponent. Until this upcoming election West Virginia's governors were limited to a single term in office—a precaution designed to prevent a politician from getting his hands too deeply into the public till. The result, however, was that no sooner had a governor been inaugurated than his effectiveness was limited by his lame-duck status. With that in mind, a group of reform Democrats, including Jay Rockefeller, spearheaded the passage of a two-term amendment to the state constitution in 1968. And to obtain the necessary Republican support for the measure, they agreed to make it applicable to the incumbent as well as future governors, thus setting the stage for the present race.

In the early months of the campaign, Governor Moore has limited himself to needling Rockefeller with charges of “political immaturity” and absenteeism. “I've been on TV more times than the secretary of state has been in his office,” he has said. And, at least during the recent Democratic primary fight, that claim may have been only a slight exaggeration. For six months Jay spent every available moment touring the state in an effort to revitalize its badly weakened Democratic party under his leadership. Then in May, after exhausting himself and a \$411,000 campaign fund (including \$331,000 of his own money), Jay won the primary with 72.2 per cent of the vote.

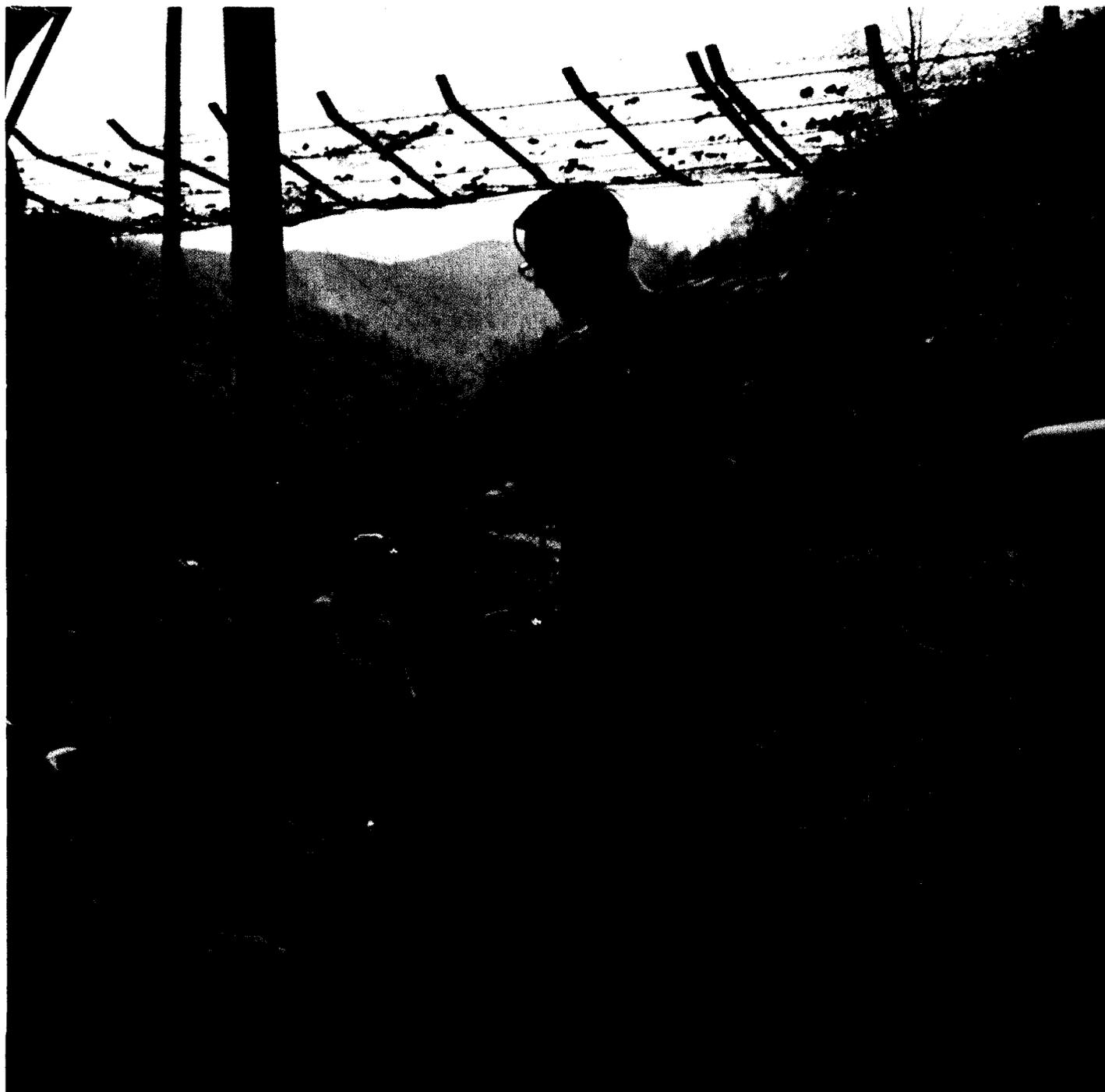
As the gubernatorial campaign heated up over the summer, it soon became apparent that a crucial test of strength between Moore and Rockefeller would come over the complex issue of strip mining. Coal underlies much of West Virginia's landscape and economy. For generations the men who owned the coal have become rich and politically influential, while men who owned little besides the muscles in their backs went underground to dig. In recent years, however, the development of giant earth-moving machinery has made it possible to get at the coal with less trouble and expense by disemboweling the landscape to expose the combustible material buried beneath.

In West Virginia's steep terrain the



Rockefeller campaigns at a coal mine in Boone County, West Virginia. His stand against strip mining makes him popular with deep miners, although not with the leaders of the UMW.

coal seams are exposed by blasting away whole mountainsides. The “overburden”—the earth's vital mantle—slides away into the valleys, burying fertile bottomland and choking streams. The landscape is forever marred by serpentine scars notched into the once-forested slopes. The human costs of stripping are equally high. People are driven from their homes or remain to witness the destruction of the surrounding countryside. And the 7,000 strip miners in West Virginia,



most of whom could apply their skills to related jobs—in the construction industry, for example—displace several times as many deep miners, who are often unsuited for any other work.

Of course, precisely because strip mining requires less labor and capital than deep mining, it is much more profitable. Indeed, some strip-mine operators in West Virginia realize pretax profits of well over 100 per cent on invested capital. Understandably, then, the state's coal production comes increasingly from stripping; several hundred square miles have already been destroyed by the technique, and the remaining strippable reserves are going fast. But the demand for coal is so great at present, the antistripping

faction claims, that legislation banning the practice would pose no serious threat to the state's leading industry. And in the event of such a ban, Rockefeller has made a campaign pledge to establish a special governmental bureau with the purpose of helping strip miners find new jobs.

Jay's initial aversion to strip mining was largely emotional, the response of a city boy enthralled by the land. Strip mining, he has said, is "like a knife slashing through a painting." By the end of 1970, when research convinced him that stripping was an economic and social disaster for the state—and that effective reclamation of strip-mined land was impossible on its steep mountains—he came out in favor of

banning stripping "completely and forever" in West Virginia. And in case the legislature failed to act, Rockefeller promised that he would do away with the practice by administrative action in the event he became governor. He may have that chance, for early last year the legislature produced a bill that placed some restrictions on strip mining but fell far short of abolishing it altogether.

For his part, Governor Moore has tried to avoid the issue entirely. While the legislature struggled toward enactment of antistripping legislation, Moore insisted that the whole thing was really a nonissue raised by publicity seekers—presumably Rockefeller. And when pressed by reporters to take

During his term as secretary of state, Jay became known in Charleston political circles as the “governor-in-waiting.”

a position himself, he has generally bucked the question down to department heads.

The May Democratic primary turned into a referendum on stripping—and in other ways than Jay’s expected victory. Representative Ken Hechler, running on an “abolitionist” platform in a gerrymandered district, beat an entrenched incumbent to win re-election to Congress, where he is the sponsor of a bill banning coal stripping nationwide. And state senator Tracy Hilton, West Virginia’s biggest independent strip-mine operator, lost to a little-known, under-financed young abolitionist named Warren McGraw. Such indications of an antistripping mandate forced Moore to take a more responsive position on the matter—and soon after the election the governor announced that he had always been a “strong reclamationist.”

Last February Moore lost standing on another mining issue—safety regulation of deep mines—when an improperly constructed waste-water holding pond belonging to Pittston Co. burst its dam, flooding Buffalo Creek Valley in Logan County, killing 125 people and eradicating several towns. The governor quickly announced that the disaster was “a natural occurrence,” supporting the company’s claim that it was not liable for such an “act of God.” (The Army’s Corps of Engineers later reported that it would have been an act of God if the dam had held.)

Rockefeller’s criticism of Moore came a month later, after the initial shock of the tragedy had passed. In an address to a local Charleston organization he charged that Buffalo Creek was a “grim reminder of a conspiracy to escape regulation.” Taking aim at both Pittston and the governor, he insisted: “These are not ‘acts of God’; they are happenings that come from corporate and public negligence. We must reject—we cannot accept—this murderous fatalism about the inevitability of disaster.” Some observers claim that the Buffalo Creek episode enabled Rockefeller to include the coal-mining southern tier of West Virginia in his primary sweep of all fifty-five of the state’s counties.

Just last month Moore again left himself vulnerable to attack on the issue of deep mine regulation. After an explosion at the Consolidation Coal Company’s Blacksville No. 1 Mine in Monongalia County killed nine men, he admitted that state and federal inspectors had cited the mine for almost a

thousand safety violations since it had opened in 1968. Rockefeller immediately shot back that citations without enforcement invited such disasters. He promised that his administration would enforce the existing penalties more strictly—perhaps even raising the often minimal fines—and charged that the number of mine inspections had fallen precipitously during Moore’s term of office despite the fact that additional funds had been appropriated for that purpose.

By now it is almost universally accepted in the state that Moore is the candidate of the coal interests, an alliance that includes not only the giant coal companies, the smaller independents, and the railroads, but also the old-line leadership of the United Mine Workers, which has often been criticized for being too cozy with the industry. The UMW is said to be responsible for distributing campaign literature urging miners to “Remember Ludlow,” the site of the 1914 massacre of striking Colorado coal miners by agents of a Rockefeller-owned mining company.

Nor have Jay’s opponents taken a purely historical approach in their attempt to blunt his antistripping attack. They have tried to establish that he himself is directly implicated in coal stripping through his family’s ubiquitous financial interests. In response to one such accusation involving purported strip mining in Indiana by Standard Oil of Ohio, Rockefeller announced: “I don’t own stock in any Standard Oil company which is strip mining coal anywhere, including Indiana.” Jay is considering meeting his critics halfway—quite a concession for the normally secretive Rockefellers—by releasing a list of the companies in which he owns shares, without revealing the amount of his interest. (With or without such partial disclosure, however, the question of apparent conflict of interest is bound to arise again for Jay Rockefeller, as he confronts issues in which his personal and public values intersect. One clear test will come, for instance, when Rockefeller is called on to take a position on the kind of tax reform—including almost confiscatory inheritance taxes—put forward by George McGovern, whom Jay supports.)

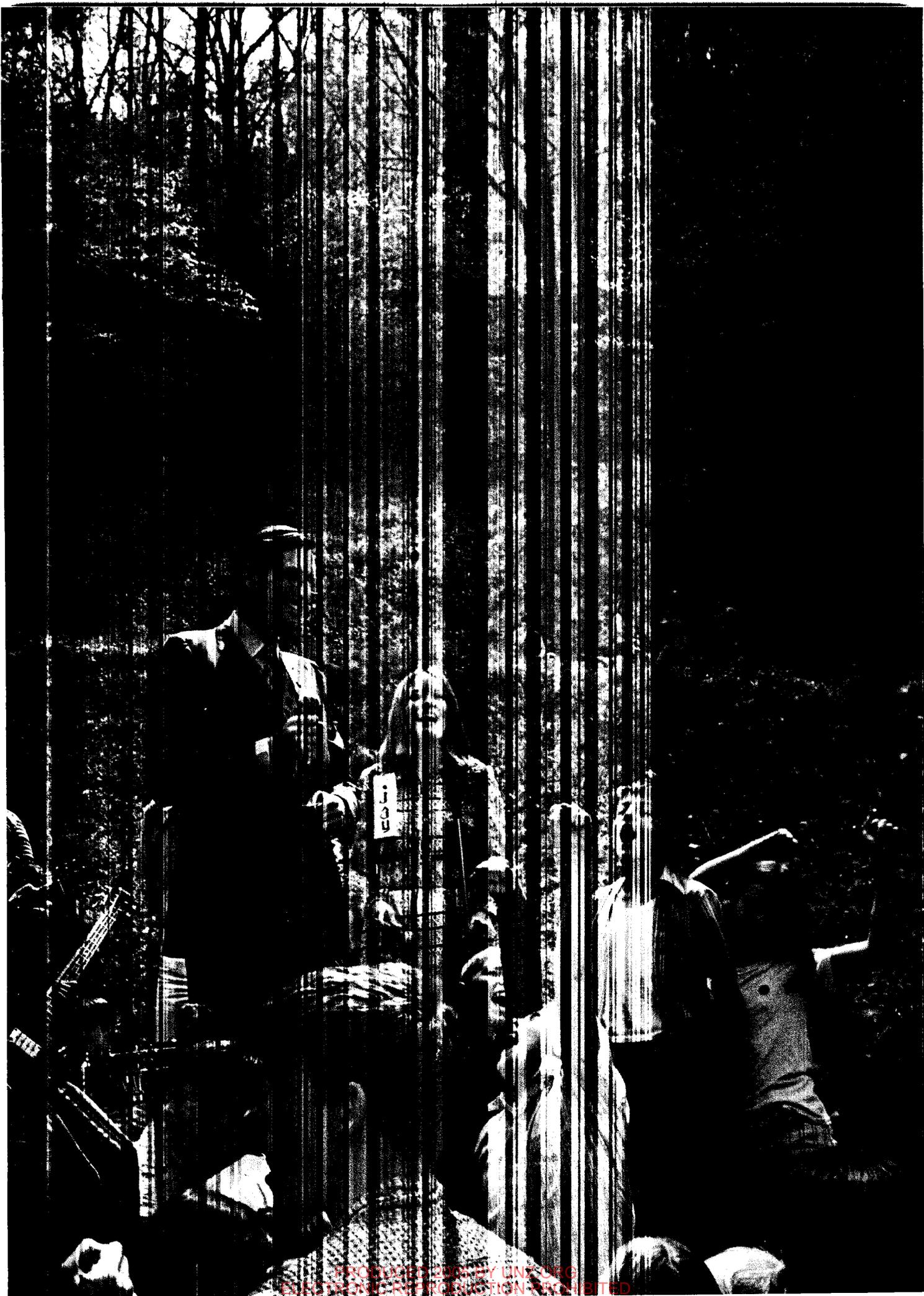
Rockefeller has also encountered less subtle opposition from the mining interests. From the kick-off of his primary campaign in the mining community of Bluefield, where he promised a better deal for deep miners and protection for the mountains, his rallies

have often been picketed. And until a few months ago, a company known succinctly as Explosives, Inc., sponsored a billboard on Route 50 between Clarksburg and Morgantown that attacked Jay with such catchy texts as: “Don’t vote for a transplant—you’ll live to reject it.”

As that reference to his out-of-state origins indicates, the charge of “carpet-bagging” still plagues Rockefeller after six years of political involvement and eight years of residence in West Virginia. Many people continue to suspect that Jay’s sojourn in Charleston is nothing more than a detour to pick up political strength en route from the family estate in New York to the White House. Much of the lingering suspicion some West Virginians have about him is no doubt a reflection of their own self-doubt. They are all-too-painfully conscious of their state’s desperate predicament but resent being exposed to the rest of the world as a case study in failure. Years later there are still people in West Virginia who haven’t forgiven Jay for a picture that appeared in a women’s magazine showing him sitting in a rocking chair on the porch of a decrepit shack wearing a custom-tailored suit. West Virginians tend to be mistrustful, even defensively hostile, toward outsiders—especially those who come to do them good but usually end up making them look bad and feel even worse. Why, they insist, if not for some species of personal gain, would anyone—least of all a young Rockefeller with unlimited options—want to come here?

In Jay’s case, of course, the answer is of interest not merely as another curious addition to the growing body of Rockefeller family folklore, but as an indication of what kind of politician he will turn out to be—in West Virginia and perhaps beyond. Jay himself rejects the obvious suggestion that he became a Democratic politician in West Virginia to avoid the debilitating certainties of being a Republican Rockefeller in New York. Other members of the family in his generation, he admits, have had some hang-ups about being Rockefellers, with varying symptoms. Rockefeller women seem to have the most difficult time of it. One of Jay’s sisters used to quit the family limousine to walk the last five blocks to school, and another has reportedly

Jay and his wife, Sharon (the daughter of Sen. Charles Percy), greet a group of West Virginia school children from the back of their campaign band wagon.



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discarded the family name entirely.

Jay Rockefeller sympathizes with them, but personally he has no use for such simplistic evasions. "The name has never been anything but a great big plus for me," he enthuses. "I love it. I love everything about it." Even in West Virginia he takes few pains to pretend that he is not rich. (His most obvious gesture of protective camouflage early in his political career in Charleston was to affect a Buick, only recently replaced by a Lincoln.) When he first came to West Virginia in 1964 to begin a two-year stint as a poverty worker in the run-down rural community of Emmons, one of his initial attempts to break the ice with the townspeople was to give them a slide-show tour of his accustomed life-style: his Jaguar XKE, his family's Pocantico Hills estate, his own Washington townhouse—the works.

At a later screening, this time in his own suburban Charleston home, a group of political associates and friends were watching a kinescope of a TV documentary on the 1967 wedding of Jay and Sharon, his pretty twenty-seven-year-old wife and the daughter of Sen. Charles Percy of Illinois. The film traced Jay's lineage back to the first John D., while the narrator made a respectful reference to the huge fortune he had acquired. From his great-grandson's direction in the darkened room came the heartfelt response: "Bless him!"

Still, if Jay did not intend to loosen his family connection by coming to West Virginia, he has at least taken himself out of the family's established orbit, with its loci at Pocantico Hills and Beekman Place, its social obligations, cultural preoccupations, and financial interests. Although Jay still makes occasional quick trips to New York for meetings at the Rockefeller Foundation, or his generation's separate Rockefeller Family Fund, he has, like his favorite Uncle Winthrop in Arkansas, achieved a certain remoteness from Room 5600, the family offices that occupy an entire floor of the RCA Building in Rockefeller Center.

Even Jay's choice of a political career, though hardly unique in other branches of the family, is in marked contrast to his father's long tradition of public silence. And if government was to be Jay's life, it is difficult to imagine the diffident John D. III—the philanthropist behind such high-toned ventures as New York's Lincoln Center—being very enthusiastic about his son's choice of the rough-and-tumble carnival of West Virginia politics.

Much has been made of Rockefeller's defection from the Republican party, to which his family has regularly contributed both talent and money. While it is doubtful that the family was

overjoyed by his choice of political company, Jay has been careful not to make his apostasy unnecessarily embarrassing to his Republican relatives—especially Uncle Nelson. Before the 1968 presidential campaign, however, when a mischievous journalist asked him what he would do in the event his uncle and his father-in-law became the GOP standard-bearers, Jay straightway replied that he would jump off Charleston's South Bridge into the Kanawah River. The quip was reported in the Rockefeller family newsletter, and Jay got a reproving phone call from his mother. For a while afterward, in response to questions on that subject, he was heard to mutter something to the effect that blood is thicker than politics.

But whatever embarrassment the political division in the family may cause him is probably unavoidable. Coming of age in the Kennedy era, drawn to work for the Peace Corps and then the poverty program in West Virginia, Jay Rockefeller was simply never a Republican at heart. According to his own estimate almost half the members of Jay's generation of Rockefellers share his Democratic persuasion, so that the political split in the family seems to be a generation gap.

Clearly, for Jay Rockefeller, West Virginia was always much more than a place where he could establish his independence from an illustrious family—if only because he had done that long before. After attending Exeter and three years of Harvard, Rockefeller found himself gratuitously elected president of his college social club in 1958 and, as he puts it, "one year away from being doomed to being home free"—from full membership in the privileged club of Rockefeller men. Instead, Jay left Harvard to take a teaching job in Japan. He soon demoted himself even further by enrolling as a student at the International Christian University of Tokyo, taking a small room in a boarding-house, and cutting his income to \$25 a month for room and board. He began to study, he recalls, "like a Jewish kid at law school."

Jay strongly resists the obvious inference that his three years of relatively Spartan self-discipline in Japan was an act of self-effacement. More than a decade later, he still remembers that period in his life as "an enormous personal experience for me. I had a great sense of discovery, and a feeling that I was really plugging into the world in a way that I hadn't before."

Jay's coming of age in Japan was marked by a family rite: He passed from being simply John Rockefeller to being John Davison Rockefeller IV, laying claim to the middle name and Roman numeral that, according to family custom, had been waiting until he

felt ready to assume them. "At that time," he remembers, "taking the full name became terribly important to me. Until then, I don't think I had ever asked myself whether I could live up to the name . . . its insistence on responsibility and commitment and service."

After three years away from the United States, Rockefeller returned to Harvard to get his degree, then served one-year stints as a Far East specialist at the Peace Corps and the State Department. Finally Jay realized that if he was going to connect with his generation he had better start finding out about America as well as Asia. At the urging of his best friend from the Peace Corps—Charles Peters, a native of Charleston who is now the editor of *Washington Monthly*—Jay landed a job as a poverty worker in West Virginia. He was assigned to the disintegrating coal town of Emmons, a collection of poor families alienated from each other and the outside world.

Rockefeller's job was to encourage the people of Emmons to join together in something the theorists in Washington blithely called "community action." "First of all," Jay recalls, "to get them to trust me—that was the first eight months right there. Then, to get them to have trust in their power to make decisions as a community—that was the next year. From confidence in community decisions to confidence that an individual can make a decision about what he needs to do—that would have been a thirty-year process."

Instead of attempting it directly, Jay broadened his focus from the microcosm of Emmons to the entire state. Skeptics who see him as an opportunist exploiting West Virginia's misery insist that his two years in Emmons were a calculated gambit. According to Jay, however, his political ambitions arose as he became convinced that "Emmons is West Virginia, it's the same damned thing"—and that in West Virginia the power to change things is a government monopoly.

It is a power that may soon be his to exercise. In a public opinion poll taken by the *Charleston Gazette* last June, Rockefeller received 57 per cent of the sampling to Governor Moore's 43 per cent. But win or lose in November, Jay Rockefeller says he is in West Virginia to stay and discourages speculation about his wider ambitions on the national political scene.

During his campaign for secretary of state four years ago, Rockefeller was asked what he could do for West Virginia. "If the people trust me," he said, "then I can do one thing: I can lead." Now, with the governor's office seemingly about to be his, Jay Rockefeller will soon find out if the people trust him, and West Virginians are going to learn whether he can lead. □

The American Obsession with FUN

In John Barth's *The End of the Road*, Jacob Horner describes a dream he once had in which, after several futile attempts to find out the weather forecast, he learns from the chief meteorologist that there simply will not be any weather the next day. He tells us about the dream in order to explain a particular state of mind that he often experiences, a state he has come to call "weatherless." Though analogies between moods and weather are commonplace, Horner questions their appropriateness in his case because a day without weather is almost impossible to imagine, and yet he frequently has days without any mood at all. At such times Horner is without a personality, is nonexistent in his own mind, except in the purely physical sense. He compares himself to those microscopic specimens that must be dyed before they can be seen: Horner needs to be colored by some mood or other in order to recognize himself. On his weatherless days he sits blankly in his rocking chair, rocking sometimes for hours until some external event colors him back into being.

Throughout the book Horner suffers from varying degrees of weatherlessness, the most extreme being a trance-like state of complete immobility. His standard device for warding off emptiness of mind is to repeat over and over an advertising jingle from the 1950s: "Pepsi-Cola hits the spot./Twelve full ounces—that's a lot." This jingle serves as the test pattern of his consciousness: As long as he can say it, he knows he still exists. Once, when the jingle failed him, he sat frozen on a bench in Penn Station all night long. By the end of the book the jingle has lost its effectiveness because Horner cannot even remember to say it at the right times. In the final scene he sits in his rocking chair, totally weatherless. When he gets in a cab and says, "Terminal," we know he will take the bus to the nameless "Doctor," recognizing himself to be a spiritual terminal case.

Ann Nietzsche, who lives in Normal, Illinois, is a housewife and freelance writer with a special interest in psychology.

The way we stress the importance of being "alive," says the author, betrays "a diminution in the sense of the self." Too often we discover our identity in the products we buy.

BY ANN NIETZKE

I have a friend, a teacher at a junior college in a large midwestern city, who sometimes suffers similar periods of weatherlessness. Her attacks are less severe and less pervasive than Jacob Horner's; I think they are, in part, just a defense against being overwhelmed by modern urban living. When things become a bit too much, she simply tunes out temporarily while her strength, the strength necessary for living a feeling life, gets replenished. Nevertheless, finding yourself in the company of someone who is in no mood at all, whatever the reasons behind it, is an unsettling experience. You just plain don't know how to act, since nothing you say or do seems to matter. There is nothing to interact with, no mood, emotion, or viewpoint to oppose or complement. You can't cheer your friend up, because she's not sad; you can't convince her of anything, because she's all too agreeable; and you can't make her feel better, because she doesn't feel bad. A few years ago, when I was visiting my friend during one of her weatherless bouts, I became exasperated and then saddened by my own helplessness in the situation. But as the weekend wore on, my sadness, interestingly enough, dissolved itself into moodlessness, too, so that finally the two of us sat there staring vacantly into space and feeling quite at home with each other. The only thing to do on such a weatherless Saturday night,

of course, was to look at television.

At that time Pepsi had just begun a new series of commercials, which must have proved very successful since it is still being used almost three years later. The main theme, familiar to everyone by now, is in the refrain: "You've got a lot to live,/And Pepsi's got a lot to give." That night, after hearing those words, my friend turned to me with the first spark of life I had seen in her eyes all weekend. "Don't you just love that?" she said. And I had to admit that I did. The tune and the words together conveyed a spirit of vivacity and affirmation that was somehow irresistibly appealing. The rest of the evening and all the next day we couldn't get the song out of our minds. We sang it aloud, together or solo, and, like Jacob Horner, we found ourselves intoning it under our breath, tapping a foot or waving a hand breezily through the air to mark the time. The thing had gotten through to us and in some mysterious way filled the emotional vacuum we were in.

Well, the coincidental relationship among my friends and me and Jacob Horner and weatherlessness and Pepsi-Cola ads all came together in an intriguing way when I recently reread Barth's *The End of the Road*. I began to listen carefully to Pepsi ads and then to Coke ads, and, as is usually the case when advertising is analyzed, I learned much less about the products than about the public for which the ads are designed. As almost any American can tell you, "Pepsi helps you come alive" and "Coke is the real thing." These slogans seem simple enough, but a close look at what they imply leads us into some sociopsychological considerations that are not simple.

When I was trying to help my friend that weekend, I didn't yet understand that moodlessness is a kind of death, that "aliveness" of some sort might be just the thing required to dispel it. Of course, even if I had realized this, I don't know specifically what I might have done for her, but I think it helps explain our response to the Pepsi commercial. In its various ads on radio and TV, Pepsi uses two main stanzas, al-