The Rockefeller’s Social Responsibility

In this lesson students will examine and evaluate documents and use them to form evidence in support of their thesis. Students will categorize and choose documents from the group demonstrating understanding of the documents, period of history and John D. Rockefeller, Sr. and Junior’s role as wealthy Americans. This lesson is designed to assess students skills in analyzing documents and in writing a document based question essay, and will require two to three hours of time depending on the readiness of students in regarding to using the documents and writing the essay.

In prior units we have examined the meaning of the “American Dream” and how it was and can be achieved through different means and to different levels. Living in American and achieving the American dream gives you possibility, promise, and peril. Students have been introduced to the idea of social justice and responsibility prior to the lesson, and also have built background knowledge through prior lessons on the immigrant experiences, the Progressive Era and reformers that were working during the time as well as Captains of Industry and Robber Barons.

**Essential Question:** Does more economic success mean more social responsibility?

**Lesson Question:** What did the Rockefellers feel was their social responsibility as wealthy Americans?

**Challenge Extension:** Was there a difference between what JDR Sr. felt he should do and what he did?

**Objective:** Students will examine the documents provided and gather information to form a thesis. Based upon that information and their knowledge of social studies they will select documents that support their thesis. Students will then write a DBQ essay answering the lesson questions and supporting their thesis using information from the documents.

Students will **KNOW** what the Rockefellers felt was their social responsibility as wealthy Americans. Students will **UNDERSTAND** that economic success and social responsibility are connected to the idea of the American dream. The students will write (DO) a DBQ essay answering the lesson question after examining documents and forming a thesis.

**Materials:** Hook Activity Worksheet (2 versions), Document Exploration Organizer, Loose leaf or access to a word processor for writing the essay

**Documents:**

For the Hook Activity - “Some Underlying Principles” selection from Chapter 6 titled “The Difficult Art of Giving” in Random Reminiscences & Ledger A – Specifically pages 3 and 4 showing donations

For use as evidence for the DBQ –

| Challenging | Correspondence regarding the support of the Colorado Fuel and Iron YMCA  
John D. Rockefeller Jr.’s speech in response to the unveiling of his portrait at Matthew Whaley High School  
John D. Rockefeller Jr.’s speech “Why I believe in the USO” |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grade Level | Pages 1664, 1665 & 1686 of the Inglis interviews of JDR from 1917-1920  
“The Generosity of Service” selection from Chapter 6 titled “The Difficult Art of Giving” from Random Reminiscences  
Excerpts from the report on CFI towns, Photo of Earl Ostrander (1929)  
“I Believe” speech by John D. Rockefeller Jr. & Plaque from Rockefeller Center |
| Below Grade Level | Photographs of the VanTassel & Dunbar Apartments brochures  
Cover and excerpts From McClures Magazine July 1905  
Photo of Serbian-Russian Church in CFI town |

| Check from JDR to fund schooling |
Procedure

Hook Activity Giving can mean different things to different people. As seen in “Ledger A” JDR Sr. felt that giving was important from a young age. Listen and follow along as we read a passage from Random Reminiscences which are John D. Rockefeller Sr.’s own words.

“It may be asked: How is it consistent with the universal diffusion of these blessings that vast sums of money should be in single hands? The reply is, as I see it, that, while men of wealth control great sums of money, they do not and cannot use them for themselves. They have, indeed, the legal title to large properties, and the do control the investment of them, but that is as far as their own relation to them extends or can be extended. The money is universally diffused, in the sense that it is kept invested and it passes into the pay envelope week by week. ...It is the duty of men of means to maintain the title to their property and to administer their funds until some man, or body of men, shall rise up capable of administering for the general good the capital of the country better than they can.”

- John D. Rockefeller, Sr. Random Reminiscences

Answer the following question in a paragraph that includes a thesis and evidence. What did JDR Sr. feel he should do with his money?

Group Activity – Document Exploration Following the Hook Activity students should begin to explore the documents in groups of 4 to 5 students. Students can be grouped heterogeneously or based upon their level of readiness. If students are seated based upon readiness then different documents can be distributed based on students needs. More lengthy readings, quotations or pictures can be substituted in. After time to discuss and explore the documents students should categorize the documents based upon their reactions, opinions and/or findings. The categories should be recorded so that students can refer back to them while making decisions on which documents will support their thesis. Students may also complete the note taking organizer on each of the documents to help in the formation of a thesis.

Independent Activity – Thesis Formation Based upon the students understanding, analysis and interpretation of the documents they should write a thesis answering the lesson question. Once the student has formed their thesis they should select three to five documents that support their thesis and outline their document based question essay.

Independent Activity – DBQ Essay Writing Depending on the time available students may peer conference with their essay outlines, or meet one on one with the teacher to discuss and deepen the analysis that they will include. Students should then begin to write. How long students have to work on the essay may depend on the amount of time given for writing in a testing situation, or if revisions or a writing workshop is to occur.

Modifications:

For the Hook Activity students should be given the handout showing a paraphrase of JDR Sr.’s words. Further paraphrasing or modification to the worksheet might be helpful such as an organization of space for a thesis and listing evidence.

When categorizing the documents some students may have difficulty seeing the connections. Categories may be given to students such as: Evidence of Positive Things, Evidence of Negative Things, Money Being Spent, Evidence of Rockefellers Ideas, Evidence of Philanthropy, Captain of Industry, Robber Baron, etc.
Some students may struggle with the formation of a thesis and might benefit from the following sentence starters and writing prompts:

John D. Rockefeller was a ________________ (Captain of Industry or Robber Baron) and used his money for...

As a wealthy American John D. Rockefeller and his family should have...

The Rockefellers spent a great deal of money on...

When comparing the way an immigrant in New York City lived and the way John D. Rockefeller lived...

Once students have formed a thesis and outlined their ideas for the essay, it may be helpful to have students peer edit their outlines and give advice on what documents would support the thesis and any ideas that might enhance the analysis within the essay. Students might also find it helpful to meet with the teacher to discuss their ideas and do a “think aloud” to reflect upon their ideas.

**Challenge Extension**

Was there a difference between what he felt he should do and what he did?

For students who have great strength in document analysis and writing, they may also be given a copy of the chapter titled “The Difficult Art of Giving” from *Random Reminiscences* which lays out Rockefellers ideas about charity, philanthropy and donations. Students should analyze this passage and include a discussion answering the challenge extension question within their essay.
“It may be asked: How is it consistent with the universal diffusion of these blessings that vast sums of money should be in single hands? How is it possible that some people have so much money? The reply is, as I see it, that, while men of wealth control great sums of money, they do not and cannot use them for themselves. The answer to that question is that, just because people have all that money doesn’t mean they can keep it to themselves. They have, indeed, the legal title to large properties, and the do control the investment of them, but that is as far as their own relation to them extends or can be extended. The money is universally diffused, in the sense that it is kept invested and it passes into the pay envelope week by week. ...It is the duty of men of means to maintain the title to their property and to administer their funds until some man, or body of men, shall rise up capable of administering for the general good the capital of the country better than they can. (It is the job of the rich to use their money wisely until someone comes along that can do it better and for them)”

-John D. Rockefeller, Sr. Random Reminiscences

Answer the following question in a paragraph that includes a thesis and evidence. When writing remember the background knowledge you have on Captains of Industry, Robber Barons and the “American Dream”.

What did John D. Rockefeller Sr. feel he should do with his money?
“It may be asked: How is it consistent with the universal diffusion of these blessings that vast sums of money should be in single hands? (How is it possible that some people have so much money?) The reply is, as I see it, that, while men of wealth control great sums of money, they do not and cannot use them for themselves. (The answer to that question is that, just because people have all that money doesn’t mean they can keep it to themselves.) They have, indeed, the legal title to large properties (own a lot of land), and the do control the investment of them, but that is as far as their own relation to them extends or can be extended (but that’s all they do). The money is universally diffused (shared with others), in the sense that it is kept invested and it passes into the pay envelope week by week (used to pay workers). …It is the duty of men of means to maintain the title to their property and to administer their funds until some man, or body of men, shall rise up capable of administering for the general good the capital of the country better than they can. (It is the job of the rich to use their money wisely until someone comes along that can do it better and for them)”

- John D. Rockefeller, Sr. Random Reminiscences

Answer the following question in a paragraph that includes a thesis and evidence. When writing remember the background knowledge you have on Captains of Industry, Robber Barons and the “American Dream”.

**What did John D. Rockefeller Sr. feel he should do with his money?**

**THESIS:**

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

**EVIDENCE:**

__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Where is the evidence? (quote)________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

**EVIDENCE:**

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Where is the evidence? (quote)________________________________________________________________
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**EVIDENCE:**

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No other race, or white or black. When bound as thou wert, to the rack,
So seldom stooped to grieving: No other race, when free again,
Forgot the past and proved them men. So noble in forgiving.

-Dunbar’s Ode to Ethiopia
MONTHLY PAYMENTS

3 Rooms—from $32.15—Living room, bedroom, kitchen and bath.

3½ Rooms—from $41.38—Living room, dining alcove, bedroom, kitchen and bath.

4 Rooms—from $41.00—Living room, dining room, bedroom, kitchen and bath.

4½ Rooms—from $52.15—Living room, dining alcove, 2 bedrooms, kitchen and bath.

5 Rooms—from $53.65—Living room, dining room, 2 bedrooms, kitchen and bath.

6 Rooms—from $69.70—Living room, dining room, 3 bedrooms, kitchen and 2 baths.

AT THE DUNBAR YOU ENRICH YOURSELF—NOT THE LANDLORD!
Brothers Twain
But, See What Happens!

February 1, 1928, George Smith and His Brother, Henry, Moved
Into New 5-Room Apartments

George's Record:

George began paying rent in one of the
nicest commercial apartment houses
in Harlem.
The monthly payment (@ $16.00 per
room which was comparatively low) was $80.00.
In 48 months, including a Security Deposit
of $80 or the equivalent of one
month's rent, George paid out $3,920.
On January 31, 1932, George had ac-
cumulated 48 rent receipts worth
$000.00.

Henry's Experience:

Henry became a Tenant-Owner at Paul
Laurence Dunbar Apartments Inc.
The monthly payment (@ $14.50 per
room which was the average at the
Dunbar) was $72.50.
In the 48 months, including the Down
Payment of $50.00 per room, Henry
paid out $3,730.
On January 31, 1932, Henry had ac-
cumulated savings amounting to
$657.10.

IN THESE FOUR YEARS, HENRY SMITH PAYS OUT $190 LESS THAN HIS
BROTHER GEORGE DOES, BUT ACCUMULATES $657.10 TO HIS
BROTHER'S $000.00, A TOTAL SAVING OF $847.10

Which Would YOU Rather Be—
George or Henry?

THEN, WHY KEEP ON BUYING RENT RECEIPTS?

At the Dunbar You Enrich Yourself - Not the Landlord

On Plan I at the Dunbar Henry would
accumulate savings as above plus $1.00
per room per month.

$000.00  $847.10

AT THE DUNBAR YOU ENRICH YOURSELF—NOT THE LANDLORD!
“A prince should earnestly endeavor to gain the reputation of kindness, clemency, piety, justice, and fidelity to his engagements. He ought to possess all these good qualities but still retain such power over himself as to display their opposites whenever it may be expedient. He should make it a rule, above all things, never to utter anything which does not breathe of kindness, justice, good faith, and piety; this last quality it is most important for him to appear to possess as men in general judge more from appearances than from reality. All men have eyes but few have the gift of penetration. Every one sees your exterior, but few can discern what you have in your heart.” — Machiavelli — The Prince. Chap. xviii.

John D. Rockefeller
is without question the most conspicuous type of our present dominating commercial man. “The most important man in the world” a great and serious newspaper passionately devoted to democracy calls him, and unquestionably this is the popular measure of him. His importance lies not so much in the fact that he is the richest individual in the world, with the control of property which that entails; it lies in the fact that his wealth, and the power springing from it, appeal to the most universal and powerful passion in this country — the passion for money. John D. Rockefeller, measured by our national ambition, is the most successful man in the world — the man who has got the most of what men most want. How did he get it, the eager youth asks, and asking, strives to imitate him as nearly as ability and patience permit. Thus he has become an inspirer of American ideals, and his methods have been crystallized into a great national commercial code.

Nor is this all. Mr. Rockefeller distributes money in charity and in endowments. If not our first, he is certainly our second philanthropist; the amount of the money given being the standard. All over the land those who direct great educational, charitable and religious institutions are asking, “Can we not get something from him?” Receiving his bequests they become at least the tacit supporters of the thing for which he stands — that is, John D. Rockefeller exercises a powerful control over the very sources of American intellectual and religious inspiration.

Now a man who possesses this kind of influence cannot be allowed to live in the dark. The public not only has the right to know what sort of a man he is; it is the duty of the
“Speaking of the Hoover campaign to feed the hungry children of Europe, my son told me last evening that the Rockefeller Foundation has contributed $1,000,000, the Laura Spelman Memorial $1,000,000, and my son has given $1,000,000. Out of a total of $23,000,000 to be collected in the nation for this purpose this one family has contributed $3,000,000.” -John D. Rockefeller

-Excerpt from MR R VS TARBELL MC CLURE’S JULY 1905 page 1664 of Inglis Interviews-

“The range of his giving is very wide. It may be said to be in with the distribution of Mr. Rockefeller’s own cast-off clothing. There is a well authenticated case, dating back only a few years, of a partly worn pair of shoes sent to a less fortunate friend with a personal note from Mr. Rockefeller.” -John D. Rockefeller

-Excerpt from MR R VS TARBELL MC CLURE’S AUGUST 1905 page 1686 of Inglis Interviews-

“I was trained from the beginning to work and to save. I have always regarded it as a religious duty to get all I could honorably and to give all I could. I was taught that way by the minister when I was a boy – taught by him and taught in many other ways. I loved to work. I was taught to save. Our family were poor people. I do not mean that we were poverty-stricken, but we had to work and to save if we were to live in fair comfort. My grandfather was a rich man – that is, for his time he was counted rich. In those days one who had his farm paid for and had a little money besides was counted as rich. Four and five thousand counted as rich. My grandfather had perhaps three or four times that. He had money to lend.” -John D. Rockefeller

-Excerpt from MR R VS TARBELL MC CLURE’S AUGUST 1905 page 1665 of Inglis Interviews-
Serbian-Russian Church at Pueblo, which JDR Jr.'s funds helped to erect.

Photograph originally with letter, Lichty to Richardson, 9/25/24, R.G. 2, Business Interests series, Box 17, folder 155.

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**CASHIER’S VOUCHER.**

New York, N. Y. April 30th, 1894

<table>
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<th>CHECK No.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>AMOUNTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>A2541</td>
<td>The Bank of New York (National Banking Association), Order of J. Knelling, Trustee. In Payment for, on pledge June 5th, to American Baptist Home Missionary Society for colored schools in the South</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
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$1,000 Received May 1, 1894 of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, the sum of One thousand Dollars, in full payment of the above account.

[Signature]

J. Knelling, Trustee.
“Speaking of the Hoover campaign to feed the hungry children of Europe, my son told me last evening that the Rockefeller Foundation has contributed $1,000,000, the Laura Spelman Memorial $1,000,000, and my son has given $1,000,000. Out of a total of $23,000,000 to be collected in the nation for this purpose this one family has contributed $3,000,000.” -John D. Rockefeller

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BLINDED
and
MAIMED

I HAVE BEEN PUT OUT
OF THE C.F. & I. CO.
HOSPITAL, ALTHOUGH
I WAS WORKING UNDER
THE ROCKEFELLER PLAN
WHEN INJURED.

I CANNOT LIVE ON THE SMALL
COMPENSATION THE STATE
INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION ALLOWS
ME FOR MY TOTAL DISABILITY,
MY LIVELIHOOD HAS BEEN TAKEN
AWAY FROM ME AND THE C.F.&I.
CO. REFUSES TO EMPLOY ME
ON ACCOUNT OF MY BLINDNESS,
ALTHOUGH THIS COMPANY IS
ENTIRELY RESPONSIBLE FOR MY
CONDITION. IS THIS JUSTICE?

Removed from R.G. 2, Business Interests
series, Box 13, folder 109

Earl Ostrander, c. 1929

435 neg
LIVING CONDITIONS

In the camp there is no sewer, etc. Whatever waste, such as dish water, wash water, etc., is thrown out in the yard. The climate is very dry and evaporation rapid. Nevertheless, the small aridness in the surrounding country is not felt. The same conditions, unless disturbed by company personnel, are normally used for heating, lighting, and ventilation of the town. The town is divided into two sections, each section having a separate water supply and sewer system. Garbage collection and disposal are handled by the company at each section. Garbage disposal is done by a man in town. He clears the streets of garbage every day.

The streets in close proximity to the plant are lighted with electric light. The company charges the men $0.20 per month for electricity. The police service of the camp is in charge of a marshall employed by the company. This employee also looks after the cleanliness of the town.

The people buy the necessities of life in the store of the Colorado Supply Company. This company store is the only one in town, but peddlers also come in with produce from truck farms and sell it. These have the freedom to set up their stands anywhere in town, but they do not have exclusive rights. The wash-house in the rear of some of the houses is in the rear of the town. The water supply of town is pumped from the river. The water supply of town is not far from the river. The water supply of town is not far from the river. This would be a great blessing.
John D. R Jr.'s Creed

During this period, JDR Jr. expressed in one concise statement his philosophy of life. On July 8, 1941, in a radio broadcast appeal on behalf of the USO and the National War Fund, he gave this statement of principles that was widely reprinted under the title, "I Believe". In 1962 these words were included on a commemorative plaque that honors him at Rockefeller Center.

“I Believe

I believe in the supreme worth of the individual and in his right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I believe that every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty.

I believe that the law was made for man and not man for the law; that government is the servant of the people and not their master.

I believe in the dignity of labor, whether with head or hand; that the world owes no man a living but that it owes every man an opportunity to make a living.

I believe that thrift is essential to well ordered living and that economy is a prime requisite of a sound financial structure, whether in government, business or personal affairs.

I believe that truth and justice are fundamental to an enduring social order.

I believe in the sacredness of a promise, that a man's word should be as good as his bond; that character - not wealth or power or position - is of supreme worth.

I believe that the rendering of useful service is the common duty of mankind and that only in the purifying fire of sacrifice is the dross of selfishness consumed and the greatness of the human soul set free.

I believe in an all-wise and all-loving God, named by whatever name, and that the individual's highest fulfillment, greatest happiness, and widest usefulness are to be found in living in harmony with His will.

I believe that love is the greatest thing in the world; that it alone can overcome hate; that right can and will triumph over might.”
We Believe...

In the following address JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, Jr., states his industrial credo:

My associates and I are deeply grateful for the kindly words of approval and commendation to which utterance has been so generously given by the preceding speakers. To each of these gentlemen we would express our profound thanks.

Will you also permit a devoted father to voice his heartfelt appreciation of the far too generous tribute so beautifully paid him by a devoted son?

The final rivet in the last of the fourteen buildings in Rockefeller Center is about to be driven and our building program completed. Conceived in times of abnormally prosperous, the development of the Center has been carried on throughout the long years of depression without abatement or halting. That employment has thus been afforded, directly and indirectly, to thousands of men has given us profound satisfaction, as well as the fact that the enterprise has come to be generally regarded as an important business and civic improvement. It may not be inappropriate at this time to state the fundamental principles and beliefs upon which Rockefeller Center has been built and for which it stands.

We believe that the ultimate object of all activities in a republic should be the development of the manhood of its citizens; that such manhood can be developed to the fullest degree only under conditions of freedom for the individual, and that industrial enterprises can and should be conducted in accordance with these principles.

We believe that a prime consideration in the carrying on of industry should be the well-being of the men and women engaged in it, and that the soundest industrial policy is that which has constantly in mind the welfare of the employees as well as the making of profits.

A business, to be successful, must not only provide to labor remunerative employment under proper working conditions but it must also render useful service to the community and earn a fair return on the money invested. The adoption of any labor policy, however favorable to the workers it may seem, which results in the bankruptcy of the corporation and the discontinuance of its work, is as injurious to labor which is thrown out of employment as it is to the public which loses the services of the enterprise and to the stockholders whose capital is impaired.

We believe it to be the duty of every citizen to do all within his power to improve the conditions under which men work and live. We believe that man renders the greatest social service who so cooperates in the organization of industry as to afford to the largest number of men the greatest opportunity for self-development, and the enjoyment by every man of those benefits which his own work adds to the wealth of civilization.

But these aims and ideals can be fully achieved only in a world that is at peace. The business men of this country want peace, peace among themselves, peace with government, peace with labor. They are tired, and the public is tired, of strife and discord, doubt and uncertainty, at home and abroad. They yearn for peace. War is often laid at the door of business. On its face such an imputation is as absurd as it is false. Any intelligent business man knows that, while war may temporarily stimulate certain kinds of business, in the long run it is far more destructive of property and other values and leads to a far greater upheaval in the general business structure than any such stimulation can begin to offset.

I say with confidence that the earnest desire of the great majority of business men throughout the length and breadth of the land is that this country shall keep out of war.

We should, as a people, free ourselves forthwith from any legislative enactments that may prevent our freedom of action in connection with whatever international situations may arise. Having done that, and with the power to act from time to time as the conscience and will of this great nation may determine, we should devote ourselves tirelessly and persistently to the maintaining of peace and the preservation of our priceless heritage—the freedom of the individual, which the millions of men and women throughout the world who have already lost it are realizing is worth more than life itself. To that great task, with faith in God and belief in the inherent worth of men, let us as a nation rededicate ourselves.
Go after exactly what you want—not what you want. For you never get anything but the things you exactly wanted.

Yes, the new job, if it should materialize, was exactly what he wanted. It was what he had prepared himself for. He could see that now. But before he could even “go after” the job he wanted, the job had come to Brazil to seek him out! His father would have seen in this the hand of God.

While preparing himself in Brazil, Alan had come to some of the conclusions that Rockefeller, Sr., had reached before him. Striving to give away his millions, Rockefeller had heard them called “the tainted money of a robber baron.” Instead of gratitude, he had known suspicion. Whether he needed it or not, John D. had had his lesson in steadfast humility. Likewise, Alan Gregg, in the back country of Brazil—“sitting on a keg of magnesium sulphate” while the sufferers from hookworm refused to accept his medicine—had had his lesson too. He had learned never to expect human gratitude for doing good, even though it may be ever so pleasant when it comes. One of the reasons Alan had chosen the medical profession in the first place was that he liked “affection and respect.” What had pleased him most as a medical student and intern was the gratitude
26 Broadway
New York

April 13, 1917.

Dear Father:

The officers of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company have been considering the recommendations made by the Industrial Department of the International Young Men's Christian Association for the establishment of an adequate Y.M.C.A. building at Pueblo, where the Fuel Company employs five or six thousand men in its steel plant. The cost of a building which would properly meet the needs, including land, furnishings and two small branches for non-English speaking men, would be not less than $225,000, probably $250,000. I have made contributions to various public works in several of the mining camps and stand ready to do the same in all. I shall be glad to show my interest in the steel workers of Pueblo through a contribution toward the Y.M.C.A. building, but feel that I ought not to contribute more than $50,000. Will you contribute $100,000, leaving $75,000 or at the outside $100,000 more to be contributed by the Company? The officers feel and we here agree that a larger contribution from the Company would be unwise, because possibly subject to criticism by the employees and the public. At the same time, they believe the building as planned is not extravagant nor more than is really necessary to adequately meet the needs of so large a body of men, including facilities for their wives and children.

In view of your former large interest in the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company, which so far as the public generally knows still continues; because of the effect which it would have upon all of the employees of the Company as well as the people of Pueblo and of Colorado, indicating your feeling of friendliness and cooperation; because it is most essential that this building be built, from a business point of view as well as from a moral and social point of view; and further because, as I wrote you some time ago, I believe the time has come when we should change our former policy and contribute to activities for the moral, social and religious betterment of the people who are related to us through our investments, quite as much as, if not more than, to those whose need is no greater and whose claim is less direct, I unhesitatingly recommend that you make this contribution. The plans for the building are all ready. A well trained and highly desirable secretary has been selected and is only waiting for appointment, and the building is needed as soon as it can be completed. Inability to finance the plan has prevented its earlier execution. Mr. Murphy cordially endorses this recommendation.

Affectionately,

Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.
Lakewood, N.J.

“Father” meaning John D. Rockefeller, the Captain of Industry/Robber Baron

“John” is John D. Rockefeller Jr.
April 16, 1917.

Dear Son:

Answering yours of the 13th with reference to a contribution of $100,000 for a Young Men's Christian Association building at Pueblo, weigh the matter very carefully in all its aspects, and then if you still feel that it is wise and best for me to contribute $100,000 toward this building and the other proposed contributors respond as indicated, I will make the contribution.

Affectionately,

Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.,
25 Broadway,
New York.

“Son” is John D. Rockefeller Jr.
"Why I Believe in the USO"

Transcript of an address by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to members of the Field Supervisors Staff of United Service Organizations at a 1942 planning meeting held Tuesday, Feb. 3, 1942, in the Hotel Pennsylvania. Mr. Rockefeller is a member of the Board of Directors of USO.

There are three reasons why I believe in the USO. The first is because it is the great builder of morale. Life in a totalitarian world

You men and women in the field are the channels through which that brooding care of the American people is transmitted to the defense forces by your personal contact and that of the individual workers in the USO units who look to you for leadership, example, and inspiration.

While many of the requests coming to the Board from countless educational institutions throughout the country could be granted, inevitably some had to be declined. It was Dr. Buttrick's practice never to let any one leave his office without having explained to him with the utmost patience, kindness and sympathy, just why his request could not be granted and how deep was the interest of the Board in all educational problems even though they might not fall within the sphere of its activities. As a result, those who went away empty handed almost invariably did so thinking with a real glow of the new friend they had made rather than of the failure of their mission. Quite naturally, the impression which Dr. Buttrick made upon those visitors was reflected on the founder and the trustees, who were likewise thought of as sympathetic and understanding.

So it is that we are all of us, to a large extent, in the hands of those who represent us. You people gathered here are representing the USO, its officers, its directors, its constituent organizations. As one of that group I have eagerly availed of this opportunity of meeting you face to face that I might confirm by my own judgment, as I now so happily do, the reports that have come to me on every hand as to how worthily the USO is represented.
"I am still thinking with pride and satisfaction, of the visit which you and the committee of distinguished citizens of Williamsburg paid me the other day at Bassett Hall. I shall long cherish as a happy memory, the kindly feeling and friendly regard, which prompted the visit. If I seemed ungracious in the reception accorded the proposal which you made, I beg you to believe, that it was not because of a failure on my part to correctly evaluate or profoundly appreciate all that your request signified, but rather because of an innate modesty, coupled with a lifelong and inherited aversion to any personal memorial - particularly a portrait.

"I have always felt, as my father did before me, that service to one's fellow men in proportion to one's ability and opportunity is only what should be expected of every citizen. Because I have tried to fulfill that obligation, I cannot feel that there is due me either credit or special recognition, for I have only done what was both a duty and a privilege.

"It was these feelings, this philosophy of
I wonder how many of us who are parents talk to our children of duty, of service, of sacrifice. I wonder how many young people give these lofty ideals more than a passing thought. And yet they are as vital today to the development of character as they always have been. Too often the pursuit of pleasure, the gratification of desire, the advancement of self-interest are the goals which our young people seek. Even with little children, what they want is stressed as the thing for which they should strive, rather than what they should want. Who of us does not remember Dr. Fosdick's classic story about the little child who said, "Teacher, must I do what I want to, today?"