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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Rick:

The original of this memo
has been given to Tom Thornton
for [REDACTED] inclusion in the briefing
book.

Lynn Sandage
Jim Fallows' Office

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 1, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM FALLOWS *JF*

SUBJECT: Working Lunch with African Foreign Ministers
and Heads of Delegations

Working from material supplied by State and NSC, Rick Hertzberg suggests these points:

1. General. Africa's concerns are global concerns. Andy Young has consulted many of those present today both in their capitals and at the UN. Their counsel is valued as we work toward Africa's fundamental goal: a strong and prosperous continent which has resolved its conflicts peacefully and with justice and is at peace with the world.

2. Southern Africa. The international community cannot condone the illegality of the situation in Rhodesia. The continuation of bloodshed and injustice there concerns us all.

-- We have been working with the British since March on a joint initiative to achieve a negotiated settlement based on racial justice and majority rule.

-- At Britain's request, the Secretary General, under Security Council authority, is naming a representative to work with the British Resident Commissioner and the parties involved to discuss military arrangements for the transition period. This first step is vital to ending the conflict.

-- Failure to reach a durable and just settlement would be a tragedy.

At this moment the five-nation Contact Group has just returned from talks in Southern Africa designed to help bring Namibia to independence. This UN effort has our unqualified support.

3. South Africa. At the recent conference against apartheid in Lagos sponsored by the UN, African and non-African nations joined in calling for changes which would allow South Africa to become a respectable member of the world community. Apartheid is abhorrent to all who believe in the fundamental human rights.

You might express your shock at the death of Steve Biko. We mourn for him and for others who have died under similar circumstances. There must be a full investigation. Such tragedies will persist so long as South Africa's political system is based on injustice.

The human rights question will continue to be central to U.S.-South African relations. We will acknowledge constructive steps taken by that government on these matters.

4. Uganda. Similarly, we are appalled by the terror in Uganda. We look to the international community to join us in condemning Uganda's extreme and consistent violations of the human rights of its citizens.

5. Middle East. The U.S. is committed to helping the parties reach comprehensive settlement that is just and durable. This commitment arises from our own national interest as well as our desire to help our friends on both sides. We are firmly committed to Israel's security and to the search for peace through negotiations.

In intensive discussions with ministers of the Middle East states in the past two weeks, we have been trying to obtain more agreement on substantive issues and on a date for reconvening the Geneva Conference this year, which is essential to maintain the momentum towards peace.

6. OAU. Other armed conflicts are sapping Africa's resources. The OAU has the challenge of ending them. We appreciate President Bongo's efforts in this and generally as chairman of the OAU.

We have called on all non-African nations to refrain from intervening in conflicts where they have no rightful role.

As the OAU countries work toward a peaceful and productive Africa, the resources and good will of the U.S. are at their disposal to the fullest possible extent, in the service of that goal.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO: Rick
Hutchison

Original to the
President 10/1/77
at 6:00 P.M.

RJZ

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 1, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BOB LIPSHUTZ *BL*

RE: Bob Meyer, Assistant Secretary of
Agriculture

You are generally familiar with the controversy which has developed concerning allegations of improper conduct by Bob Meyer relating to possible conflicts of interest arising out of his personal property ownership of land in the Imperial Valley of California and Department of the Interior regulations concerning water resources and which limit ownership to 160 acres per person. The controversy has increased as a result of a recent ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and promulgation of regulations which have been under preparation for some time.

I am attaching a memorandum dated September 30, 1977, from Bob Bergland to me. We have reviewed the extensive factual report which he sent along with this memorandum; we have obtained factual information independently, including a factual report from two of the three White House staff persons who have information about the matter (the third report is due), and we anticipate receiving very shortly a factual report from the Department of the Interior employees familiar with the situation.

I also am attaching a news article from today's New York Times, which quotes you.

Pending further developments of the information in this matter, I wish to recommend that neither you nor the press office state any conclusions as to whether illegalities, violations of the Executive Order controlling conduct by Executive Branch employees, or even improprieties (or the appearance of improprieties) have been committed.

As you will note in the last paragraph of Secretary Bergland's memorandum, he has taken actions which should prevent any further activities by Bob Meyer which would exacerbate the situation.

Within the next few days I will make a recommendation to you concerning the situation. In the meantime we will continue our factual investigation and analysis, and also I will be in personal touch with the Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of the Interior.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

SEP 30 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: ROBERT J. LIPSHUTZ
Counsel to the President

FROM: BOB BERGLAND
Secretary of Agriculture

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Bergland".

In response to the request of Mr. Cardozo of your Office, I am enclosing five (5) copies of a factual report prepared at my request by Sarah Weddington, General Counsel of the Department of Agriculture, with respect to Assistant Secretary Robert H. Meyer's recent meetings with Members of Congress, Interior Department officials, and White House staff personnel regarding the effects of a decision of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals on land-owners and farming interests in the Imperial Valley of California. As you know, Mr. Meyer and members of his family have substantial personal interests in land and farm operations in the Imperial Valley.

Ms. Weddington's report was prepared on the basis of interviews of many of the participants, including all involved officials of this Department. An attempt was also made to question those Members of Congress and others who met with Mr. Meyer, at his request, and with two other land-owners from the Imperial Valley. As you may know, the two persons for whom Mr. Meyer arranged the series of meetings, and whom he accompanied, were John R. Benson, Mr. Meyer's brother-in-law, and Donald H. Cox, one of the trustees under a blind trust arrangement entered into by Mr. Meyer as a requirement of your Office prior to his nomination by the President to be an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

I have instructed Mr. Meyer that he is not to be involved in the future in any discussions with any officials of the Executive or Legislative branches of the Government, with respect to the Ninth Circuit's decision, the Interior Department's proposed regulations, or any other official Governmental decision-making in this area. I am also taking steps to remind all employees of this Department, including specifically all Presidential appointees and other high-ranking officials, of the requirements of Executive Order 11222 and of the Department's own conduct regulations based thereon.

Carter Orders Agricultural Official To Stop Seeking Aid for His Land

By SETH S. KING

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30—President Carter ordered Assistant Agriculture Secretary Robert H. Meyer today to stop seeking preferential treatment for farmers in California's Imperial Valley, where Mr. Meyer owns or leases more than 2,500 acres of valuable irrigated land.

"I really don't feel that anyone in Government, including myself, should use his official position to pursue a goal that would result in financial advantage or other advantage for a public official," Mr. Carter told a group of farm writers and editors in the White House Cabinet Room.

The President said that he had no information that Mr. Meyer's actions were illegal. "But I just don't want to have the

accusation of impropriety there," he added.

Mr. Meyer, who was appointed by the Carter Administration, conceded earlier this week that he had been talking with the White House, with the Interior Department and with area Congressmen urging them to seek an exemption for the Imperial Valley from a 1902 law limiting ownership of land using federally supplied irrigation water to 320 acres for a farmer and his wife.

But Mr. Meyer insisted that he had announced to each person he approached that he was acting as a private individual and not talking for the Carter Administration. He also said that Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland had been informed of this and had agreed he could do so but only as a private citizen.

President Carter, referring to Mr. Meyer's actions, said today, "I understand from my staff reports that nothing

illegal was done. But I sent a note to Bob Bergland and told him to stop the effort of Bob Meyer's to determine land policy in the Imperial Valley."

A Federal court of appeals recently upheld the 1902 law. The Imperial Valley, one of the country's richest cotton, fruit, and vegetable areas, uses federally controlled irrigation water. But the 1902 law has never been enforced and in 1933 the Interior Department wrote an administrative opinion exempting that area because it had had private water resources before the Federal projects were built.

The appellate court ruled that this exemption no longer applied. And, according to the 1902 law, Imperial Valley land owners would have to sell all their holdings above 160 acres per farmer or 320 acres per farmer and wife. The limit of 160 acres, a quarter of a section, was an arbitrary figure corresponding to the old homestead land grants.

Carter for Law Change

Mr. Carter said he believed the 1902 law was bad and should be changed. But he said that in the meantime he had no alternative but to enforce it.

"The altercation has not been between Washington and farmers, honest farmers in the West," he said. "It has been between farmers in the West and their neighbors wanting to have an easier ability to acquire land."

He said he recognized that 75 years ago 320 irrigated acres was all a husband and wife could handle. But with today's massive development and large machinery, a larger acreage is needed for an economically viable farm, he said.

Mr. Bergland was asked later if he had ordered Mr. Meyer to stop and he said he had. He also said there was no intention to dismiss Mr. Meyer.

Standing With Farmers

At his meeting with the farm writers, Mr. Carter was asked if he agreed with a recent New York Times report that he was losing support among farmers because of his Administration's farm policies and slipping market prices.

"No, I don't think any of our polling results indicate that I have lost support in the farm belt," he replied. "The farmers are disturbed, and I am a farmer and I am disturbed as well."

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

Dear Mr. President,

C/

Happy Birthday!

As one who recently experienced the psychological trauma of my fiftieth birthday, I am reassured by the way in which you age so gracefully (and slowly) under the severe pressures you experience.

Thanks for the example - and please get some relaxation this weekend.

Respectfully,

Harold Brown

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