

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

EYES ONLY

February 13, 1973
9:30 a.m.

MEMORANDUM FOR: H. R. HALDEMAN
FROM: STEPHEN BULL *SB*
RE: Bebe Rebozo's Driving

✓
Steve
Washington

I guess it's the President's desire to have Bebe operate the automobile on some of those drives in San Clemente and Key Biscayne since this affords the President a bit of privacy with his friend. In the past, Secret Service has worked with Bebe in giving him special pointers on driving, testing him with the super Ford Motor Company test vehicle they have, etc. However, after following the President along last Sunday on that drive off into the Canyon, it was my observation, which was confirmed in a conversation I overheard the next day between some Agents on the airplane, that Bebe's driving tends to be dangerous. In California he was driving in excess of 70 miles an hour on the highways through the intermittent rain squalls. At times the rain came down in torrents and Bebe didn't even slow up. The real danger, as you probably know from personal experience, is that in areas that normally do not have very much rain there is much residual oil on the road, and the rain just makes it all the more slick. Additionally, visibility is reduced considerably.

The other point is the matter of the President being taken out of communication range. I understand that, on a recent trip to Florida, the President and Bebe drove off someplace into the boondocks. A helicopter had to be dispatched so that some emergency communications could be established with and for the President if necessary. This situation, as I understand it, would have necessitated the President stopping at a gas station and using a pay phone had it been necessary for him to make a decision such as launching missiles, etc.

Both of the above matters are important to the President, but the very fact of Bebe driving the President puts Bebe in a very bad position. Should a child dart out in front of the car, or should he be involved in the most minor of accidents, it would result in a major story and subject Bebe and the President to criticism. I really think it is in the best interests of the President for Bebe to act as a passenger in a vehicle and, on these private drives, just have one single Agent drive.

Agree _____ Disagree _____

On the next trip to Florida I would like to engage Bebe in conversation, informally, and try to impress upon him in a non-obvious way, the importance of the communications aspect and the matter of driving safety. However, I hesitate to do this without receiving some guidance from you both as to how to approach Bebe and what to say. I do think that the situation is kind of serious, particularly after observing his driving last Sunday. I won't do anything until I talk to you, but would request that you consider this matter.

Thank you.

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