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Wednesday, September 21, 1966

REMARKS OF MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON AT COLTON HALL,
MONTEREY PENINSULA, CALIFORNIA

Office of the Press Secretary
to Mrs. Johnson

THE WHITE HOUSE

Governor Brown, Senator Farr, friends:

What a wonderful part of the world to live in -- or to visit! It's not hard for the traveler to see why the beauties of this peninsula have inspired poets and writers and thinkers through the years.

Standing here at Colton Hall, the cradle of government in California, I am well aware of your proud past. You are to have your centennial soon! I am impressed with what you have done to preserve the colorful history and bountiful beauty of the Big Sur Country.

You had a master plan and that, as many a less fortunate county will tell you, makes all the difference.

So today, the visitor here can see Monterey Harbor with its historic adobes, the famed seventeen mile drive with its Cypress Point, your superb Point Lobos Reserve and your panoramic drive down the Coast, which I will dedicate today as California's first scenic highway.

What a blessed place to be a cross-roads of the world. I'm delighted to see the native costumes of the faculty at the Defense Language School. Twenty-eight languages taught there add to the interest of the area and the strength of the Nation.

I wanted not only to see the natural beauty of your country, but also to salute the citizens and leaders-in-government who have taken action to preserve this natural heritage.

Your coastline, which is your immediate pride and pleasure, is also the Nation's coastline, our common Western edge.

What you have done with it -- makes all your countrymen applaud.

It is hard to think now as you travel this coastline, what the alternative might have been -- a freeway with billboards, perhaps flashing neon signs. But the people of this area were determined that this would not happen. And it didn't.

It took the cooperation of planning commissions, boards of supervisors, and a large array of far-sighted citizens who were determined to make "the good life" not a hollow promise, but a living achievement.

It is no secret that California's scenic highway system -- so beautifully illustrated at your fingertips -- is a leading National example of what other states can do. That is why we looked to the pioneer -- the expert -- when the President gathered together a task force on highway beauty. It won't surprise you that we found that expert right here in your

midst. Senator Fred Farr is the author of the scenic highway legislation. What has been done here -- in California -- by your Governor Pat Brown and your legislature is making a national impact.

The people of California can well be proud to have produced such far-sighted conservationists.

Communities all over the country are seeking ways to save themselves from the sometimes destructive and thoughtless hand of mushrooming populations.

Alert Schweitzer once said: "Man has lost the capacity to foresee and forestall. He will end by destroying the earth."

I am not so pessimistic. There is growing testimony in towns of this country. There is testimony here today that man is going to master the complications of the 20th century and make our land more beautiful.

We have misused our resources. But we haven't destroyed them. It is late. It ^{is} fortunately, not TOO late. And, I know that the people of Monterey Peninsula know that conservation -- beautification -- call it what you will -- is more than just one tree, or one historic building, or one scenic highway.

It is a frame of reference, a way of life.

You have lived it and everyone who comes here is refreshed by what has been done.

I want to contribute my share -- a chestnut tree seedling from the Thomas Jefferson Mounds at the White House, and let it express my gratitude for what has been done by you, the people of the peninsula.

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