



LBJ Orders Some New Haggar Pants

Date: 1964-08-09

Conversation: WH6408-16-4851

Participant: Lyndon B. Johnson

Participant: Joseph M. Haggar Jr.

Start Time: 13:17

Duration: 04:50

Place: LBJ Ranch

SCENE SETTER: President Johnson called the Dallas-based Haggar clothing company to order some new pants. He spoke with Joseph M. "Joe" Haggar Jr. and provided specific (and sometimes graphic) instructions for how the garments should be customized.

Signal Corps Operator: Go ahead, sir.

President Johnson: Hello?

Joseph M. "Joe" Haggar Jr.: Hello?

President Johnson: Mr. Haggar?

Haggar: Yes, this is Joe Haggar.

President Johnson: Joe, is your father the one that makes clothes?

Haggar: Yes, sir. We're all together.

President Johnson: Uh-huh. Y'all made me some real lightweight slacks that he just made up on his own, sent to me three or four months ago. It's a kind of a light brown and a light green, rather soft green and soft brown.

Haggar: Yes, sir.

President Johnson: And they're real lightweight. Now, I need about six pairs for summer wear.

Haggar: Yes, sir.

President Johnson: I want a couple, maybe three, of the light brown, kind of a[n] almost powder color, like a powder on a lady's face.

Haggar: Yes, sir.

President Johnson: Then there were some green, and then maybe some other light pair. If you had a blue in that or a black, I'd have one blue and one black. I need about six pairs to wear around in the evening when I come in from work.

Haggar: Yes, sir.

President Johnson: And I need—they're about a half a[n] inch too tight in the waist.

Haggar: Fine. Do you recall the exact size? I just wanted—I want to be sure we get them right for you.

President Johnson: No, I don't know. Y'all just guessed at them, I think, and sent them. But wouldn't you have the measurements there?

Haggar: We'll find them for you.

President Johnson: I can send you a pair. I want them a half an inch larger in the waist than they were before, except I want two or three inches of stuff left back in there so I can take them up. I vary 10 or 15 pounds a month.

Haggar: All right, sir.

President Johnson: So leave me at least two and a half, three inches in the back where I can let them out or take them up, and put a—make these a half inch bigger in the waist. Make the pockets at least an inch longer. Money—my money and my knife and everything fall out. Wait just a minute.

End of excerpt 1.

President Johnson: Hello?

Haggar: Hello.

President Johnson: Now, the pockets, when you sit down in a chair, the knife and your money comes out. So I need at least another inch in the pockets.

Haggar: [That'd] be fine.

President Johnson: Yeah. Now, another thing: the crotch, down where your nuts hang, is always a little too tight. So when you make them up, give me a[n] inch that I can let out there, because they cut me. They're just like riding a wire fence. These are almost—these are the best that I've had anywhere in the United States.

Haggar: Fine.

President Johnson: But when I gain a little weight they cut me under there. So leave me . . . You never do have much margin there, but see if you can't leave me about an inch from where the zipper [*belches*] ends around under my—back to my bunghole.

Haggar: All right, sir.

President Johnson: So I can let it out there if I need to.

Haggar: That'd be fine.

President Johnson: Now, be sure you got the best zippers in them. These are good that I have. And if you get those to me, I would sure be grateful.

Haggar: Where would you like them sent, please?

President Johnson: White House.

Haggar: Fine.

President Johnson: Now, I don't guess there's any chance of getting a very lightweight shirt, sport shirt, to go with that slack, is there? That same color?

Haggar: We don't make them, but we can have them made up for you.

President Johnson: If you might look around, I wear about a 17.

Haggar: [*Pause.*] Do you like—

President Johnson: Extry long.

Haggar: Do you like it in the same fabric?

President Johnson: Yeah, I sure would. I don't know whether that's too heavy for a shirt or not.

Haggar: I think it'd be too heavy for a shirt.

President Johnson: I sure want—I sure want the lightest I can in that same color or matching it. If you don't mind, you figure out somebody up there that makes good shirts and get me one to match each one of them, and if they're good, we'll order some more.

Haggar: Fine.

President Johnson: I just sure will appreciate this. I need it more than anything and . . . Now . . . That's about it. I guess I could get a jacket made out of that if I wanted to, couldn't I?

Haggar: I don't know. I think that—did Mr. James Haggar have a jacket made?

President Johnson: Yeah, he sent me some jackets for some earlier, but they were way too short. They hit me up about halfway down my belly. I have a much longer waist. But I thought if they had material like that and somebody could make me a jacket, I'd send them a sample to copy from.

Haggar: Well, I'll tell you what: if you will send us this, we'll get it—we'll find someone to make it.

President Johnson: OK.

Haggar: And we can supply the material to match it.

President Johnson: OK. I'll do that. Now, how do I—you give this boy [Kenneth "Ken" Gaddis] the address, 'cause I'm running for a funeral, and give him the address, just how to address these trousers. So we'll send them to you, and don't you—you get the measurements out of them and add a half inch to the back, give us a[n] inch to the pockets, and about a[n] inch underneath so we can let them out.

Haggar: In other words, you like just a little more stride in the crotch.

President Johnson: Yeah, that's right.

Haggar: We'll take care of that.

President Johnson: I want you to build these at least a half inch more, and then leave me some in there.

Haggar: Yes, sir.

President Johnson: OK, here he is.

Haggar: Glad that you enjoyed the others.

End of excerpt 2.

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