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SHORTGRASS

As you may have noted in the news, Vice President Rockefeller bought a 6000 acre ranch down on the Coastal Plains of Texas. News sources said the Vice President didn't plan to run any cattle. It was going to be used as a vacation spot for the family.

Mr. Rockefeller's heritage is bound to run strong. Other breeds of city folks steam up the windows of large rooms, talking of how much they'd like to own a cow outfit. The Vice President's grandfather founded the family fortune by avoiding four legged animals. Some of his descendents have been in agriculture, but it sounds like the cure has begun to take.

One thing for sure, politicians can't be accused of conflict of interest by holding land and public office at the same time. Texas had a President no too long ago who was a rancher. Mr. Johnson, you know, was a part-time cowman.

In the five years of the Johnson presidency he never was investigated once for being partial to herders. High rollers up East did a lot of snickering about his fondness for chili con carne, but that's about as close as I ever remember anything connected to beef being mentioned.

I have been expecting cattle people to become prominent in Washington. Recessions and depressions are our specialty. Deficit financing is a common talent of all cattlemen.

Much of the excitement over the unbalanced budget could be calmed by a team of cowboys and their bankers. Seasoned cow country jugkeepers could be a big help to the nation's leaders. An old boy who had kept the note pad around a cowtown could plug the government's losses as fast he could shut down the leaks in Tom Thumb's penny bank.

I have a lot of respect for agricultural bankers. Anytime Child Who Sits in the Sun or myself gets to feeling too rich, we go down and sit awhile in the lobby of the bank that held our notes during the long drouth of the '50s.

Fifteen minutes will put the situation back in perspective. Paper wealth dissolves a lot faster within the reaches of a loan officer. Financial statements don't look near as big close to a loan committee's meeting room.

Other businessmen have begun to seek our company. I notice more and more how often people are seeking my advice. Run-over bootheels may become a sort of father-and-son symbol for the beleaguered city folks. They could well pick out the ones of us who have so much experience in depressions and recessions.

Texas is going to be glad to have a Vice President and his family down on the coast. I do wish that he could use a load or two of claves next fall to stock his outfit. Even a trade on a couple of second hand pickups would be a help. But considering his bloodlines, I fear he'll be too smart to try our game. Too many folks have had too good a lesson for a Rockefeller to take the hook.