

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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Sunday, October 30th began in Boromabiman ^{Palace?} Mansion in Bangkok at the incredible hour of 5:20, with Helen bringing me coffee. But I was all too ready to hurry because I wanted to have a last walk around the fabulous grounds of that amazingly colorful complex of palaces, Buddhist temples, lush, park-like grounds, a maze of statues and small pagados, incredibly ornamented, that looked like they came right out of a fairy story.

By six-thirty I was out the front door of Boromabiman Mansion, wearing my red dress, the Sunday color of Thailand, brought by chance, with my camera, followed by Ashton and very soon a small entourage. Though not needed it seems inevitable on these trips. I had asked if the car could please pick me up as they departed, and I had a good 30 minutes walk seeing what I had yearned to see since my visit in 1961. The morning was blue and gold, not too hot yet, all that I ~~liked~~ ^{lacked} for complete delight ~~for the~~ ^{was a} historian. I had been told that the last buildings were put up by ~~Kitticachorn~~ ^{King} their great King who led Thailand into the modern world, abolished slavery, introduced social reforms, raised the status of women, ^{brought about} economic developments; Everything I heard about him I liked except his buildings -- a huge palace of pink plaster with tall white fluted columns topped with Grecian capitols, ~~Corinthian~~ ^{Corinthian} maybe. It looked like it might have been in any Southern European Capitol, And

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Bangkok is so spectacularly Bangkok! But out in front were the wonderful ^{topiary} ~~topiary~~ trees, clipped in their grotesque shapes.

I stepped ~~into the courtyard~~ through a doorway into the great courtyard and was at once in fairyland. The magnificent Buddhist temple, its roofline ornamented with curving fingers that reached to the sky, and hung with gently tinkling temple bells, dominates the courtyard. There are ^a myriad ² small pagodas whose multicolored domes shaped like the hat on Buddha's head rise on every side. Here the buildings are the work of King M [?] ONKART that dynamic fearsome ruler in Anna and the King of Siam, and the great grandfather of the present King, or by Kings ^{who} ~~of~~ preceded him. I can understand ~~x~~ what Okie meant when he said Bangkok is both the delight and the frustration of a camera artist, because no camera can take it all in. ~~It~~ cannot possibly include it all. ~~There~~ is such myriad ^{Nor CAN} detail. ~~How~~ words to describe it. I will try.

I came to a little pagoda guarded by two fierce Chinese lions of carved stone. They were brought over as ballista long ago in a Chinese SAMPA purchased by some ruler for his palace, and rice was taken back in trade. Every inch of the pagoda is covered with flowers - tiny petals made of porcelain, in blue and rose and gold and pink and green and white. Such lifetimes of delicate work! Such a fantasy of design! Then you come to huge statues, perhaps 25 feet tall, of painted wood, and you see that they represent characters in the

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stories of the battle between the demons and the monkeys who ate
the ^{princess?} princess. They glare down at you as you walk off into the
of
courtyard, past the mural which adorns the long wall -- ~~they have~~
a colonnaded structure that tells ~~the~~ in endless detail the National
legend of the monkies and the princess against the demons. Its
origin came from somewhere within India, I believe. There is a
strain of the ~~Indo~~ Hindu.

You come to the great temple itself, and ~~there~~ I see that
around its base there is ^a long line of lovely tiles that look like
Chinese. Its delicate tracery of flowers and trees and birds -- each
one a work of art, priceless and irreplaceable.

(end of tape)

Each one could have been the design for a Chinese wallpaper, and
there are hundreds. There is an incredible variety of materials --
carved stones and painted wood, delicate porcelains, tile panels in
^{endless} ~~the~~ expanses of mosaic, temple domes of gold leaf; everything
fascinates me, especially the roof tops. These buildings speak of
great riches, of lifetimes of labor. Thailand is the most exotic, the
most remantic country I have ever seen.

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There are two strangely discordant notes rising among the forest of temple roofs, a giant antenna with ^{its} huge saucer-like ears bringing the news of the world. I am told it was installed by Communications to handle our trip. And then the lament of some Thai, who was escorting me around temple grounds -- he told me that when some pieces of the mosaic were damaged or lost that, alas, there was ^{no} no more of that kind of labor anymore to do the repairs on them. ^{It} took too many hours, he said.

// I feel that if I were asked to describe Thailand, I would be like an ant trying to describe an elephant. I couldn't even see above the toenails. //

About seven Lyndon rode up in the big black limousine. I stepped in and we motorcaded to the airport. Along the streets that were filled even so early, the children waving flags, -- The night before we had said to the King and his beautiful Queen that we considered it a great imposition for them to get up before day to tell us goodbye, so they did not accompany us. There were brief, low-key farewells at the airport by the ever-smiling ^{KITTICACHORN} & ~~Chicacorn (?)~~. I felt like I was saying goodbye to fairyland. And then, at 8:20 wheels up and we were headed for Malaysia. I tumbled into bed for a brief hour or two of rest.

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At 9:45 local time[^] and somewhere along the way time
ceased to have much relevance to me[^] we arrived at ^{KUALA LUMPUR} ~~Tallalampoor~~ (?)
called familiarly KL by world travelers. I thought by this time I had
seen everything in arrivals. I had not. As we walked off the plane
there was the usual red carpet. We were met by the King Yang di-Pertuan Agong
and his Queen, and by Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman.
our old
~~old~~ friends from Washington visits, a very worldly, poised charming
man, himself the son of a Sultan, who I am told was a playboy until
he was up in his forties, and then set about really working for his
country.

What made this arrival ceremony so different was the glaring
contrast of the old and the new. In ~~front~~ front of us was a handsome
new airport building of glass and steel. Eero Saarinen could
have been proud of it. It looked like a Dulles Jr. Few cities of the
United States could boast as much. In delicious contrast we were
escorted down the red carpet under gold silk umbrellas, tasseled[^] a
symbol of royalty[^] and seated on a raised dais under an elegant
~~canopy~~ canopy, the Queen and I. I had been given a basket full of
orchids, many colored sprays, by a little girl. There was a 21 gun salute
the two national anthems, ~~glax~~ flags everywhere; the flag of Malaysia
is red and white, the crescent for Islam a 14 pointed star for the
14 states that make up Malaysia.

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Just come
The meeting with diplomatic corps and government officials, and then the speeches. Lyndon congratulated Malaysia for building a free and prospering countryside & that can ~~now~~ relieve the poverty and apathy ^{on} ~~of~~ which Communism thrives. He spoke of Malaysia's own struggle against the Communist Guerillas & which he said shows military action can stop Communist aggression and also that peace as well as the war can be won.

The 14 mile drive into the city with Mrs. Stephanie Bell, our Ambassador's wife, was intensely interesting. It was a capsule account of the history, economy, and ^{Cultures} ~~colleges~~ of Malaysia. On my left there was a forest of rubber trees, so different from what I had imagined -- tall, slim, white trunks mottled with grey, their foliage was very high. A few feet up there was a chevron-like mark from which the rubber dripped into a cup at the bottom. The work of ^{cup} collecting from this ~~box~~ was done mostly by Indians, Mrs. Bell told me. The ground was a carpet of ferns. It made a beautiful picture.

We traveled on the best roads in Southeast Asia, she told me, and indeed they would compare well with any in this country. There was a wide, high median strip, and evidence of planting along the road.

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(?)

We saw signs that said "Salamit de tong, President and Lady Johnson" and ^{alas} the largest billboard I had ever seen, forerunner of what we may expect, I understand, in losing the fight to limit the number of billboards along the highway, they simply increase the size of those that are put up.

I asked about the people that made up Malaysia. Mrs. Bell's answer and later the ^{Donkey's} ~~Foxes~~ (2) was rather unsettling. Not a majority of Malaysians ^{between} 45 and 50 percent and about 35 percent Chinese, and it is from this sector that most of the trouble comes, 10 percent or more Indians, the rest a mixture.

We passed an impressive university where about 2000 students attend. The economy of the country depends principally upon rubber, tin, and palm oil and the nation's economic development program is based greatly on agriculture research. For instance they produce a tree that will give 10 times more rubber than older trees, and then when its producing years are over -- it lasts for about 25 years -- its trunk can be used to make paper.

And the country is trying to ease its expanding population problem by hacking new land out of the jungle. For instance, Lyndon ^{being} was taken to see a village of 200 families where 6 years ago there was nothing but jungle and a few communist guerilla fighters. And I heard the strange story of their form of government. It appears ~~that~~

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that under the British there were 9 Sultans of 9 major states, and then 5 smaller states. I don't know the names of their rulers. The British left the Sultans intact with all the trappings of grandeur and considerable power, but they had a Governor General in each Sultanate, who lived in Government House. When independence came some 14 or so years ago, a system was set up whereby the 9 Sultans chose among themselves a King who would rule for 5 years, and then be succeeded by whomever the Sultans chose, a sort of revolving kingship. The first 2 kings had not lived out their terms but had died in the present palace, I was told, of undoubtedly natural causes. It seems to me a most unlikely system of government. *The Jonker*
~~Tongue (2)~~

is a strong figure, and apparently a very well-loved man. He is called simply *ku* ~~Tongue~~, which means Prince, by everybody.

KUALA LUMPUR
~~Kallalampoor (?)~~ was a beautiful city surrounded by heavily forested mountains, very verdant blue green, its public buildings an amazing contrast of *the* comfortable dignity of a British past and the startlingly handsome *modern* ~~new~~ Parliament building, the national mosque and the museum.

such
~~I~~ I came across ~~in~~ old friends as crepe myrtle and canna and cosmos-like small flowers, and lush tropical plants -- the yellow flame ~~tree~~ tree, the creamy white *frangipani*, orchids, orchids everywhere, and *hibiscus* and bouganvillea. It was one of the most beautiful and exciting countries I had been to, and when I

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arrived at the guest house about eleven, a big comfortable white house of the Victorian era of British rule, I begrudged the rest of an hour that I took before going to the palace for our audience with the King and Queen and lunch.

The palace was a big, comfortable white house with many porches, on a hill, reminiscent of the British, and all their footsteps here it seems to me were good ones and remembered with more gratitude than bitterness. The King, a heavy-set, rather impassive man, escorted me upstairs. The Queen was a beautiful poised woman, quiet, in her mid-thirties, who became animated mostly when talking about playing badminton which she enjoys daily.

Upstairs there was a large reception room in which chairs were precisely arranged along two sides and the ends. The King took Lyndon to the end and seated him on his right with a couple of dignitaries flanking them, and I was close by, next to the Queen on one of the sides. Some 20 or more other guests from their government and the American party filled the other chairs.

And then an official, I ~~may~~ suppose their chief of protocol, advanced in a very ceremonial way extending to the King his gift to Lyndon - a very elaborate dagger. I felt a slight chill. Lyndon quickly reached in and gave him a coin telling him about the old story in our country that when friends make a gift of a knife the giver must accept a coin in return so the friendship won't be cut. To me

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the Queen presented ^{lengthy} ~~lots~~ of beautiful brocade. I had a ridiculous impulse to laugh as Jimmy Symington approached the King, decorously presenting our gift and then backed away in a sort of shuffle in order not to turn his back on him.

Lunch ^{soon} began with a clear soup, at the bottom of which lay two white round eggs which glared up at me like baleful eyes. The ^{Jonke} ~~Parsons~~ explained they were quails eggs. I daintily avoided them. And from then on it was an "ours" and "theirs" affair. Very considerably they proffered us luscious looking small steaks, green peas, cauliflower, and then a complete meal of their own exotic dishes. The main course was curried rice, yellow with little raisins in it, accompanied by a large platter of nine delicacies: delicious chutney, little chips of salted fish, shredded carrots and other vegetables, and other things I couldn't name, and to cover the rice a very hot spicy meat dish that you might have found in Mexico. The ^{Jonke} ~~Tonque~~ kept on warning me that it was hot, and I kept on insisting I was raised in a country where one ate hot things. Up to now my digestion had held out wonderfully, and I had sampled in each country with eager curiosity the dishes of the land. It would be dull to go around the world eating Post Toasties. And not a flicker of stomach trouble had I had. Desert came and I flashed a look Lyndon's way. It was tapioca, but not as we know it in a grey-white little mold. It was quite firm. And then came two ~~XXXXXX~~ sauces, a white one that was

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milk of coconut, and a black one that looked like chocolate and tasted sweet, but completely unknown to me. And then there were fruits. ^{The Jonke} ~~Tanque~~ took pleasure in peeling ^{them} for me and explaining what they were. One ~~that~~ looked like a large brown nut and when he removed the thick husks there were little orange-like segments, bland and sweet. And then another ~~that~~ looked for all the world like a large strawberry with thick hairs. And then my old friend around the world - bananas, -- very small, the size of a man's finger.

Lyndon had been enjoying himself with the Queen, and I was delighted. Later he told me he had quite boldly asked her how she had met and married the King. And she had told him that she had been married when she was about 16 without ever having met him, a match made by her parents and his. He had been married before and had children her age; one of his daughters was her special companion. I envy Lyndon the ability to get into such conversations but I can think of no way to ask them such interesting questions as "Can a man have several wives? ⁷ Do they still have divorce by just saying three times you are divorced? [?] what are the rights and economic situations of the women who do get divorced in such a manner? ¹¹ Later I did ask Mrs. Bell who told me the old Moslem order still persisted, that there were some changes in the wind, ¹ an organization to demand more rights and status for women.

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After lunch Lyndon went on to visit the rubber^l plantation. I yearned to do it all but knew there was a limit. So I left for a little more than an hour's rest at the guest house where we were staying. And then Stephanie Bell, Toh Puan⁷ Norashikin (Paun⁷ is their word for Mrs.) who is the wife of the Minister of Home Affairs, came to pick me up, and we went on a tour of Kuala Lumpur.

First to the Mosque, a beautiful building, a marriage of the past and the present. We were met at the door by the Chairman Tan Sri ~~Abd~~ / Abdul, and Chief Imam and officials. We took off our shoes. We walked through colonnaded porticos into the prayer room and up to the high altar. I was enthralled by the artistry of the building. There was lacy fret-work with blue tiles that you associate with Mosques of centuries ago, and yet it is as modern as tomorrow. We were never outside the sound of running water. Delightful. A slim minaret against the sky is visible all over the city.

The architect, a Malaysian, Enche Baharuddia, accompanied us and explained the wall inscriptions. I signed the guest book which I have done around the world. There was one moment when below the surface ~~or~~ my mind was caught between the laughter and amazement. Enche Baharuddia, my guide, said when we came to a round, high domed chamber -- or so I remember it -- This is the mausoleum for the great of our country. There is room for seven. This bold, new

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country, only 14 years old, planning already a place of honor for its George Washingtons and Thomas Jeffersons when they die! But who will they be? I wondered how they jockeying would take place for the occupancy.

We went next to the National Museum. A little girl named Yasmin, daughter of the Director, gave me a basket of orchids on the steps. The Museum was remarkable mostly to me because of the enormous mosaic mural outside -- a bold colorful pageant of the history of Malaysia.

Inside there were displays of Chinese, classical dancers, costumes through the ages, ~~the~~ SEDAN chairs and beds, and model of a Chinese house. The most interesting of all was Malayan shadow puppets. Actually the building was more impressive than the contents. They told me that the old Museum and nearly everything it contained had been destroyed during the war.

Then our motorcade drove through the lovely lake gardens. I was impressed over and over at the lush green verdure of this city, the open spaces, the startlingly handsome buildings of which the new Parliament building, rising like a white tower against the blue-green background of a mountain is the outstanding jewel. It is as though some very good planners had made a well thought out decision to gain status, a place of prestige in the world, by having a number of splendid buildings in this Capitol city. They have and it is splendid, and all

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well set in beautiful landscaping. In fact, the Parliament Building had a huge parking lot so skillfully settled behind a rise of land that you do not see it as you approach the building. And even when you look down upon it, from the windows above, it is dotted with trees to relieve the expanse of cement.

On our drive back, something a little creepy happened.

I was so caught up in looking at the buildings and scenery that I was forgetting my ~~act~~^{role} of smiling and looking into the eyes of the people and greeting them, I asked the car to stop a moment while I could get a picture of the Parliament Building. Suddenly out of nowhere the car was surrounded by a throng, mostly youngsters. I had rolled down the window to take the picture. The people surged forward, and we were enclosed, and Jerry reached back and rolled up the window, for one fluttering second almost catching a thin, brown claw-like hand that was reaching in. And Jerry said, in that voice that he ~~used~~^{had} used the night of the San Francisco Opera, "I think we ^{had} better stay on schedule, if you don't mind, Mrs. Johnson. You are due back at the residence at about this time." I simply murmured "All right."

Ch. Tape - probably displeased
I was ~~not~~^{displeased} ~~peevish~~ at my own performance; that hand was reached in only in welcome; and I was partly annoyed at myself that I hadn't calmly, quietly ~~and~~^{and} looking from face to face, and smiling into their eyes, instead of hurrying away. And partly I was annoyed

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because I cannot stop to take a picture. I would like to have that freedom. Jerry didn't need to tell me that something was afoot.

Later I found out more specifically what it was. There had been some little demonstrations, some 50 or so Chinese had raced up and down the streets, tearing down American flags before we came; there had been a banner in front of the University "Welcome MURDERER Johnson." There was a riot involving only a handful of people, but one had been shot by the police and killed.

Back at the house I wandered around the grounds, took my pictures and a lovely green hilltop it was, looking out at the minarets and the palms, the mountains and the Parliament Building, but aware always of the little brown man with a rifle in the distance guarding the property.

Inside I had a facial and a manicure by a delightful woman with a title, Lady Joan Center, who told me stories about how her husband had helped with the resistance during the Japanese occupation and remained on after the British had left and helped the Malaysian Government against the Communist insurgency. She was an Elizabeth Arden representative and traveled around the world. I yearned to know how she got to be a "Lady" but unlike Lyndon I couldn't ask.

One interesting bit of information I picked up during the day from Stephanie Bell was that yellow is the color reserved for royalty. Hence the yellow umbrellas; and therefore one shouldn't wear it.

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For dinner I wore my flowered chiffon and we went to the Parliament Building itself where the ^{Tonkin}~~Tonque~~ was our host for a delightful banquet in which they very graciously included 12 ~~of~~ or so members of our party, always of course Secretary Rusk and Jimmy Symington, but I was glad to see Rostow and Clark and several of the girls there.

As we arrived, nine silver trumpets played ruffles and flourishes. We went upstairs to a beautiful large drawing room for the exchange of gifts. The ^{Tonkin's}~~Tonque's~~ wife proved as silent as he was vocal. In fact, I hardly felt that I had made contact with any of the women I met except possibly the Queen. The ^{Tonkin}~~Tonque~~ gave us a painting -- a street scene of two women.

Every step in this Parliament Building confirms the impression that it ~~is~~ is a marvelous piece of architecture. Their quarters for ~~entertaining~~ entertaining are quite comparable to ours in the new State Department Building. Downstairs in the banquet Hall I ~~was~~ sat next to the ^{Tonkin}~~Tonque~~ for a dinner that began quite familiarly ^{with} clear chicken soup; then there was something wrapped in banana leaves - some Malaysian version of hot tamale encased in dough and seasoned meat in the center, and then roast duckling with orange stuffing, winding up with more exotic Malaysian fruits.

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Midway in the meal, the entertainment began with classical Malaysian dancers, and I highly recommend it as a civilized custom for 18 hour days. It shortens the evening and spices it too. It was a sort of montage (?) of the history of Malaysia. One dance was definitely Indian, another reminiscent of Thailand, and another pure ~~Chinese~~ Chinese, with figures inside a dragon, and another Malaysian. Meanwhile, on the stage, two bands held forth, a loud, brassy, very Western Radio Malaysia orchestra, and if there is any way in which we have made contact with the Eastern countries I think it is through jazz. And then there was an orchestra purely Malaysian in instruments and music. The minute one stopped the other took up

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The Prime Minister toasted the President with a witty speech about the large bed, the difficulty they had had in this country of small men in finding an 8 foot bed, and when Lyndon toasted the King in a more serious speech the burden of which was *(Their neighbor)* that if China would increase its bread output instead of atomic bombs, then she could be friends with the world.

It was an interesting evening with a very articulate host. I found that these public buildings have been built by their Public Works Department, that many of the architects were Malaysian, one Dutch; that they have some equally excellent low cost housing. They have

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the highest per capita income of any country in Southeast Asia --

something over \$300 per year -- and the mainstay of their economy is

rubber and tin and palm oil (~~same as Thailand but I cannot under-~~
~~stand the last word, something like paxxx-parmor or parmoil - many~~)

It seems a hazardous sort of government and yet what it has to show

for it, ~~it~~ after only 14 years, ~~of~~ existence, ~~is~~ substantial indeed. A

very interesting ^{volatile} ~~volatile~~ country. I hope I shall come back someday.

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