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1	Transcript	Lady Bird Johnson's Diary, Pages 2, 6-7		3	10/17/1967	C

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Initials

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Tuesday, October 17, 1967

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I had coffee and juice early with Lyndon. These last few months are a constant duel of light meals and strenuous efforts all week long, and then indulgence on the weekends -- especially when I go to the Ranch. And then I saw Lucinda for dress fittings. Shorter and shorter they go, and more accustomed does the eye become, and I am doing what I swore I never would, -- actually wearing them a little above the knees.

I recorded some, and then about 11:20 I went to Lyndon's office wearing the orange-red dress and jacket by Marquise. And a little past 11:30 we went out on the lawn for the arrival ceremony of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore.

My interest in meeting them was whetted by my visit to Malaysia and by that extraordinary personality Tunku who is its leader. Singapore of course had broken away from Malaysia just a few years ago.

When the Prime Minister stepped from the car I was struck by how very Chinese he was, though I had just finished reading the briefing that said the people were 80 percent Chinese -- the rest Malays, Indians, Pakistani, British. But certainly there was no language difficulty. His English was excellent and his conversation incessant as was his wife's.

His answer to Lyndon's welcoming speech was colorful and interesting -- no time to nod. Alas, it is quite possible to do so as some leaders in a foreign language drone on and on -- in what turns out

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when translated to be cliches. "The world," he said, "is full of bears and dragons."

An interesting way to sum up the Soviet Union and Communist China.

Another arresting phrase, "That Americans are powerful -- all the world is too painfully aware."

The gist of what he said to me was that I have come to see and learn whether you have the strength and patience and fortitude to see this through in Asia -- SANITIZED and very interesting.

When the receiving line in the Diplomatic Reception Room was over and I had put Mrs. Lee into the car, I said "hello" to a young Irish girl -- the "Rose of Tralee" -- who was enroute to the Rose Festival in Tyler, Texas. And Mr. Lambert of Dallas -- here to receive an award from the Nurserymen.

And then I went into the Mansion for some quiet looking of my own for a place to hang the new Eisenhower portrait -- a gift of Senator Darby of Kansas and much preferred by Eisenhower to the one that already hangs here.

A little later I met with Jim Ketchum, and we agreed that a good place to hang it was on the stairs as you ascend to the second floor. There is room for three there, and one has to go out now for some repairs anyway.

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Some future First Lady will fill the panels on the wall as you go up. And that will be all right. It will just be like the monarchs looking down at you on the great stairwell as you mount in the British Embassy today.

I had lunch with Lynda on a tray in her room. She, bless her, was going down to meet the ladies of the press at 1:00 to talk about being a working girl and being a young bride. She has mellowed considerably in her attitude to the press. But not a one of the Johnsons will ever quite achieve Luci's winning blend of candor and stoutly preserving her own little bastion.

In the afternoon I worked at my desk.

And then at 3:00 I had a date with Lynda and Chuck -- the three of us rode in an inconspicuous black car out into Arlington to a delightful house -- 3556 Valley Street -- owned by a young couple named Whipple who were leaving the next day for a foreign assignment. It was an absolutely natural, easy meeting. One baby underfoot and another asleep, the house stacked with suitcases, a mother-in-law on hand to help with the move, and nobody overly impressed with the identity of the new possible tenants. I liked them, and I liked the house. The big picture window in the dining room that looked out onto a woodland -- the dogwoods already turning red -- a fireplace in the living room, a small den -- completely furnished. It reminded me of all the 15 times or so I've rented my house -- the one on 30th Place. The mother and I

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both asking the necessary questions -- I about how much the utility bills were and did they have an inventory. Lynda amazingly leaving it all up to Chuck, and I think their decision is going to be yes. It took us only about 15 minutes to get there from the White House.

I was back by 4:00 and worked with Ashton, studied tonight's guest list, had two quick games of bowling with a rather good score. And then a session with Jean Louis. And then a little past 8:00, in my elegant red dress that dates from the Fall of '64, I was with Lyndon on the North Portico to meet Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew and his wife who wore a gold and black Chinese dress. And there were pictures on the Portico steps -- the only ones of the evening because this was a very unusual Chief of State dinner -- only 30 guests with dinner in the family dining room on the second floor. The Prime Minister had requested that it be small.

A few hours before, Lyndon had looked at the guest list. Someone had dropped out, and there were only 28 and Lyndon, to my amazement, said, "Joe Alsop is just back in town. Why don't we ask them?" I was delighted. He and Susan Mary are always excellent, sophisticated company. I called him at once. He was free. And so we wound up with 30.

We took the Prime Minister's party -- including his three Ministers without wives -- Dr. Whatt, His Excellency Enche Rahim Ishak, the Minister of Education, and Mr. Hon Sui Sen, Chairman of the

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Economic Development Board, and their Ambassador and Mrs. Wong, directly upstairs to the Yellow Room. And there was scarcely any need of a receiving line. So in a very casual way, we brought guests up to them as we had a drink.

Dean Rusk and both the McNamaras. And Senator Hickenlooper and Verna. The Mansfields, and our Ambassador Mr. Galbraith. And of course Jimmy Symington, and Elspeth and Walt. Bill Bundy, alone. His wife went to the hospital today. A businessman named Riordan who has interest in Singapore. Clark and Marny Clifford. His presence always makes me more comfortable. And my two all-time favorite people, McGeorge and Mary Bundy. They are our house guests for the night.

We gave the Lees a set of books -- one on Justice Holmes -- they are both lawyers, having met at Cambridge University. And they both achieved a double first in Law. And one of my favorite gifts for her -- a dressing table box in vermeil and shell motif. And for him, some custom-made golf clubs. He's a great golfer. And for us, they had an ancient Chinese scroll -- flowers with a Chinese inscription.
harbor
And a painting of the Singapore/scene in batik.

It turned out to be one of the most unique and interesting Chief of State dinners I can remember.

I had the Prime Minister on my right and then Margy, who looks

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pale and thin, with her spirit undampened. And then Senator Mansfield who had come without Maureen. She had had a cold at the last minute.

He was silent the whole evening -- wan and almost ghost like.

SANTIZED

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SANITIZED

I took the ladies into the West Hall for coffee. The gentlemen went back to the Yellow Room.

And a little before ~~the~~ 12:00 they said goodnight. And then Mary and McGeorge and Lyndon and I relaxed on the sofa and had a happy night-cap and talk of McGeorge's job. He's worked with us on the Israeli war in June -- the whole broad spectrum of the world. And I got in my plug for how thrilled I was when I had seen agricultural research station in the Philippines as well as Topingo in Mexico. Knowing

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them has been one of the good experiences of my life in this house --
in this job.

And then there was night work for Lyndon, and finally bed.