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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

Tuesday, May 14, 1968

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What a day. As we advance farther into May I feel more and more like a pitcher that is poured completely full of some precious liquid. But it cannot hold anymore and it simply overflows at the top. What a series of emotions, of events, wonderful things that I would like to participate in vigorously and remember fully in detail. These last six weeks have been about the busiest in my life, and I am simply at the point where I yearn for a few days of nothing.

I left a call for 6:30 and was dressed and ready and headed for the hangar at 7:15.

I ran into Peter Rostow who paid me one of the nicest compliments I shall ever get. He said, "Thank you Mrs. Johnson for the best weekend I've ever had." I like to get to know the children of my friends, and I've indeed come to consider Walt and Elspeth as our friends. This has been a special weekend with them and all the more precious for me because Peter has obviously liked ranch life -- from cleaning stables to driving an ancient jeep.

We flew into Bergstrom and got on Air Force I. The ^{Bergs}~~Bergs~~ were already on it. I had explained my plan to Lyndon much earlier. And he said by all means we must invite them to stay at the White House. They wouldn't be in anybody's way, as he expressed it. So we arranged sight-seeing for them much of the day. Then she'll watch Mr. Per do my hair, and hopefully I'll look better in the years to come at the Ranch with her help. One little segment of my mind is planning ahead these days, trying to fill every day with those things that cannot come again -- those kindnesses to people who have been kind to me all of my life by sharing the White House with them. And then simply getting ready for the day when I move out. But my energy, my sheer strength, simply does not

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match all the things to be done. So on the three hours back to Washington, I laid down in the cabin and tried to take a nap, and couldn't. And so literally did that thing I hate most -- wasted time.

We went from Andrews into the White House on the helicopter. The Bergs very wide-eyed and excited, I think.

Back in my room, I looked at the headlines of the paper. Here in Washington the city of the poor was getting its first dwellers. And in Paris, Cy Vance and Averill Harriman were getting down to business with the North Vietnamese. Lynda Bird came in and talked to me. Mother's Day had come and gone, and we hadn't made our announcement about her baby in late October. She said she was ready, and her daddy had already said, "The sooner, the better."

We left it tentatively that she would tell Liz and Liz would take it from there.

And then with noon already upon us, Bess came in to ~~plan~~ ^{Scenario} plan the ~~scenario~~ on our dinner for the night. Never before have we cut it so close. I looked over the guest list and got Marilyn busy calling the James Lang's and the Bill Hobby's to see if they would be House guests. Lyndon had already asked Jean Murry Vanderbilt. And at last the Arthur Krim's with whom I had spent the whole weekend had been on the list and I hadn't had the wit to check with them to see if they would be coming and to invite them to stay at the White House. I hope by now that they know there is always room for them.

Marilyn undertook to retrieve them from New York. And Bess and I went to work on seating and just how we would handle it. With 57, it was obviously too big for the upstairs family dining room in that intimate, private approach

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that we had first planned. And yet that many is lost in the State Dining Room, I think.

Like a political meeting, a party is often better in a crowded room. So we decided on drinks ahead of time in the State Dining Room and then round tables in the Blue Room for dinner, the strolling strings during desert. They are always for me a moment of lift, of excitement -- the White House touch. Then after dinner, coffee and liquers in the parlors. And little tables in the hallway. A small group for dancing for anyone who wanted to.

Because it was not a State Dinner, we did not have any entertainment planned. And because Mrs. Marcos is here for medical treatment, and the mood of the country is dead-serious with the war, and our arms shrink so tested with the long hours of work, & a really gala dance didn't seem the right format.

I worked with Bess on the other list -- Costa Rica, Australia -- we are running a race with that date book and daily loosing ground.

In June I shall do nothing but harvest wild flower seed. But we did make progress. We kept right on working over a hamburger and Waldorf salad on a tray in my bedroom. Bess didn't walk out until about 3:30. I went to the swimming pool and had thirty laps. And Mr. Per came in and gave me a shampoo and set, with Mrs. Berg watching. And I shut my eyes under the dryer and tried to think back to my visit to the Philippines. The archiological dig with the ~~xxxx~~ Zobell's, the picnic lunch at their beach house, a visit to the Loxon's and seeing their collection of artifacts, coastlands of the

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Chinese trade from the main Pang in Son Dionestes. A fabulous, never to be forgotten burial fiesta.

And I studied the guest list. A bright, ~~and~~ engaging collection of friends.

Some time during the afternoon, I don't remember quite when, Lynda had come in to visit me and very disturbed had read me a letter from Chuck. All this time I have been waiting for the just-right time to write Chuck myself, when I could think quietly and express myself best and in my own handwriting. The perfect time never comes. So I stopped right then and there and dictated a letter to Ashton. That's one of my husband's marvelous attributes. He grabs time by the forelock and holds it at bay, while he does some job with the other hand. But never would get done if he waited for the perfect time. He's written Chuck and Pat about two letters a week ever since they left. And this is my first, I am ashamed to say.

Lyndon wasn't ready at 8:00. So I went out on the North Portico wearing my pink chiffon with the white flowers.. Mrs. Marcos arrived looking beautiful and quite well, with Angie Duke and her brother Ben who is now the Governor of one of the States, and two of her lovely blue ladies and the Charge d'Affaires of the ~~PHILIPPINES~~ Philippines, in the absent of the Ambassador.

Actually, I didn't mind a bit that Lyndon was late because this gave me an opportunity to really talk to her about the Zobell's, the Loxon's -- our wonderful visit. What a great job of organization she did taking care of six visiting Chiefs of State, but had been a fantastically wonderful visit. And I wanted to let her know that it was well remembered and appreciated -- every detail of it.

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And then Lyndon came in, and the three of us stood in line in the Red Room.

Justice and Mrs. Thurgood Marshall led the guests in. She is a Philippino. C.R. Smith was the only Cabinet member present. Handsome Danny Brewster and his new wife -- the only Senator. There was Hale and Lindy Boggs, and the young Bill Moorhead's, and the Ed Martin's from the House. We had asked the Chip Bollins, the new Under Secretary of State, whom I had not gotten to know well yet. And there was the former Ambassador to the Philippines, Bill Blair and his lovely Deta. And Mennen Williams who is the Ambassador-designate to the Philippines and Nancy. And the Roger Stevens, because of Mrs. Marcos' interest in the Center for the Performing Arts. She told us that the money had all been collected and the building would be completed in six months. And because she is beautiful and young and interested in arts, we'd invited several from the entertainment world: Dick Adler, David Merrick, the Robert Marrows. And from the Press, the Dick Dickerson's and Betty Beale.

This party really ran the single ladies and the single gentlemen. Fred Farr, Lloyd Hand without Ann, Jean Vanderbilt, Francie White, Editor of Harpers ²²²²~~Bazaar~~ -- one of the most stunning women present, ^{in a} ~~and~~ very lady-like, patrician black and white dress.

And Lyndon's all-time favorite lady alone, Mrs. Nicholas Longworth. I put her at his table, who was fully of congratulations about Linda and said, "I like her - I like her."

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They have a certain kinship between them, I think.

Knowing Alice Roosevelt Longworth has been one of the exciting pages of my life here. A winter's tale to be retold when I sit by the fire and life is quiet.

From Texas, there were the Bill Hobby's and the James Lang's, both of them looking very sheek and interesting and I would like to get to know them better. And we had invited Adelle Simpson and her husband, both because I like them and because Mrs. Marcos likes fashion.

Dear Margaret and Jack were guests. And Bess without Tyler though. It was in fact an exceptionally attractive guest list, and I was proud of it as they filed past. In fact it had all the makings of a good party, except a lively host and hostess. Lyndon looked very tired. He has not been sleeping well the last several nights, and he is always the most important ingredient in any party that we have.

I had Ben Remaldes on my right -- laughably^e and easy. And then Linda Boggs who always carries a table. And on my left, Dick Helms whom I found most compatible, handsome, quiet, very flattering in remembering little things about something you said or did some ~~was~~ time which you yourself have forgotten. And he looks a far cry from the Head of a cloak and dagger organization like the CIA.

Mrs. Marcos had told us earlier that all of the results had come out fine and the she was indeed quite well -- nothing to worry about. But her husband had his foot in a cast.

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The park we had christened in front of the Malacca Yang Palace has been extended and developed. She showed me pictures of it. She was a charming, easy guest. And after Lyndon's toast, she herself rose and made the return. Poised, articulate and just enough of that feminine hesitation that kept you pulling for her.

And so it had been a good party up to a point, but it rather fell apart.

When we left the dinner tables and had our coffee, a few people danced but we made no effort to rev it up. We had already told Angie that an early evening would be a good idea.

And so when Mrs. Marcos made a gesture to leave about 11:00, we went to the door with her and guests drifted away rather quickly. And I was actually upstairs by 11:15 -- one of the earliest dinners I can remember.

Leaving me vaguely dissatisfied that I ~~xxx~~ hadn't summoned from some well of reserve enough sparkle and vitality to keep things going and send people home feeling really excited that they had been to a great White House party.