

## POOL REPORT

DECEMBER 6, 1975

## Malacanang Palace Meeting

The palace is an elegant, Spanish colonial style building in white with fancy grill work on the windows and balconies. It has been decorated for Christmas in stunning fashion -- gaily colored lanterns hanging from the trees on the grounds, for instance. Christmas carols, such as: "Deck the Halls With Boughs of Holly" were being played over loudspeakers on the grounds.

The pool was held in a stunning foyer on the second floor of the palace with massive chandeliers. The foyer carried out the Christmas motif with a large manger, artificial poinsettias, frosted Christmas trees with bright handmade decorations, etc.. While we were waiting to go into the music room, the pool read the notations in the palace's guest book by the First Family. The President, who listed his occupation as "President, USA," wrote: "a most wonderful welcome by great friends." Mrs. Ford noted, "the lovely welcome meant so much to us. Thank you." Susan wrote "with warmest wishes and kind affection." Secretary Kissinger signed the book, but did not write any comments.

A few minutes later, the pool was ushered into the music room, where the two Presidents were seated on a sofa of orange brocade fabric with matching chairs. A large Christmas tree with handmade decorations was nearby; a striking lifesize painting of Mrs. Marcos was displayed on a wall behind the two Presidents. The room was quite elegant with rich mahogany paneling.

The President sat on Marcos' right. The two Presidents spoke too softly for the pool to hear any of their conversation. As we were ushered back into the foyer, Mrs. Marcos was chatting with Mrs. Ford and Susan. We heard Mrs. Marcos say "all the chandeliers were buried...". We presume she may have been referring to hiding the chandeliers during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines during World War II. But we were unable to check this and emphasize that this is pure speculation on our part. About that time, the Ray Conniff singers came blaring over the intercom drowning out the rest of the conversation. A few feet away, Henry Kissinger was heard telling Carlos Romulo of Ambassador Sullivan, "he used to work for me...we negotiated the Vietnam agreement together."

Tom DeFrank, Newsweek

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