



Associated Press

Ms. Charles Thone, wife of the Republican congressman from Nebraska, greets First Lady Pat Nixon as she arrives for yesterday's Congressional Club luncheon at the Shoreham Americana Hotel.

A Luncheon With Friends

Pat Nixon, saying she has read 11 of her husband's Watergate transcripts released three weeks ago to the Huse Judiciary Committee said yesterday that "it takes nine to 12 hours — you can't read excerpts."

"When you've read it all come back," she admonished the reporter during a VIP reception preceding the annual Congressional Club luncheon in her honor at the Shoreham Americana Hotel.

The reporter had asked Mrs. Nixon whether she had read the transcripts.

"Yes, I did. Did you?" the First Lady shot back.

The reporter replied that she had read 300 pages in one night.

"It takes nine to 12 hours," Mrs. Nixon countered. "You can't read excerpts."

A few minutes later, she became visibly annoyed when another reporter attempted to question her about the transcripts.

"Now look, this is not a press conference," she said. "This is a party. If you want, ask the people here who worked so hard on this so it will get in the newspapers. Last year there wasn't a single line on this luncheon."

(The Washington Post, in its May 24, 1973, editions actually carried 32 lines on the luncheon. The coverage included a description of an incident in which a congressional wife strongarmed a reporter to keep him from asking the First Lady a Watergate-related question.)

Yesterday's luncheon, attended by Mrs. Gerald Ford and Supreme Court, Cabinet and more than 1,000 congres-

sional wives and their guests, focused on the theme, "A Day in the Country."

In addition to a \$1,000 gift in Mrs. Nixon's name to Wolf Trap Farm Performing Arts Center's youth enrichment program, there were personal gifts to the First Lady from the club. One was a handmade quilt, worked by Mrs. Edwin Bengston of Wausa, Neb., the other a specially made picnic basket outfitted for eight with English china, linen and flatware.

"Through the years," Mrs. Nixon said when thanking the club, "you're my best friends. Your words just cheer me up — 'we love you,' 'we're for you,' 'we support you.' These are things that give you courage to go on and do what's right."

—Donnie Radcliffe