

Ford birthday lunch. Pool report.

Mrs. Ford had the idea of giving the President a ^{SURPRISE} birthday lunch at the Sans Souci. ~~Said Sheila Weidenfeld~~ According to Paul De Lisle, maitre d', he was called Tuesday by Sheila Weidenfeld about the lunch. Tables were reserved on the balcony at the rear of the restaurant, and a special cake, Gateau au Cointreau, was baked for the occasion.

This is a sponge cake with cream ^{LIQUEUR} filling,

President Ford learned about the surprise lunch when he was receiving birthday phone call from Senator Humphrey, he told reporters. Mrs Ford appeared in the oval office with the news. "He's very sly," said the President, patting his wife.

"This isn't where I normally would work," said Mr. Ford as he entered the restaurant. They were escorted to corner table on balcony on which was a bouquet of carnations and yellow roses from the restaurant. There was applause as they entered. There were two tables of secret service, plus Dr. Lukash, and a press table, occupying the entire balcony.

DeLisle, who said he was "nervous" said there had never been a President eat lunch at the Sans Souci before, although there were First Ladies, including Mrs Kennedy, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Nixon and Mrs. Ford. DeLisle was wishing everyone a "Happy Bastille Day" but was not heard wishing the President that.

The President smoked his pipe during lunch, chatted with Mrs. Ford, had two martinis and a chef's salad, plus a helping of his birthday cake. Mrs Ford had two gin and tonics with no lime and Dover sole, broiled, with salad and potatoes. Also a larger helping of birthday cake. The birthday cake was donated by the restaurant. A half-bottle of Puligny Montrachet ^{LES GRANDS CHAMPS} 1973, described as a "beautiful wine" by DeLisle, was contributed by the press pool.

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The cake had two roses on top and "Happy Birthday" inscribed. ~~As~~ The cake was brought to the President's table by white ~~coated~~ waiters who sang "Happy Birthday," in which they were joined by the rest of the patrons. The restaurant was packed, but apart from some curious stares, the ~~ords~~ were left in peace. Edward P. Morgan, ABC commentator, sitting alone at a booth below the President's table, went up and congratulated the President, as did Roger Stevens, director of the Kennedy Center, and Ambassador Ortona, former Italian ambassador and State Department and Helmut Sonnenfeldt, counselor. Also two unidentified tourists from ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ a local convention.

The press pool and the President exchanged humorous postcards during lunch, using Sans Souci postcards, the messages basically of a happy birthday nature.

Mrs Ford paid for the lunch, ~~xxxxxxx~~ which cost \$25.96, which did not include the cake or the wine.

The lunch lasted almost two hours, and as the President left, he told the press pool he "didn't feel any older than 25." He shook a hand or two as he went through the restaurant, but caused little stir with his departure.

A solid crowd lined the street outside the restaurant, and the President stopped to talk to reporters before getting into his car, telling them how Mrs Ford had paid the check, and standing with his arm around his wife, patting her back, as he talked. The crowd sang "Happy Birthday" and pressed in to ~~take~~ shake hands. One man pushed forward, told the President, "Happy birthday from all the Latvians and ~~Everyone~~ else." Same man kissed Mrs. Ford's hand. As the President's car moved off, people ran alongside, and he waved to them.

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Heila Weidenfeld, who ~~also~~ attended the lunch with the press pool, said that Mrs Ford was giving the President a pair of brown leather leisure shoes as a birthday present, because he had liked a pair of black leisure shoes she gave him at Christmas. Gifts from the family still to be disclosed.

The President's birthday dinner in the White House, said Mrs Weidenfeld, would consist of corned beef and cabbage, horse radish sauce, potatoes, beets and mixed green salad. Also chocolate angel ~~and~~ food cake with chocolate icing and One candle, Also champagne. The President, explained Mrs Weidenfeld, is fond of corned beef and cabbage.

If he had not eaten at the Sans Souci with Mrs Ford at lunch, he would have had cottage cheese, said Mrs Weidenfeld, who added that there would have been no tomato ketchup on the cottage cheese.

Mrs Ford wore a white cotton suit for the occasion. One of the press postcards sent across tables to the President asked for the name of his running mate. The reply said, "How about Mrs. You-Know-Who" meaning Mrs Ford.

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