

White House Chef to Try It Again

WASHINGTON, June 2 (UPI) —The White House pastry chef stood stanchly behind the scaled-down version of his recipe for Tricia Nixon's wedding cake today despite one test of it that produced nothing more than "mush" and "soup" and a dirty oven. But he promised to retest the formula as soon as he got time.

The New York Times's food editor, Raymond A. Sokolov, and home economist, Jean Hewitt, whose test convinced them that last-minute revisions would be necessary if the wedding guests "are going to have anything remotely resembling cake to eat," concluded the recipe contained too many egg whites.

Several experts, including The Times's retired food editor, Craig Claiborne, agreed with the conclusion that the cake

White House today for permission to observe Mr. Bender's new efforts in the kitchen, but his request was denied.]

The White House made public the recipe yesterday, and United Press International began receiving some questions about its egg whites-only ingredients even before The Times ran its test.

In a story in The Times this morning, the paper reported its test on a scaled version faithfully followed Mr. Bender's recipe, but "produced mush on the outside of the layer and soup on the inside. Some parts of the proposed 12-by-2-inch layer burned before the suggested 45-minute cooking time was over. The oven was a mess."

Mr. Claiborne, author of

flour and eggs. Whole eggs."

Among the questions received by the White House was one from Los Angeles that asked whether it was possible that the pan is square not round. "Former configuration would result 144 square inches cake or, roughly, 5.4 square inches per each 25 pieces meaning size something slightly less than 3 by 2 inches," the message read. It continued, "virtually impossible fathom piece size of 12-inch-round cake. For our information is frosting included in depth estimate?"

Mr. Bender was unmoved, but in response to The Times's complaint that the batter overflowed the pan, he did say that the White House forgot to include in the recipe it put out that a brown paper collar should be put around the pan



The New York Times/Gene Magglo

How scaled-down recipe for Tricia Nixon's wedding cake, as provided by the White House, turned out after being baked in The New York Times test kitchen. The picture was taken after much of cake batter that overflowed the pan and coated the oven had been cleaned off.

should have some whole eggs, too.

But Heinz Bender, the pastry chef, insisted that the formula was correct for the 350-pound lemon flavored cake he planned to make for Tricia's wedding June 12 to Edward Finch Cox.

"It worked in the White House kitchen," Mr. Bender insisted. But he said he would double check it by baking the recipe tomorrow. He said he wouldn't have time before then because he was busy getting ready for tonight's black-tie dinner at the White House for Anastasio Somoza Debayle of Nicaragua and 90 guests.

[Mr. Sokolov asked the

some of the most popular and widely read cookbooks in America, agreed. "I've seen a lot of bizarre recipes, and I must conclude from this one that obviously the White House means whole eggs and not egg whites in the second step of the recipe. But I shouldn't comment because I haven't tried the recipe—I haven't seen it printed because I no longer read newspapers."

UPI's food editor, Jeanne Lesem, said, "The White House needs a good proofreader, and its chefs need to bone up on American culinary history. Poundcake recipes called for one pound of butter, sugar,

to contain the batter as it rises quickly.

'Just Hold On'

WASHINGTON, June 2 (AP) —Henry Haller, the White House chef, surprised by the quick queries from many food editors, today asked: "Are they working nights?"

He suggested one of the problems of the home-size recipe might be that the White House weighs its egg whites and those making the cake at home might be using different size eggs.

"We are going to see," he said, promising the new test. "Just hold on."