

GOP Brunch: Not Exactly MS.' Ideal

By Sally Quinn

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Miami Beach

IT WAS to be a parade of historic "firsts" for women in government, and those who sponsored the brunch yesterday at the Fontainebleau Hotel can take great satisfaction in knowing that it certainly was.

The "Women of Achievement Brunch," in honor of the First Lady, was a study in contradictions. From the inclusion at the head table of so many women, (including Pat Nixon) whose presence there was solely because of their husbands' achievements, to the historical fashion show, modeled by some

of the actual achievers, the event became a series of assaults on the unprotected flanks of the imagination.

An obstacle course of security guards, souvenir sellers, ticket takers (\$7.50 per person) and Nixonettes ("get to know a Nixonette," read their buttons) in red, white and blue had to be survived before one entered the packed Grand Ballroom.

Inside, the high pitched level of voices sounded like the Bird Cage restaurant at Lord and Taylor's on a good shopping day as the women read their programs and rummaged through their bags of favors, which included recipe books, political playing cards and lots of things with elephants.

Lester Lanin, who once would lend his lofty presence and his orchestra only to the Newport, Long Island and Palm Beach ballrooms, found himself playing introductions as the endless head table guests lurched into the spotlight and filed down to their places.

Everyone was advised to stand when Pat Nixon, or "Mrs. Cool" as Anne Armstrong called her, arrived to tell the women that "We're all for you," and "I feel real joy and warmth to look out and see all those smiles."

"Isn't she wonderful?" asked Anne Armstrong, aft-



ANNE ARMSTRONG
"From the heart"



AP Wirephoto

The President's daughter, Tricia Cox enjoyed a laugh with several Nixonettes while she tried on one of their banners at the Miami Airport following her arrival with her mother, sister Julie and husband Edward Cox for the Republican National Convention.

er the First Lady had finished her few words. "You know, she never writes down a single word. It all comes from the heart and it certainly sounds that way."

While all this was going on inside the Grand Ballroom, some 300 young people who identified themselves as SDS members, with troopers holding them at bay, were protesting against "the ruling class" and attesting that the "real Women of Achievement are welfare mothers, and Vietnamese women."

But enough of that. It was time for the awaited "American Pageant of Progress," narrated by Mrs. Sammy

Davis Jr. and Pat Boone. Boone, introduced as a great entertainer and a great family man, was wearing a new hairstyle, somewhat longer but teased and sprayed neatly into place.

The idea of the pageant was for the achievers—the likes of Shirley Temple Black, Lenore Romney, Anna Chennault, Clare Boothe Luce, and such officials' wives as Mrs. Clark MacGregor, Mrs. Elliot Richardson and Mrs. William Rogers—to model the period costumes of famous women throughout history.

During the modeling the narrators explained the slides to go along with the

dresses and entertained the audience with prepared bon mots.

"Martha Washington wasn't much on women's lib. When it came to revolution she let George do it," says Pat Boone. "Right on," reads Mrs. Sammy Davis from her notes.

Boone mentioned that Susan B. Anthony had done good things, "but that was before Raquel Welch." There would even have been more puerile patter but he unfortunately had to leave to go sing the National Anthem at Convention Hall so Sammy Davis took over.

The grand finale after Clare Boothe Luce modeled

herself was the President's brother's wife, Mrs. Edward Nixon, modeling Pat Nixon's inaugural gown. "One thing about the First Lady," said Sammy, "is she does the woman thing her own way."

Then it was time to go. The lights went up, revealing several empty seats at the head table. "Some of the men had to go to attend to important business at Convention Hall," explained Anne Armstrong, cochairman of the Republican National Committee.

"But that's good because it shows that we women who are left behind do like men, but we can stand on our own and our own merits."