

Love Sweeps The White House



Arthur Hoppe

A HIGH OFFICIAL source has been quoted as saying the President's concerned the nation isn't paying enough attention to his daughter's wedding.

Rubbish! With the momentous event only hours or days or, at most, months away, the whole country is talking of little else.

"Can Trish find happiness with young George Cox?" is one of the questions on a million lips these days. "Isn't his name Al?" is another. While running a close third is, "What's a Trish?"

The problem for the White House, of course, is how to maintain national interest at the present fever pitch. Consequently, press briefings have now been stepped up and are being held at 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. daily except Sunday, when the early session is replaced by a prayer breakfast in which the press is asked to join with the staff in beseeching the Almighty to withhold rain from the Rose Garden during the ceremony.

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THANKS to the dedicated work of Miss Pamela Turnover (a former associate of Sol Hurok) and her creative task force of 63 writers, photographers and idea men, a veritable spate of exciting stories has flooded from the White House in recent weeks.

Headlines include: Bridesmaids to Carry Small Bouquets of Mini-Flowers, Why Fred MacMurray Was Invited to the Wedding (he played golf once with the President in 1969), Tricia Not Nervous Yet, and Will Six-Foot-High Wedding Cake Fall Down?

Producing splashy stories like these day after day for a palpitating nation is no

easy matter. Take a typical 2 p.m. press briefing.

Miss Turnover: I think you've all received copies of the announcement that the groom will wear black socks at the ceremony. Please note that this isn't for release until 12:01 a.m. E.D.T. tomorrow. Any questions?

Q — Does this mean he'll wear black socks on his honeymoon? Or does he plan to change socks after the ceremony?

A — I don't have any advance information on that yet. I'll try to have at least an indication for you by the 4 p.m. briefing.

Q — What about the bridal gown? There's a rumor it'll be topless.

A — Questions on the bridal gown are a violation of the ground rules. You all have the schedule. Hints on the gown will be released Tuesday, vague descriptions not for attribution on Wednesday, pirated sketches on Thursday, denials on Friday and official drawings at 3 p.m. E.D.T. on Saturday. Now then, about the groom's socks. They are size 12½, mid-calf length, with double re-enforced heels and . . .

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SO IT'S little wonder that for the past few days people in bars, buses, parks and parties have talked of nothing but Mr. Cox's socks. And the tension mounts.

Think of the emotional cost to us American. Think of the economic cost of all this staff work on press releases. Think of what it's costing the father of the bride. Think of me.

As the father of several prospective brides myself, I feel I can be permitted a single word of advice to Trish and her beloved Joe Cox — a word that comes from the very bottom of a father's heart:

Elope.