

Pat's Pleasant Senate Luncheon

Washington

With talk of Watergate at tables all around her and members of the Ervin committee sitting nearby, First Lady Pat Nixon yesterday joined "old friends" among Senate wives for lunch in the Senate dining room. They avoided the subject of Watergate altogether.

A parade of senators who stopped to greet Mrs. Nixon avoided the topic, too, but out of her hearing some diners were more outspoken.

Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. (Dem-N.C.), chairman of the Watergate committee, said he saw Mrs. Nixon "but did not stop." Senator Howard Baker Jr. (Rep-Tenn.), vice chairman of the committee, and his wife both stopped to talk with Mrs. Nixon. So did a third member of the committee, Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (Rep-Conn.).

Asked if he mentioned Watergate, Weicker said, "Oh, no. I told her I hope her husband is getting completely better and asked her to take good care of him."

FIRST

It was the first time a first lady had been entertained in the Senate dining room while her husband was President. Mrs. Nixon was invited by Mrs. Herman E. Talmadge, whose husband, the Democratic senator from

Georgia, is also a member of the Ervin committee.

Former First Lady Mamie Eisenhower accompanied Mrs. Nixon. Other guests at the round table for eight in the very center of the dining room were Mrs. Mike Mansfield, wife of the Senate majority leader, Mrs. John L. McLellan, wife of the Democratic senator from Arkansas, Mrs. Wallace Foster Bennett, wife of the Republican senator from Utah; Mrs. John Sherman Cooper, wife of the former Republican senator from Kentucky; and Louella Dirksen, widow of the late Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois and Senator Baker's mother-in-law.

PRALINES

pralines for her guests from a recipe by the late Senator Allen J. Ellender of Louisiana. She brought fresh tomatoes from her garden to serve with filet of flounder stuffed with crabmeat as the main luncheon dish. Dessert was fresh strawberries laced with bourbon.

Mrs. Nixon admitted later that she ate very little because so many people stopped to talk to her. And she seemed delighted about that.

"It was just like coming home," she said enthusiastically. "I used to come here all the time during the two terms my husband was a senator."

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