



AP Wirephoto

President and Mrs. Ford read a petition of 'support and best wishes' from the U.S. Senate

Days Ahead of Schedule

'Betty's Doing Very Well'

Washington

First Lady Betty Ford, ahead of schedule in her recovery from surgery, began to read her mail yesterday, and was reported to be thrilled by the expressions of concern for her.

"She also is aware of the impact that her illness has made on people" and that thousands of women across the country have been rushing to seek breast cancer examinations, said her press secretary, Helen Smith.

President Ford told Oval Office visitors yesterday morning: "Betty's doing

very, very well. She is about two or three days ahead of what the doctors prognosticated as the rate of recovery. So, we're very happy."

The White House said there have been 10,000 letters, more than 500 telephone calls and over 200 telegrams for Mrs. Ford. There was even a check sent to the White House for \$5000 for the American Cancer Society.

A spokesman for the cancer society reported that Mrs. Ford's ordeal with the disease has awakened wom-

en across the country to the dangers they also face.

"Phones have been ringing off the hook" with calls from women trying to make appointments with doctors, clinics and hospitals for breast cancer examinations, said a spokesman for the American Cancer Crusade.

"It's a tragedy for Mrs. Ford, but she may have saved an awful lot of women's lives," the spokesman said.

The President of the American Cancer Society, Dr. Lasalle D. Laffall Jr.,

sent Mrs. Ford a message saying, "You and members of your family are to be commended for the prompt and forthright manner in which you dealt with your recent illness. It will serve women who are destined to have a similar experience."

Among the messages to Mrs. Ford was one from 90-year-old Alice Longworth, daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt, who said, "Just a line to wish you well from one who a number of years ago had the experience you just had."

Associated Press