

Betty Beale: Washington

WASHINGTON — In its eagerness to protect its charges, the Secret Service seems to go to ridiculous lengths at times. Even Betty Ford got tickled when she saw the number of men who accompanied her husband into the briny deep when the Vice President recently took a dip in the Pacific Ocean. It was during their brief stay at that heavenly vacation spot on the big island of Hawaii known as Mauna Kea.

"Three agents were on either side of him," said Mrs. Ford, "and they swam together in perfect rhythm. It looked like a water ballet," she added with a giggle.

The deluxe Rockefeller resort is so private that stars like Bob Hope and Lucille Ball know they can go there and not be molested by autograph seekers and gushing admirers. But the presence of the Vice President whose boss is the subject of an impeachment investigation was something else again.

"The word must have gotten out that Jerry was going to take a swim," said Betty, "because not only was the press waiting with cameras but cameras seemed to come out from everybody on the beach."

Not to be outdone, she had her movie camera with her to take her husband and the beautiful setting, "and when the press started taking pictures of us, I turned my camera on them. I also took pictures of the water ballet," said the amused Second Lady.

As they returned to Washington, the Fords sent out invitations to a reception June 19 in honor of son Michael and his fiancée Gayle Brumbaugh.

Pat Nixon was so annoyed by the newswoman who was asking the White House if she had ever recorded the \$52,000 set of emerald and diamond jewelry Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia gave her that she instantly, in a fit of anger, sent it to the gifts unit of the Executive Office Building to go to the National Archives — much against the advice of White House counsel Fred Buzhardt.

First secretary Helen Smith said, "We have a better record of gifts than any previous administration, according to people who have worked here for a long time." The diamond and cabochon ruby earrings which were a gift to Mrs. Nixon from King Faisal were recorded, said Helen, by herself for background press information along with the guest list of the President's stag luncheon in Faisal's honor and filed away. But nobody asked for them.

The ridiculous part about all this was that even if

The Secret Service's ballet in the surf

handsome gifts to the President or his family "should be determined to have been accepted on behalf of the United States" as the law states, it doesn't make sense to store beautiful jewelry in a dark government vault somewhere when the recipient needs some adornment for the glamorous official functions every First Lady must give.

Says chief of protocol Henry Catto, "The law does not mention at what point the recipient shall turn a gift over to the chief of protocol. As I read it, it must be turned over before leaving the White House."

The late Don Carnevale of Harry Winston's tried to get a handsome collection of jewelry started at the Smithsonian with the idea that it could be borrowed by First Ladies for state occasions. The collection is there, but no President's wife has ever felt free to use it. How absurd then for a First Lady who has been given beautiful jewelry not to be able to wear it while she's in the White House. To the beauty-loving feminine mind it's nothing short of a crime!

Johnny and Carol McCain, one of the bravest couples in America, gave a farewell party here the other day. Johnny, you remember, was the POW prisoner who was tortured worse than some because his father was admiral of the Atlantic Fleet. His story made headline news across the country when he returned crippled after years of horror to find his wife also crippled from an automobile accident which had



Crown Prince Hassan, left, with GOP Chairman and Mrs. George Bush.

crushed both her legs. He expected to find her as tall and agile as the former fashion model he had married because she kept the accident and nine operations a secret from him. She'd even had one leg shortened by three inches to match the one that had been broken in one hundred places!

Today by virtue of sheer grit and determination Johnny can walk without a limp. Two operations couldn't fix his leg; "physical therapy did it," said Carol. The Navy commander lifts 40-pound weights with his right leg 200 times a day, has the muscles stretched by physical therapists six hours a week and exercises at home continually. Carol still limps because she can't bend her knees enough, but she's as cheerful as he is about heading for Jacksonville, Fla., where the flier will take command of A-7 Squadron at Cecil Field. Back in his mind he is toying with the idea of someday running for political office.

Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan, the 27 year old brother of King Hussein, came here to discuss economic development and was wined and dined by Ambassador and Mrs. Sallah at a dinner for 180. Everything went according to protocol until a Congressman's wife

decided the Prince was irresistible, rose from her place at dinner, staggered around to his Royal Highness and began kissing him again and again. Two of Hassan's security men tried to cope, but the Congressman got there first and firmly led wifey back to her chair.

George Bush, glimpsing Lebanese Ambassador and Mrs. Kabani at that dinner, remarked on Israel's bombing in Lebanon. "It's sad. Lebanon had nothing to do with Maalot. They are sweet people," he said of the Kabanis.

Thruston Morton, former Senator from Kentucky and GOP national chairman, was picked two months ago by President Nixon to succeed Walter Annenberg to the Court of St. James's, but the appointment seems to be in limbo.

The Peter Flanigans have put their Washington house up for sale for \$410,000, and Brigid plans to leave in mid-June with Peter following later. The presidential assistant is the 31st of the Nixon aides on the staff in 1970 to leave the White House.