

# State's 'Gifts' Reminder

6-14-74

By Maxine Cheshire

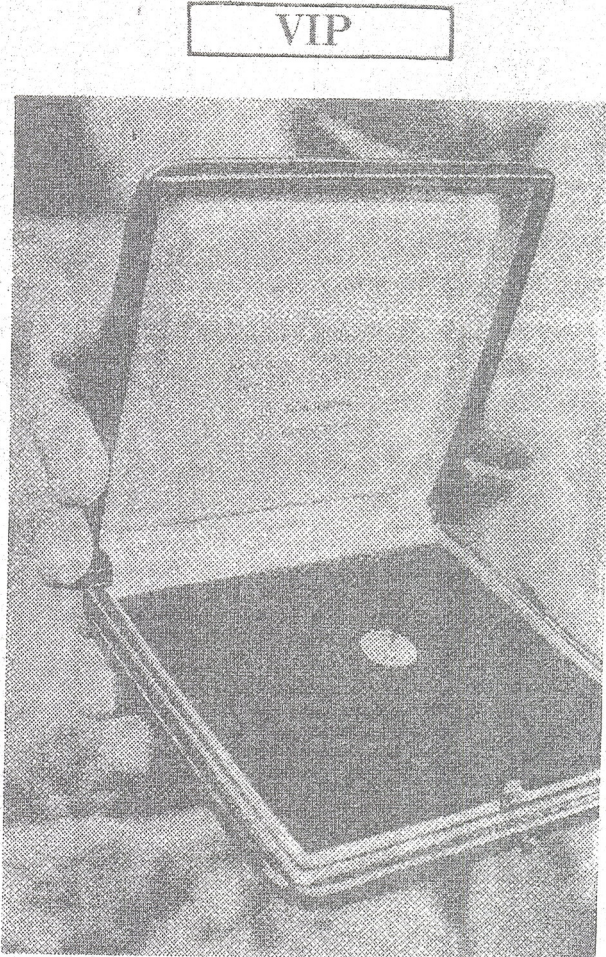
The State Department said yesterday that it will send out a "reminder" to all government employees in the "next day or two" that gifts from foreign sources are public property and must be turned over to the Office of Protocol.

The announcement followed disclosure in yesterday's Washington Post that Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) had turned in a diamond worth more than \$100,000 to the State Department on Wednesday, more than six years after his wife received it. The 7.9 carat jewel, taken from a Minneapolis safe deposit box earlier in the day and flown to Washington, was a gift from Congolese president Joseph Mobutu to Muriel Humphrey during an African trip made when Humphrey was Vice President.

In a prepared statement issued Wednesday, Humphrey said he had been unaware that the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act, had been amended in 1966 to ban foreign largess to families of government officials, applied to his wife.

Humphrey added that he had been accompanied on all foreign trips by a protocol officer and was at "no time" advised "that gifts received by me or members of my family should be placed in the custody of the State Department."

Earlier stories reported the recent turning over of valuable jewels given by Arab royalty to First Lady Pat Nixon, former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew,



By Gerald Martineau—The Washington Post

The 7.9 carat diamond Hubert Humphrey received from Congolese President Joseph Mobutu in 1968.

Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.), and former Secretary of State William P. Rogers. In all cases, there had been delays of more than a year between the time the gifts were received and the time they

were publicly disclosed and turned in.

The Gifts Act, amended by Congress in 1966, prohibits public officials or their relatives by "blood, marriage or adoption" from ac-

See GIFTS, B2, Col. 1

## GIFTS, From B1

cepting foreign gifts worth more than \$50, unless it would "adversely affect the foreign relations of the United States." The law requires that, if accepted, gifts be turned over to the Chief of Protocol's office for cataloging and disposition as public property.

State Department officials say the Gifts Act is "vague, ambiguous," since it does not contain a specific timetable as to when gifts should be turned over after their receipt. Further, they say, the law has no sanctions, leaving the Chief of Protocol as a watchdog with no manpower or authority to insure compliance.

John King, at a State Department briefing yesterday, was asked by reporters if any other government officials had turned over valuable gifts in recent days.

"Not to my knowledge, no," said King. "But we are

obviously looking into this whole question and it's possible something has turned up." King said that the Office of Protocol and the legal division of the State Department were looking into the situation.

The General Accounting Office is already conducting an audit of the way the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act is being enforced in all three branches of government. That investigation was ordered on April 11 at the request of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which drafted the 1966 law.

Asked when the reminder to government employees would be issued, King said "directly." He added, "Such circulars of course, were sent in the past—particularly after the law was amended in '66 . . . But this is more in the nature of a reminder, rather than a pro-

mulgation of new regulations."

King did not say whether the directive would specify that such gifts be turned in immediately or without a time unit.

Responding to reporters demands to see the gifts now stored in the State Department, King said "these things are to be turned over Administration (GSA) as soon as we can efficiently accomplish this." Photographers and reporters were allowed to view previously publicized gifts, however later in the day.

Meanwhile, on the House floor yesterday, Rep. Bud Shuster (R-Pa.) charged that Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) illegally kept gifts he had received and should be investigated. (Humphrey's staff is now compiling a list for the GAO of all foreign gifts—other than the diamond—he or his

family have received since 1966.)

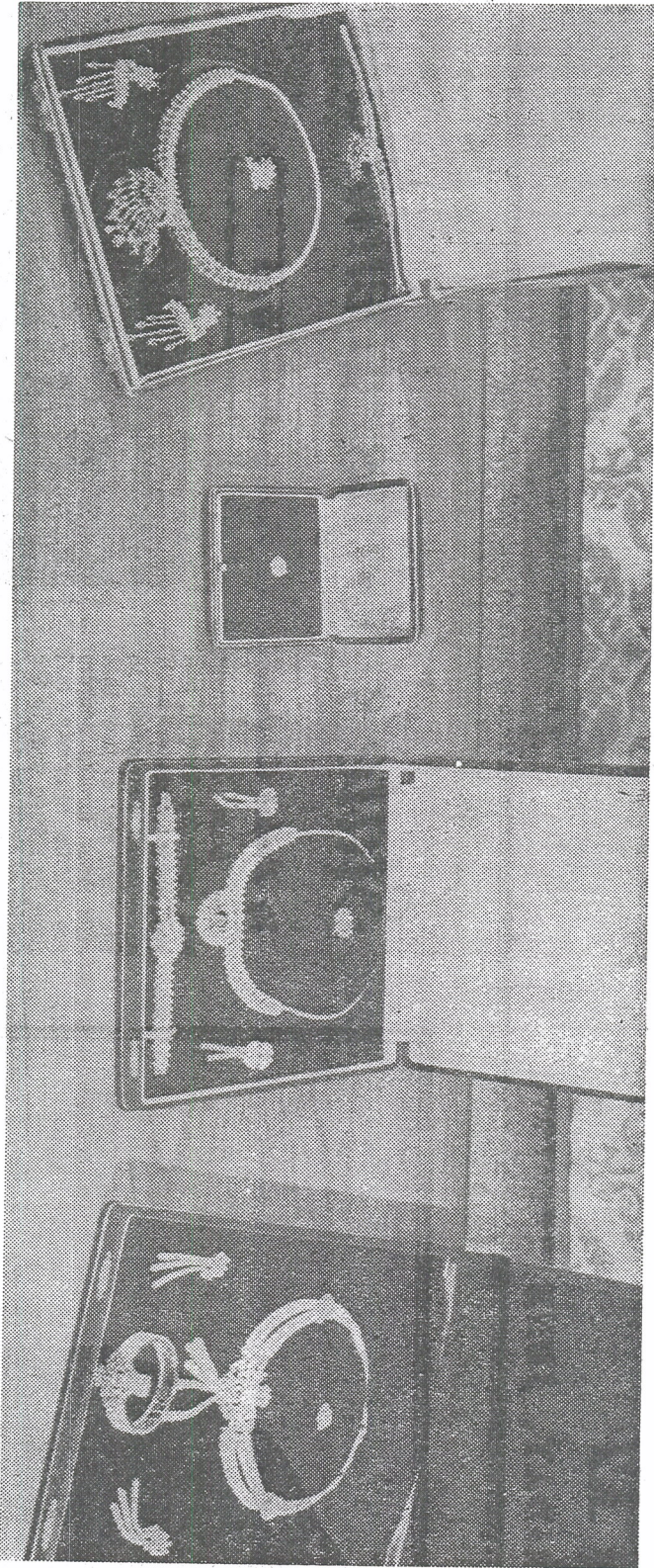
"We're told that he really didn't know it was illegal," Shuster said. "We're also told that the file on this matter somehow disappeared from the State Department in the last days of the Democratic administration . . . Who's he trying to kid?"

Shuster called on the Justice Department, the Senate Watergate Committee and the House Judiciary Committee to investigate "these transgressions."

Pointing out that another Vice President, Spiro T. Agnew, had been "drummed out" of office for accepting kickbacks, Shuster said, "but it's supposedly all right for another Vice President, whose party controlled this place (Congress) to accept a \$170,000 so-called gift and keep it for his personal use."

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PEOPLE/ADVICE



By Gerald Martineau—The Washington Post  
*Gifts of Arab jewels to U.S. officials flank the Humphrey diamond in the small box at the State Department yesterday.*