

Nixon Aids Marines at Accident Site

By Bernard Hunt

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SAN CLEMENTE, Calif., July 18—Former President Nixon struggled in vain to save the lives of three Marines involved in a head-on crash in front of his car Thursday as he returned from a golf match at camp Pendleton Marine Base.

Camp Pendleton officials said Nixon, his son-in-law Edward Cox and a Navy Medical corpsman who travels with the former President tried to save the Marines as other members of the party radioed for help.

"Mr. Nixon took charge of the accident scene," said a base spokesman. "He directed his Secret Service man to call for a med-evac unit."

Two of the Marines were killed instantly. The third

died five hours later at the base hospital.

Nixon was returning to La Casa Pacifica, his San Clemente home, and was driving along Las Pulgas Road on the base when the car in front of his collided with an oncoming vehicle.

It is not known if Nixon saw the cars crash or what caused the collision. Camp Pendleton officials are investigating the cause of the accident.

The Nixon party stopped and as Nixon and Cox tried to assist the Marine still alive, the Secret Service agent radioed for help.

The Nixon party was on the scene for about an hour and left when the med-evac unit took charge.

Also in the group were Nixon's daughter, Tricia Cox, and Nixon's former mil-

itary attache, Col. Jack Brennan.

The dead Marines were identified as Sgt. Davis Vandal, 28, of Oceanside, Calif.; Sgt. Larry W. Grise, 24, of San Clemente, and Cpl. Raniero A. Delgado Jr., 20, of San Antonio.

Usual procedure when a traffic accident occurs at Camp Pendleton is for the base public information of-

ficer to notify the media. However, there was no public announcement of this crash.

Nixon nearly died Oct. 29 when he went into shock following surgery to correct a phlebitis condition. In April the former President told a reporter his doctors had pronounced him "about 75 to 80 per cent recovered."