By Earl Wilson

NEW YORK - When you only have \$2 or 3 billion, you have to cut corners.

They're now trying to establish that Howard Hughes is in a nursing home in California under an assumed bank account but I just got a hot flash from the Bahamas that he's cutting down expenses and occupying only one-third of the ninth floor of the Brittania Gardens Hotel for his six secretaries and eight security officers.

When he was rich, he would have had two floors.

Although nobody has seen him, many have seen Hughes' own kitchen staff and personal chef.

A frail figure in a blue robe, seen down near the swimming pool at a late hour, was rumored to be Howard Hughes but since nobody has seen him in years, who is to know for

There's a gag around the restaurants that when Diahann Carroll was asked about that little mark on her neck, she told all it was 'Frostbite."

Maria Callas, here for the new Juilliard Opera Theater meetings and the Curtis Master Classes in Philadelphia, will stay in the New York area for a couple of weeks. A European journalist asked very innocent-like, Who will she be seeing in New York?" A representative said, "She has a great many friends in New York and probably will be seeing them. That is her private

One of the quickest ways to spot newlyweds in Las



Jenny Lee Wright plays Pearl, the girl Ben Gazilondon in the indication

ture."Husbands," current-

ly playing here.

Vegas: "Even when they're plush Blue Fox, then flew on a losing streak, they're still kissing."

The first woman who ever appeared nude in a picture? W-e-I-I, it could have been Gloria Swanson in "Male and Female" with Thomas Meighan, though she was really all covered up with soapsuds . . . Merv Griffin gave his wife Julann a birthday surprising when he flew a planeload of friends (including Arthur Treacher) from Los Angeles to San Francisco for dinner at the them back to Los Angeles the same night.

Flip Wilson figures some doctors are getting too independent: "I know one guy who is famous for his bedside manner . . . but you gotta go to his bedside."

Was that Zero Mostel who left a gift package for Lauren Bacall at "Applause" containing snuggies? . . . Jennifer Salt, Jon Volght's ex-girlfriend, will be one of the three girls in Brenda

Vaccaro's show, "Father's rectorial film job is "Keep-Day" ... William Holden is filming "The Wild Rovers" in the Arizona desert, but he's not rough in git-he brought along his \$30,000 Mercedes-Benz with built-in

A Midwestern visitor complained about a visit to a fancy Manhattan restaurant: "Why did they have to go and spoil all that good French cooking with those terrible American prices?'

Shelly Berman's first di-

ing Off My Grass" with Mickey Dolenz of The Monkees . . . Rita Dimitri, who wears hot pants at her La Chansonette, was admitted to the plush 21 with them, but couldn't get into Cote Basque ... Songwriter Jimmy Van Heusen, who wrote many of Bing Crosby's hits, said he's working on a Broadway musical and hopes Bing will star in it . . . Speaking of music, the songs from Doris Day's TV special will be released as an album-her first recording in more than two years.



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