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# Curbs on 'bugs' urged

## Mandel wants sale of electronic gear restricted

Private citizens and non-governmental groups should be restricted in their ability to acquire electronic eavesdropping and surveillance equipment, Gov. Marvin Mandel said Thursday.

"I think it's too easy for individuals to purchase this equipment," the governor said at his weekly news conference. "People are buying it and I don't think they're buying it to leave in the drawer."

Mandel made his remarks after he was asked to comment on a Senate investigating committee report alleging widespread unwarranted surveillance and illegal wiretapping by units of the Baltimore Police Department.

The news conference was the first time since the release of the report last week by the Constitutional and Public Law Committee that Mandel had been available for questions on the 157-page document, which the governor said he has read twice.

The report alleged that city policemen and employes of the Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co. regularly carried out telephone eavesdropping without court orders required under federal law.

The report further said that vice squad officers falsified the source of the information developed by illegal wiretaps to support requests for search warrants against such activity as illicit gambling.

Asked to comment on the allegations against law enforcement officials, Mandel spent most of the time saying that a law is needed to regulate the sale of spy paraphernalia to nongovernmental groups and private citizens.

Asked to cite specific examples of eavesdropping violations in the private sector, Mandel mentioned the case of Charles Tipton in which a tape recorder was hidden under a coat to capture a conversation.

However, the recorder in the

Tipton case — which involved allegations of an attempt to get state penal officials to lighten Tipton's sentence — is the type on sale throughout the state in electronics shops and department stores.

The governor said he was not ready to sponsor legislation regulating the sale and use of

spy gear because he wants to see what legislators will do.

Regarding police activities, Mandel reiterated his opposition to spying on persons not linked to specific criminal activity, one of the allegations made against the city police in the report.

## Mandel tax plan greeted calmly

Representatives of three powerful industries which will be hit by Gov. Marvin Mandel's proposal to accelerate the collection of \$39 million in business taxes apparently don't plan much of a legislative fight against the changes.

Lobbyists for banking institutions, public utilities and insurance companies reacted much the same following Mandel's disclosure that he would ask the General Assembly to require them to pay estimated taxes during the year.

Other Maryland businesses already are required to make estimated tax payments instead of waiting until after the year is over to send their money to the state treasurer.

"We feel it will be passed," William E. Weaver of the Maryland Bankers Association said of the Mandel proposal.

"As far as the industry is concerned, we're not going to take any position on it. Let's be practical. Nothing is going to be accomplished trying to defeat it," he said.

Banks, utilities and insurance companies are treated differently from other corporations because they pay special taxes in lieu of corporate income taxes. Utilities pay a gross receipts tax, insurance companies a premium tax and banks a franchise tax.

Those taxes are now collected in the spring each year for the preceding 12 months. That

the taxes that accrue through the year.

Mandel, to help balance his budget, is asking the General Assembly to require them to pay at least half of their expected tax liability by July 1 each year.

## Crawford said quitting race

State Sen. Victor L. Crawford will withdraw from the U.S. Senate race to seek the Democratic Congressional nomination from the Eighth District, the Baltimore Sun reported today.

The paper said it had learned from reliable sources in Annapolis that Crawford made the decision last weekend.

The Montgomery County Democrat denied that he had decided to withdraw from the Senatorial contest.

But he said he is "getting a lot of pressure" to enter the race for the seat which is being vacated by the popular veteran Republican Congressman, Gilbert Gode.

Crawford said the pressure is coming from state and local political leaders, but he would not identify those leaders.

He said they seem to believe he is the only one who can beat Republican State Sen. Newton I. Steers, who is expected to announce his candidacy for the GOP nomination Saturday. Crawford has been close

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requirement may have added \$48 million—the rough equivalent of one elementary school for each county—to the construction costs.

The prime opponent of the bill was Charles Rush of the Baltimore Building Trades Council, a union group, who said the prevailing wage law is needed if unionized contractors with their higher labor costs are to be able to bid competitively against nonunion firms.

Durscher told the committee, however, that he has noticed only a slight increase in the number of contractors seeking school jobs in Montgomery County since the state took over school construction and tied it to prevailing wage in 1971.

Rush said another effect of prevailing wage is that in

for school jobs, the public will get better quality because unionized workmen are better craftsmen than nonunion workers.

He said that while union wage scales have risen only 6.9 per cent in the past 21 months, the cost of land has risen tenfold in the past five years and interest charges have gone up 10 per cent during the same period.

"I don't see any proposal here to freeze the cost of land, lower the architects' fees or salaries of the school superintendents, which I understand are quite high," he said.

Pluto, discovered in 1930, is the most distant known planet in our solar system. In its 248-year orbit of the sun, Pluto never comes closer than