

Evening Capital

Published by Evening Capital, Inc.
2000 E. 12th St., Des Moines, IA 50319

Founded 1727

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Our say

Mystery money damages Mandel

IN THE WAKE of Watergate, one hardly knows whether to laugh or cry, at the sheer gall of Gov. Marvin Mandel in stonewalling — there is no other word for it — any and all questions relating to some \$54,000 received by himself, his second wife and son.

For over a month now Mandel and his family and his press secretary have refused to explain the fact or the purpose of this money, which is said, although not yet by the governor, to be a loan.

This loan, of which Jeanne Mandel received \$12,000 directly, with the remainder going to the governor's son Gary, after endorsement by the governor, is reported to have originated with the Pallottine fathers for the purpose of financing his divorce.

If that is the case, then why did Jeanne Mandel instead of Bootsie get a check? And why the governor's son?

What are the terms of the loan? Are they standard business terms? Is the interest rate one per cent or two per cent or eight per cent? Who arranged it? And why?

Here is the governor of Maryland, already under indictment, the recipient of a loan for more than twice his salary. How is it to be repaid? From his funds? Or perhaps, from state business?

It seems to us that by refusing to provide a simple answer, the governor raises some very fundamental questions about his integrity and the integrity of his family.

Even Richard Nixon in his worst days of Watergate did not stoop to exposing his wife and children to charges of bribery and corruption. Here is Marvin Mandel, on the other hand, apparently willing to let his wife take the heat for \$12,000 and his son for another \$42,000.

If the governor has done nothing wrong, and this is an entirely reasonable and personal matter, then he has done a great disservice to his family by refusing even the most general explanation.

The public is left to draw inevitably unfavorable conclusions that reminds us, at least, of how former Congressman John Randolph of Roanoke 150 years ago described another capable public servant, Edward Livingston. Said Randolph: "He is a man of splendid abilities but utterly corrupt. He shines and stinks like a rotten mackerel by moonlight."

And yet it may well be that like Richard Nixon, Gov. Mandel is his own worst enemy and there is perhaps an entirely innocent, or at worst a modest embarrassment, in this whole affair.

If so, by facing up to it now the governor may save himself and his family infinite agony later. This is not an age in which a governor can permanently stonewall questions which go to the heart of his personal character. The facts of this so-called loan are not going to go away.

Art Buchwald



Can't trust anyone



Capital readers give their views

Gun control

Sir: Friday's and Saturday's paper had an account of 57-year-old Howard Lawless, a night clerk at a Ritchie Highway Motel in Brooklyn Park, killing a 25-year-old would-be robber with a handgun. Police investigation soon revealed that the robber had killed a man earlier that same date, presumably in a successful robbery, and the robber's pistol had been stolen in a sporting goods robbery in which the clerk there was killed. The dead robber had an extensive criminal record.

Criminal history has demonstrated that after a criminal kills once to twice he has no compunction about killing again with the odds being that the motel night manager would have sur-

civilization's so-called "progress."

The Engels are to be doubly saluted because they are helping birds—critters who cannot repay them in a mundane way. In that, they are helping all of us humans, for it will indeed be a sad day for us when the ducks and other wildlife can no longer survive the effects of man and are seen no more.

The one story made my brief stay in your beautiful community one I shall remember always—and for the right reasons.

For the birds and all who love them, thank you for that truly wonderful story.

M. H. BANNER
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Normal, Ill.

Mail service

Sir:

secretary of South America, Argentina, B and Venezuela materialized USA hypnosis the world, a neglect of I tragic.

A visit by recognized specialist, w their langua; Rockefeller, without procrastinati has unfortu much of the might have the Latin Am Our failure their aspir; deplored by leaders in I visit by our some of the who are fac malnutriti