

The Weather

Chance of flurries this afternoon and tonight. High, 45; low, 18. Yesterday's high, 40; low, 27.

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THE



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Mandel expected to return

Timing is called key to minimize problems for Lee

By DONALD KIMELMAN

Marvin Mandel is expected to reassume the full powers of the governorship this week, allowing him to finish out his turbulent final term Wednesday in the way he began it four years ago.

An informed source, close to Mr. Mandel, whose conviction on corruption charges was thrown out Thursday by a federal appeals court, said the timing of Mr. Mandel's return has not been fully worked out.

The source said a way was being sought to minimize the inconvenience to acting Governor Lee, who has been running the state for the past 18 months.

"It's more the niceties of the situation than the legality," the source said.

Mr. Lee, for example, is anxious to preside at the swearing-in Tuesday of Judge Rita C. Davidson, whom he appointed last month as the first woman to serve on the Maryland Court of Appeals.

With his 15-month suspension lifted by the appeals court ruling, Mr. Mandel need only send a letter to Mr. Lee informing him that he is taking back the powers he voluntarily transferred to his lieutenant governor in June, 1977, just before the start of his second trial.

Conceivably, the source noted, he could phrase the new letter in a way that Mr. Lee might have the gubernatorial powers briefly returned to him for the hour of Mrs. Davidson's swearing-in.

While the question of Mr. Mandel's formal return to power has inspired intense speculation (various radio stations throughout the day yesterday were reporting unequivocally that he is or is not coming back), there is practically nothing left for Mr. Mandel to do in the remaining hours before Governor-elect Harry R. Hughes takes office at noon Wednesday.

Clearly enjoying the renewed interest in his fate, Mr. Mandel spent his second straight morning yesterday holding court in the "Governor's Booth" of Chic & Ruth's Deli here, occasionally calling friends on his personal red telephone.

He offered no clues as to what course he is going to take.

"I haven't done anything at the moment," said Mr. Mandel. "We're just trying to relax . . . the future will determine itself."

Thom Burden, Mr. Lee's press secretary, said last night that there had been no communication between the two men on the transfer of power.

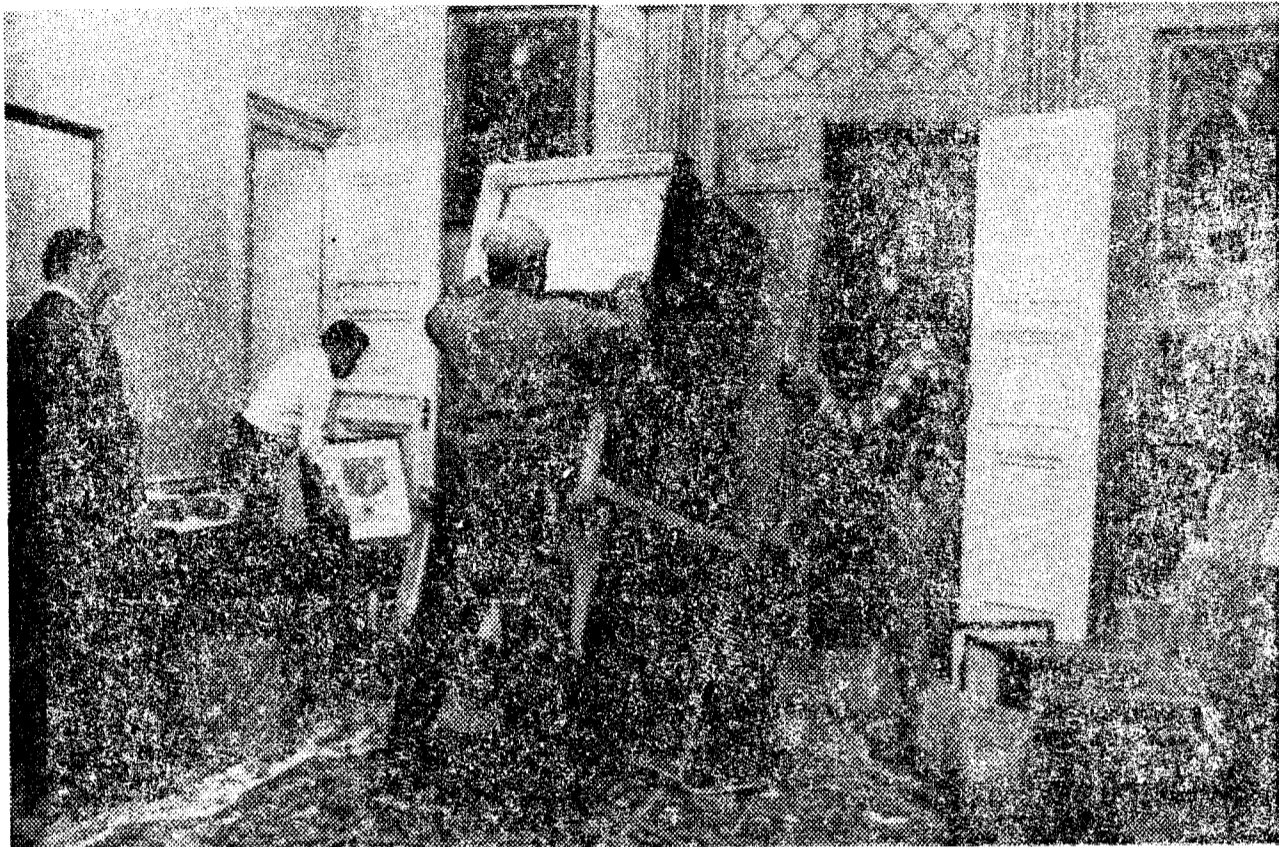
While Mr. Mandel was greeting well-wishers at the deli, Mr. Lee drank his last cup of breakfast coffee at the Governor's Mansion and walked across the street to his State House office.

There, with a few wry remarks, he packed up his final effects and cleared out the office.

The movers had already departed, taking his desk, his green vinyl-covered, high-backed swivel chair and most of his boxes of speeches, press releases and other personal papers to his home in Silver Spring.

With a television crew in attendance, Mr. Lee placed a state-owned copy of the Baltimore telephone directory in one of the boxes, calling his action "my first offense against the State of Maryland."

He also joked about hanging a vacancy sign on the iron fence surrounding the mansion and said that if Mr. Mandel wants to reach him, he will have to telephone him in Silver Spring. Mr. Lee's State Police bodyguard cringed as the act-



Sun photo—Ralph L. Robinson

John Neidlinger (left), a supply officer, looks on as workmen remove acting Governor Lee's desk from State House. Lifting

a painting is Harold Usilton, a State Police officer. Harry R. Hughes is scheduled to be sworn in as governor Wednesday.

Mandel return to office is expected

MANDEL, from A1

ing Governor recited that home number for the Channel 11 camera crew.

Mr. Lee's remark about the telephone book reflected a sensitivity in the Lee camp about a request from Governor-elect Hughes's staff that an immediate inventory be taken of all State House furniture and equipment.

Mr. Burden, Mr. Lee's press secretary, made a point of telling reporters that the acting Governor's desk was presented to him by the State Board of Public Works, which Mr. Lee chairs, while the swivel chair was a gift he received several years ago at a conference of lieutenant governors.

Mr. Burden asked several reporters to serve as witnesses when he carried his own swivel chair out of the building, explaining that it was a gift from his wife for his 35th birthday.

The press secretary said Mr. Lee would return to Annapolis tomorrow and Tuesday to perform last-minute functions, such as attending the swearing-in of Mrs. Davidson.

"If he needs to use the office, we'll set up a card table or something," Mr. Burden said. "That's easy to take care of."

The newest member of the state's triumvirate of chief executives—Governor-elect Hughes—was the only one who appeared to be working yesterday.

Mr. Hughes spent most of the day holed up in his transition headquarters in Baltimore, going over his budget message with Thomas W. Schmidt, the state's budget secretary. Mr. Hughes will submit the budget to the General Assembly Friday afternoon, two days after his inauguration.