

# Mandel explains settlement

From Staff and Wire Reports

Marvin Mandel said yesterday that he agreed to pay Maryland \$10,000 — settling a dispute over the ownership of furniture and other items from the governor's mansion — to avoid further expensive litigation.

In a press conference at his attorney's office in Glen Burnie, the former governor claimed that the payment did not constitute a penalty.

James L. Shea, an assistant attorney general who helped negotiate the settlement, said the payment was to cover the cost of state-owned items that Mr. Mandel took when he left office in 1977. "It's for the furniture," he said.

Mr. Mandel also agreed to take custody of boxes of personal items that had been sitting in storage, at the state's expense, since he left office.

The out-of-court settlement ended a six-year-old dispute between Maryland and Mr. Mandel over furniture and other items which the state claimed were property of Government House — the governor's mansion in Annapolis — taken by Mr. Mandel when he left office.

"Agreement has just been reached," Mr. Mandel said during a news conference yesterday at his attorney's Glen Burnie office. "The papers have been reviewed and I have just signed them."

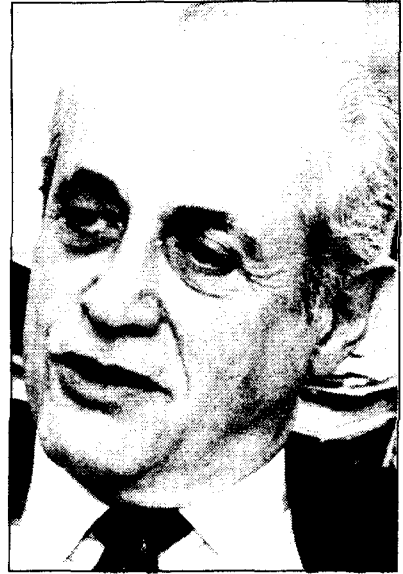
Mr. Mandel said that he and his wife Jeanne were "not happy" they had to pay the state as part of the settlement, but he added that it appeared to be the only way to avoid further litigation.

He said he would pay the \$10,000 within six months. He claimed the payment to the state did not constitute a penalty.

The agreement "speaks for itself that . . . I'm not returning anything to the state," Mr. Mandel said.

After the press conference, Assistant Attorney General James L. Shea said the Mandels' payment was to cover the cost of state-owned items that the former governor took when he left office.

"Any payment that we would receive would not be to cover our le-



MARVIN MANDEL

... says he wanted to avoid lawsuit

gal expenses," he said, "but to vindicate the principle for which we brought the suit. It's for the furniture."

State Attorney General Stephen H. Sachs filed suit January 4, 1980, after lengthy negotiations had failed to produce agreement on whether Mr. Mandel had taken anything that belonged to the state when he left the governor's mansion after his conviction on federal corruption charges.

The suit demanded that Mr. Mandel return 57 pieces of furniture and other items, currently worth almost \$10,000, which the state said he and his wife took when they moved out. Waterford lamps and ashtrays, wood sculptures, redwood patio furniture and Chippendale chairs were among the items claimed by the state.

The suit also asked that Mr. Mandel be required to pay \$3,811 for food, supplies and "approximately 350 bottles of state-owned liquor and wines" it said were taken by the former governor and his wife.

Mr. Mandel countered with a civil suit contending that many disputed items were his and that the state was refusing to return an additional 18 items he had left in the mansion.

Those items, which the attorney general's office said have been in storage at state expense since 1977, include boxes of books, old photographs and a bust of the former governor.

Mr. Shea denied that the state ever had laid claim to those items. "They left items behind that everyone always has recognized were theirs," he said. "Those are the items being returned to them."

Sun April 1983