

Brown's Hideout a Mystery

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By Peter A. Jay

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H. Rap Brown was hidden away last Sunday night in a motel in Bel Air, Md., according to information reaching law enforcement officials, who said their information remains that he now is at home in his New York apartment.

The young black militant's attorney, however, said he has no idea where his client is, but said—as did law enforcement officials—that

there is no information to indicate he has left the country. Attempts to locate Brown in New York yesterday were unsuccessful.

Maryland officials said they expect Brown's trial to reopen as scheduled in Bel Air on Monday, despite a defense contention that the deaths of two of the defendant's associates in an automobile explosion there four days ago have made a fair trial impossible.

In Washington, where the

body of one of the two men lay in a funeral home, both black and white groups pressed their contention that the Bel Air explosion was an attempt on Brown's life. They say the explosives were placed in the car by people who thought Brown would be in it. They denounced official speculation and news reports about the incident as precipitous and biased.

Gov. Marvin Mandel and

Maryland police responded to this criticism by reiterating their earlier suggestion that the two men, Ralph E. Featherstone and William H. (Che) Payne, died because a powerful explosive they were deliberately carrying was touched off accidentally.

"The evidence accumulated to date indicates it was being transported," Mandel said through an aide.

See BROWN, A6, Col. 4



By Margaret Thomas—The Washington Post

Attorney Clifford Alexander, left, listens as Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), speaks

BROWN, From A1

State Police Lt. Col. Thomas S. Smith said a preliminary investigation supports this theory and predicted that an FBI study now in progress will buttress it further. "If it doesn't," Smith said, "I'll have to eat crow and we'll have to take a new tack."

Mandel scheduled a press conference for today at 11 a.m. The governor is expected to discuss the explosion in Bel Air and a subsequent blast that ripped open the courthouse in Cambridge, Md., and perhaps to FBI's report.

Smith said the number of bomb threats received in most of Maryland since the deaths of Payne and Featherstone had decreased yesterday, but this was not so in Washington and its suburbs.

All the District's schools were cleared for 35 minutes in the afternoon, in a move authorities said was without precedent here.

Mayor Walter E. Washington said the city "has taken all necessary precautions" and, with Police Chief Jerry V. Wilson, sought to allay fears that the bomb threats might be genuine.

"The Mayor and the chief of police believe the situation might be softened a great deal if the press would responsibly refrain from making a big deal of a lot of idiotic, false telephone calls," Wilson said. He said he saw no "extremely unusual mood" in Washington.

An explosion, apparently

caused by a bomb with a timing device, severely damaged a nightclub on 11th Street NW at 4:15 a.m. yesterday. Police said they had no immediate explanation for the explosion.

A group of national black leaders said they feel there is a relationship between the death of Featherstone and what they consider the disappearance of Brown.

In a news conference, Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.) said the two events "seem to be related." Conyers said he was speaking for 20 Negro politicians, educators and other professionals from across the country.

Conyers said the news conference was not called to speculate about the explosions, but to discourage speculation until a full investigation was completed. Because of the bombings and the disappearance of Brown, he said, the country is "on the edge of another great amount of tension.

"Had Rap Brown been in that demolished car," he said, "it would have opened the door to an incredible kind of confrontation across the country."

He said that some, but not all, of the Negroes for whom he spoke saw no point in taking their worries to Attorney General John Mitchell, who he called the chief architect of the Nixon administration's "Southern and suburban strategy" winning the votes of whites unhappy over Negro disorders.

In talking to "the political

general who is also the Attorney General," Conyers said, some blacks feel that "we're going to the source of the problem."

He said it would be "complete folly" to proceed with Brown's trial on Monday. The trial, on charges of incitement to riot and arson in Cambridge in 1967, was moved to Bel Air at the request of the state and over defense objections.

Harford County Circuit Judge Harry E. Dyer Jr., who is hearing the case in Bel Air, said he expected the proceedings to begin on schedule Monday after a recess he ordered early this week. Selection of a jury is scheduled for Tuesday, after a day of argument on motions. Brown, who is free on \$10,000 bond, is not required to appear until selection of the jury begins.

Brown's attorney, William M. Kunstler, said in New York that he will be in Washington today to attend Featherstone's funeral at the Stewart Funeral Home, 4001 Benning Rd. NE, at 1 p.m.

Kunstler said he would talk to reporters at the airport when he arrives at noon on the 11 a.m. New York shuttle, but would have nothing to say about Brown's case until Monday.

By 5 p.m. yesterday, about 150 people had visited the funeral home to view Featherstone's body, which lay in an open wooden casket dressed in a high-necked jacket made by his wife, Charlotte, a seamstress. The dead man's right arm was missing, lost

in the explosion, and a rose-colored veil covered the do colored veil covered the body.

Available in the funeral home were mimeographed leaflets, marked "approved by Mrs. Ralph Featherstone," declaring that Featherstone and Payne "were murdered in an attempt to kill H. Rap Brown."

The leaflet said that "these killings were a political act directed to black people everywhere," and said the two men killed in the Bel Air explosion "understood that African people are at war with European peoples."

Meanwhile, a coalition of 23 white organizations in Washington denounced the Maryland state police for their handling of the Bel Air bombing case and said press reports of the incident were "irresponsible."

"We believe that Ralph Featherstone and William Payne were killed because they were involved in the black liberation struggle," the coalition declared in a statement issued at a press conference here.

"We believe they were killed by a white racist society that condones violence and practices genocide against third world populations abroad and black and brown people at home."

The group assailed what it termed "uncritical reporting" of the police suggestion that the two men died while deliberately transporting a bomb.

Among the organizations sponsoring the statement

were Women's Liberation, the National Lawyers Guild, Women's Strike for Peace, Jews for Urban Justice, Federal Employees for a Democratic Society and the D.C. Nine Defense Committee.

In Cambridge, police said they expected to have "some kind of a break" in the courthouse bombing case within a day or so. Police said they still are seeking an unidentified young white woman seen in the courthouse the day before the explosion. The woman is not a suspect, but is wanted for questioning, police said.

In the Washington area, in addition to the District schools, the Montgomery Mall shopping center and the Fairfax County courthouse were cleared for short periods because of telephoned bomb threats.

At the State Department, Secretary William P. Rogers was forced to leave his office briefly while security men investigated a bomb warning shouted by two teen-age boys running along C Street shortly after noon. The security men found only a package of weights for a grandfather clock, left there by a custodian.

The Fairfax courthouse was evacuated in response to a call by a man who a secretary said told her: "You better get out of there. The place is going to blow up in two hours. Black Power." The building was searched and the two-hour deadline came and passed without incident. Employees returned to work.