

# Police and Medical Findings Indicate Maryland

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—Gov. Marvin Mandel released today police and medical findings indicating that two men killed by a bomb in their car Monday night had accidentally detonated explosives they were carrying to the scene of the H. Rap Brown hearing at Bel Air, Md.

The data included a preliminary report from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and detailed findings by the Maryland police and state medical authorities.

By releasing at a news conference here the text of a telegram from the F.B.I. director, J. Edgar Hoover, and photographs, diagrams and statements prepared by the state police and medical officials, the Governor apparently sought to counter speculation, particularly among Negroes, that Ralph E. Featherstone and William H. Payne, the victims, had met foul play.

Both men were friends of Mr. Brown, and some speculation by black militants has suggested that Mr. Brown was the intended target of a bombing.

Governor Mandel, a Democrat, was under strong pressure from Negro leaders not to "jump to conclusions." So while the evidence he presented seemed nearly conclusive, he said repeatedly today that "we're not drawing any conclusions, just presenting the evidence."

Mr. Hoover sent the following telegram to Lieut. Col. Thomas S. Smith, the state police chief of operations, who has been leading the bomb investigation:

"Reference your case involving automobile explosion south of Bel Air, Md., on March 9.

Residues typical of and consistent with those solid deposits remaining after detonation of dynamite found on parts of automobile. Not possible from examination of residues to determine brand, percentage strength, amount or type of dynamite. Explosives specialist who conducted on-the-scene examinations of opinion explosion occurred inside automobile in front of front seat on passenger, or right, side.

"An explosive charge so positioned would logically be resting on floorboard. Area of car where explosion occurred does not include glove compartment, dashboard or parts of automobile where explosive charges could have been concealed from view of persons occupying front seat.

### Clock Fragments Found

"Parts of key-wound clock characteristic Westclox manufacture found in automobile debris. Fragments of mercury battery or batteries among items reportedly removed from body of victim William H. Payne. Above clock and battery fragments could represent an electrical firing system for a bomb. Not possible to determine what caused explosive charge to detonate inside car. Additional laboratory examinations being conducted and laboratory report being prepared. Hoover."

This was the first disclosure that clock fragments had been found.

Dr. Werner Spitz of Baltimore, the deputy state medical examiner who performed autopsies, reported that in the case of Mr. Payne, "the pattern and the distribution of the injuries indicated that the deceased was bent forward" in the front passenger seat of the

car "with his arms in close proximity to the explosive, which was located on the right front floorboard."

Mr. Payne's arms and legs were blown off, Dr. Spitz said, and his lower face apparently took the full force of the blast.

The medical examiner said the explosive charge "could not have been located under the seat to cause the same type of injuries and yet leave the back and buttocks intact."

He said that a small one-and-one-half-volt mercury battery of the type used in hearing aids had been removed from inside the base of Mr. Payne's skull and that lacerations had disclosed a straight trajectory through his mouth, indicating that the victim had been bending forward over the explosive device when it detonated.

Dr. Spitz said short lengths of electrical wire had been removed from the victim's chest

cavity. He said all the evidences of explosive force on the body of Mr. Featherstone, who was driving the car, placed the source of the explosion at floor level in front of Mr. Payne's seat.

Colonel Smith and Sgt. Wilbert Traverse, a laboratory specialist, showed enlarged photographs of pieces of the car wreckage and said that the force of the explosion had bent outward the bright aluminum door sill moulding on Mr. Payne's side only at the forward section, indicating that the explosion had occurred at his feet, not beneath the seat.

Sergeant Traverse said the glove compartment door had been bowed upward. He said it would have been buckled outward by a blast within the glove compartment, under the dashboard or in the engine compartment, and buckled inward by an explosion under the seat.

## Victims Were Carrying a Bomb

The Governor said he could give "no answer" as to why the men were driving away from Bel Air at the time of the explosion, which took place on U.S. Route 1 about a mile from the town. He said the speedometer of the car had been "jammed" by the explosion at 55 miles an hour.

The possibility that Mr. Payne could have groped under his

seat for a dropped cigarette or other item and accidentally discovered a concealed bomb, detonating it in some way by pulling it forward onto the floorboard, remained "the only loophole in our evidence," a police spokesman said today.

Asked about the probability of this theory, Colonel Smith commented: "It's possible. We are still investigating."