

Tennessee

Conference challenge looms

● MEMPHIS — President Carter might have to contend with a challenge to his plans for a piecemeal national health insurance policy when he arrives for this weekend's Democratic National Conference.

The Democratic Agenda, a coalition of labor, blacks, feminists and political leaders, is planning a showdown on the issue during the three-day gathering in Memphis, which starts Friday.

Michael Harrington, the group's leader, predicted that the coalition will get the 406 signatures — 25 percent of the 1,633 delegates — needed to force the issue to the conference floor.

The petition must be turned in by Tuesday in order to qualify for second priority and Sunday's discussions. Resolutions qualified after Tuesday will be third in priority and might not be considered.

President Carter favors a national health insurance program, but wants to enact legislation one piece at a time as economic conditions permit.

William Farris, chairman of the Tennessee Democratic Party and chairman of the convention's host committee, downplayed the potential split over issues.

"I don't think we're going to have any major fights," Farris said Monday. "There will be some differing opinions, but I don't think it will be any more than that."

Lane's cult pay reported

● LOS ANGELES — Despite earlier claims he was working without pay for the Peoples Temple, attorney Mark Lane was actually being paid more than \$10,000 to launch a public-relations "counteroffensive" against critics of the cult, the Los Angeles Times reported Monday.