

Gov. Mandel Is Suspect In a Corruption Probe

Annapolis, Md.

Governor Marvin Mandel revealed yesterday that he has been told formally by the U.S. attorney for Maryland that he is a criminal suspect in the federal grand jury investigation of political corruption.

The 56-year-old Democratic successor to Spiro T. Agnew made the announcement at a news conference but refused to discuss the matter beyond issuing a brief statement acknowledging receipt Wednesday of a letter from Jervis S. Finney, the federal prosecutor in Baltimore.

In the statement, he said Finney's letter was the first formal acknowledgement that he was involved in the investigation, which has been focusing for more

than a year on some of his closest friends and political fund raisers.

Newspapers have been reporting that the investigation deals with an alleged pattern of favors between the governor and his friends, whose business interests have been subject to state decisions during the 6½ years since Mandel succeeded Agnew.

Mandel is the fourth known political office-holder to become a formal target of the federal investigation which began in 1972.

To date, the probe has resulted in Agnew's resignation as vice president after pleading no contest to income tax evasion and the jailing of two county executives, Dal Anderson of Baltimore and Joseph W. Alton of Anne Arundel.

Associated Press