

# FBI Grounds Flying Suspect

Federal authorities believe they have grounded the polite robber who preferred small town banks, including one in the Missouri Bootheel, and who then escaped using airplanes and even a homecoming parade.

Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation arrested Dennis Leo Lehman, 41 years old, in a Phoenix, Ariz., motel yesterday on charges of robbing the Bank of Kennett, Mo., of \$25,000 in mid-January, then escaping in a small airplane from a landing strip across the street from the bank.

He is charged also with the \$30,000 holdup of a bank in

Arcata, Calif., on Feb. 14, in which the robber fled in an automobile, then transferred to a small plane to escape.

Federal authorities say he is a suspect in the \$55,000 holdup last October of a bank in Bridgman, Mich. In that one, the robber held up the bank just as a high school homecoming parade was about to begin, and he melted into the crowd.

A decision has not yet been made whether to return Lehman to Missouri for trial of the Kennett bank robbery or to California in the Arcata holdup, the FBI said.

Lehman, who served three years in a Washington correc-

tional center for bank robbery, had been living in the Chicago area and began taking flying lessons last October, shortly after the Bridgman bank was robbed, the FBI said.

The FBI announced it had recovered the small Piper Cherokee single-engine plane used in the Kennett robbery. It was found last night at the Franklin Flying Field near Franklin, Ind., a short distance from Indianapolis.

Agents said that a charge of interstate flight with a stolen aircraft may also be considered against Lehman, because they believe he rented the plane under an alias in

Sarasota, Fla., just before the Kennett robbery.

Hours after the California robbery, authorities found a small plane abandoned near Fort Bragg, Calif. It had been purchased by Lehman for \$10,000 shortly before, they said.

Police Chief Michael Pedde of Bridgman, Mich., said that last Oct. 10, a clean-shaven man fitting Lehman's description entered the Farmers and Merchants National Bank about 6 p.m., produced a .45 cal. pistol and ordered two employes to stuff currency from the safe into a bowling ball bag.