

Mark Lane Is Investigated for Alleged Grand Theft

By **ROBERT LINDSEY**

Special to The New York Times

LOS ANGELES, April 25 — The Los Angeles County District Attorney's office is investigating Mark Lane, the lawyer and author, in connection with allegations of possible grand theft in his association with the People's Temple.

Steve Ramirez, a District Attorney's investigator, said today that his department was weighing the filing of a criminal complaint against Mr. Lane but added that because of departmental policy he could not comment further.

He said, however, that the investiga-

tion pertained to allegations that Mr. Lane accepted \$7,500 from an officer of the cult last November after saying that he needed it to buy a copy of an unpublished article damaging to the People's Temple when, in fact, Mr. Ramirez said, Mr. Lane already possessed the article.

He said the investigation was initiated after the publication of an article about Mr. Lane by The New York Times on Feb. 4 in which details of the alleged transaction were reported. Mr. Ramirez said that the investigation had confirmed the details of the transaction.

Mr. Lane could not be reached for com-

ment today, but in the past he has denied doing anything wrong.

Mr. Lane is a onetime New York State Assemblyman whose allegations of conspiracies in the assassinations of President Kennedy and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. have received wide publicity. His role in the People's Temple affair has been the subject of controversy since more than 900 members of the cult died in Guyana last November.

He has said that he was retained by the late Rev. Jim Jones as an adviser and to investigate an alleged conspiracy against the cult by the Central Intelligence Agen-

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 1979

cy. But he has been assailed by some former members of the group for not disclosing information, received from Teri Buford, a former aide to Mr. Jones, that Mr. Jones had gone mad and was preparing for mass suicide and murders.

Affidavit Is Cited

According to an affidavit in possession of the District Attorney's office, Jean Brown, an officer of the temple, declared that two weeks before the mass deaths in Guyana she paid Mr. Lane \$7,500 to obtain a copy from an unidentified man of an article critical of the temple. The article was written by Gordon Lindsay, a free-lance writer, for The National Inquirer.

Subsequently, The New York Times reported in February, Mr. Lane acknowl-

edged that he had the article in his possession at the time that he saw the cult officer in November, and that he had not had to pay any money for it. He did not disclose his source of the article. It was never published by The National Inquirer.

Before the suicides and murders in Guyana, Mr. Lane was a vocal spokesman for the cult, describing its commune as a socialist paradise being persecuted by the C.I.A. Since then, he has described Mr. Jones as a paranoid murderer and has been highly critical of the cult.

Mr. Lane is now in Los Angeles on a lecture tour.

Bodies to Be Transferred

DOVER, Del., April 25 (UPI) — The

bodies of 299 persons who died last November in Jonestown will be transferred from Dover Air Force Base here to military bases in California, a spokesman for the air base said today.

The spokesman, First Lieut. Joseph Saxon, said that the transfer would cost \$55,000.

No decision has been made on what to do with the 248 unidentified bodies still in Dover.

F.B.I. Fills Laboratory Post

WASHINGTON, April 25 (AP) — Bell P. Herndon, a 28-year veteran of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was named today as assistant director of the bureau's laboratory division to replace Thomas S. Kelleher, who is retiring. Mr. Herndon is a native of New York City.