

Rev. Jones' Attorneys Lane And Garry Are Still Sparring

By Ron Javers

Former Peoples Temple lawyers Mark Lane and Charles Garry were bitter foes long before they flew to Jonestown with Representative Leo Ryan and his party, and their mutual flight for survival through the jungle apparently did little to cement friendship.

Garry — who staunchly defended Jones and the temple before the killings a year ago and now insists that he was duped by Jones — has been speaking before lawyers' groups around the country describing Lane as the "catalyst" who triggered the tragedy at Jonestown by assuring the cult leader that he was the target of a vast conspiracy.

Garry obtained a tape of a rousing speech Lane made to temple members in San Francisco just a month before the massacre.

On that tape, which was made available to the Chronicle, Lane told the cultists that Jones was "a saint" who was being persecuted by the FBI, CIA, IRS, the U.S. Post Office and the news media.

Garry also displayed the confidential memorandum Lane wrote to Jones two months before the mass killings. It begins:

"Even a cursory examination reveals that there has been a coordinated campaign to destroy the Peoples Temple and to impugn the reputation of its leader."

Despite the memorandum, Lane disputes Garry's charge that he contributed to Jones's fears of government conspiracy against him.

"I think really the strain has been too much on poor Charles," Lane said.

What has happened, he said, is that the "news media have been utilized by U.S. intelligence organizations and the intelligence organizations have been utilized by the media" to ruin the reputation of Mark Lane.

Despite the acrimony between the two lawyers, it was Garry who

indirectly involved Lane with the temple in the first place.

Garry was seeking a writer who could counteract the negative publicity the Temple had been receiving in the Bay Area when he contacted Los Angeles author Donald Freed about the prospect of doing a favorable biography of Jones and his church.

Freed visited Jonestown but declined the book offer. Instead, he told his longtime friend, Mark Lane, about the bizarre sect in the jungle and its leader who spoke of a farflung government conspiracy to destroy him.

Shortly thereafter, unbeknownst to Garry, Lane flew to Jonestown, talked to Jones and later prepared a memo confirming Jones's worst fears about the purported conspiracy.

He also requested a \$20,000 retainer to defend the Temple against a government plot that, by most accounts, existed only in the mind of Jim Jones.

Lane was no stranger to conspiracy theory. He gained national fame by challenging government accounts of the slayings of both President John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. and earned substantial sums on books and lectures that alleged dark plots in both assassinations.

Now Lane's conduct in other aspects of the Peoples Temple case has become the subject of a formal complaint to the New York Bar Association.

In an interview, Lane insisted that no such complaint had been filed against him.

But the complaint — though held "confidential" by the New York Bar, which would consider such matters — is quite real to Jack Sando, the Washington attorney who filed it. Sando asked for an investigation, after reading a news story which quoted Lane saying he had not eaten any of the cheese sandwiches offered by the cultists to the Ryan party because he had reason to believe they were

drugged.

Sando told The Chronicle that he sent his complaint to the bar last January. He said bar officials wrote back that they had received his complaint. But he still has not heard what, if anything, has come of it.

Sando said he had been "outraged" at Lane's conduct in Guyana as described by Washington Post reporter Charles Krause.

Krause, one of the reporters who accompanied Ryan to Jonestown, wrote that Lane told him after the massacre that he had not eaten any of the sandwiches, but instead had overcome his hunger by eating coughdrops.

Garry confirms that account, saying that Lane told him on the night the two lawyers spent huddled in the jungle after escaping Jonestown that he believed the sandwiches were drugged, but that he had not warned anyone in Ryan's party.

There never was any evidence that the sandwiches were drugged, and for his part, Lane has repeatedly denied saying they were. "I never even saw any cheese sandwiches," he told The Chronicle.

He added that he intended to sue several other publications for libel because of stories written about him in the Peoples Temple case.

Lane told The Chronicle he had retained prominent New York attorney Jonathan W. Lubell to represent him in the libel matters.

But in a telephone interview, Lubell declared, "I am not representing him. I never agreed to represent him. There must have been some misunderstanding."

The matter of the cheese sandwiches now rests with the New York Bar's grievance committee in Brooklyn.

Frank Finnerty, the grievance committee's chief counsel, told The Chronicle that "particularly complicated" complaints often take years to resolve.