

FBI Investigates Reports by Lane Of Cult's Plans

The FBI is checking reports by Memphis-based attorney Mark Lane that members of the People's Temple will use an \$11 million "war chest" to assassinate government leaders, critical journalists and cult defectors, a Washington federal agent said today.

Lane was quoted today as saying the FBI and Secret Service are concerned the plan might be put into effect during the Dec. 8-10 Democratic Mid-Term Convention in Memphis.

An FBI spokesman said neither the FBI nor the Secret Service has any specific information about a plan by the People's Temple to attempt to disrupt the convention. President Carter and Vice President Walter Mondale are scheduled to appear at the convention.

"Lane did not give us any specific information about a plan to disrupt the convention nor does the FBI have any independent information about such a move," the FBI spokesman said.

April Ferguson, Lane's assistant in Memphis, said, however, the FBI had approached the attorney about the possibility of an assassination attempt during the convention, and not vice versa.

"Mark had not thought about the cult leaders possibly taking advantage of having all the political leaders together at the mini-Democratic convention here next weekend," Mrs. Ferguson said. "It was the FBI and Secret Service people who brought up the possibility to him."

Mrs. Ferguson, interviewed today at Lane's home at 1177 Central, said the attorney is expected to return to the city from New York tonight.

Lane was in Guyana and fled into the jungle at the beginning of last week's mass murder-suicide ritual. He had been there to serve as an attorney for the People's Temple during the visit of U.S. Rep. Leo Ryan, D-Calif., who was slain by members of the cult.

Several empty Kool-Aid packages (powdered soft drink was used by cult members to mix with the cyanide poison administered to the suicide victims) were found in recent days at Lane's home and office, and his whereabouts have been closely guarded since.

He made his statements about the assassination plan in an interview ~~last~~ with ABC-TV's Barbara Walters.

Lane reportedly told her he learned of the assassination plan from a woman he said was second in command to sect leader Jim Jones. Lane said the plan is being financed with \$11 million, and \$8 million of the money is in Swiss banks. He said he knows the bank account numbers.

Mrs. Ferguson said Lane is still concerned about the FBI's finding a note on the body of cult-leader Jones with a Memphis phone number on it. She said officials told Lane the number was for a man now in prison who was offered a contract to rob the Lane home and office.

"We know that man is in jail and our only concern now is that the contract might have been passed on to someone else," she said.

Because of that concern, she said, new locks have been installed on the doors at the Central home, a guard dog is being sought, and residents are not opening the door to callers unless the callers are well known and properly identified.

"I think the government agents were just considering the possibility that something that like could happen and were doing a good job by thinking of it and taking precautions," said Mrs. Ferguson.

Harold: Glad to have your comments & the StL & Knx clips. No--I keep copy of every clip I send you, obtained from extra newspaper. Best, Phil.