

Lawyer Lane Says 'Gift' of Kool-Aid Is Threat on Life

By KEN GARLAND

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Memphis attorney Mark Lane has received what he feels is a threat to his life because of the recent ritual-mass suicide of more than 900 persons in Jonestown, Guyana, police said today.

Police said they went to Lane's home at 1177 Central at 7:30 last night after receiving information that Lane had found four packages of Kool-Aid in a plastic bag in the door of his home early Saturday morning, police said.

Lane confirmed that he had found the Kool-Aid and feared it represented a threat to his life. Capt. G.S. Willis, one of the officers who went to Lane's home, said.

The officers said they tasted the powder and that it did not appear to contain any substances other than Kool-Aid.

The cult members in Guyana drank cyanide mixed with Kool-Aid.

Lane told the officers he felt his life was being threatened because of his connection with the members of the People's Temple religious cult, who killed U.S. Congressman Leo Ryan and four members of his party in Guyana Nov. 18 and then committed mass suicide.

Lane, who was a legal consultant for the People's Temple, was visiting Guyana along with the Ryan party during its investigation of complaints that members of the temple were being held in Guyana against their will.

The officers said Lane also told them Michael LaFranci, an inmate at the Shelby County Penal Farm, had received a phone call from a woman asking LaFranci to break into Lane's Memphis home. He said LaFranci's name was found in the Jonestown cabin belonging to the Rev. Jim Jones, leader of the People's Temple cult.

Lane also told officers his home in Washington, D.C., has been broken into.

Lane, the attorney for James Earl Ray, said he has reported these incidents to Dick Blay, assistant special agent in charge of the Memphis office of the FBI, and Richard M. Green, a special agent with the Memphis office of the Secret Service.

The attorney could not be reached for comment today.