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Nov. 6, 1978

Congressman Leo J. Ryan
1720 South Amphlett Blvd.
Suite 219
San Mateo, California 94402

Dear Congressman Ryan:

It is my understanding that you and another member of Congress and possibly two members of the staff of the International Relations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives wish to visit Jonestown, Guyana due to complaints that have been made about the project there. It is also my understanding that you or members of the staff of the Committee have been briefed by persons hostile to the People's Temple and the project in Jonestown. It would seem to me both fair and appropriate for you to seek information from the other side as well before embarking upon a trip to Jonestown. Since I represent the People's Temple in various matters, I should be happy to meet with you and tell you of my experiences in Jonestown and with Jim Jones and with the People's Temple.

I have been informed that you wish to tour Jonestown during the middle of November. My client has asked that I be present while you make that tour. It seems entirely appropriate and proper that I should be there on that occasion. Accordingly, I placed a telephone call to your San Mateo office at 9 a.m. on Friday, November 3, 1978 to make arrangements for your trip to Jonestown and to discuss the entire matter with you. Your side stated that you would return my telephone call but I have not as yet heard directly from you. However, I did receive a telephone call from Jim Schollaert who told me that he was a member of the Committee's staff. I informed him that I would be engaged during the middle of November in that I would be representing several witnesses who were to appear in public testimony before the House Select Committee on Assassinations in Washington, D.C. from the middle until the end of November. I suggested to Mr. Schollaert that if you called me we could no doubt work out a date which would be satisfactory to all of us.

You should understand that Jonestown is a private community and that while they appear willing to host your visit there under certain circumstances, courtesy requires that arrangements be made in advance of your visit. For example: there are no hotels or restaurants in the area and you would be the guest of the community during your entire visit. The people of Jonestown have expressed a willingness to care for your needs and the needs of your staff and associates but they suggest, and I certainly agree, that a date which would be convenient to all of us should be arrived at through discussion.

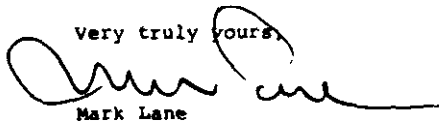
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You should be informed that various agencies of the U.S. Government have somewhat consistently oppressed the People's Temple and sought to interfere with the People's Temple, a religious institution. I am now exploring that matter fully in order to bring an action against those agencies of the U.S. Government that have violated the rights of my client. Some of the members of the People's Temple have had to flee from the U.S. in order to experience a fuller opportunity to enjoy rights which were not available to them within the U.S. You should know that two different countries, neither one of which has entirely friendly relations with the U.S., have offered refuge to the 1200 Americans now residing in Jonestown. Thus far the People's Temple has not accepted either of those offers but it is their position that if religious persecution continues and if it is furthered through a witch hunt conducted by any branch of the U.S. Government, that they will be constrained to consider accepting either of the offers. You may judge, therefore, the important consequences which may flow from further persecution of People's Temple and which might very well result in the creation of a most embarrassing situation for the U.S. Government.

I hope that this matter can be resolved in an amicable fashion and I continue to wait for a telephone call from you so that we may discuss this matter more fully.

Very truly yours,



Mark Lane

ML:br
cc: Jean Brown

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