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**RYMUR**  
**(JONESTOWN)**

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**NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS**

**VOLUME 8**

Volume 8

MASSACRE

MASSACRE

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Knockout drops in temple death drink

By Peter H. King  
Examiner Staff Writer

CHARLESTON, S.C. — The lethal drink of Jonestown — cyanide and Kool-Aid — also contained a hypnotic drug to render the followers of Jim Jones unconscious before the poison took hold and the writhing began.

Dr. Lynn Crook, a pathologist who visited the settlement three days after the death ritual, told The Examiner he found empty bottles of chloral hydrate scattered about the vat where more than 900 persons lined up to die.

He said the presence of chloral hydrate — commonly called knockout drops — in the potion would painlessly put partakers to sleep in less than two minutes. Cyanide takes up to 10 minutes to kill.

Crook theorized that Jones could have used chloral hydrate in the past to set up his congregation for the ultimate act.

"I have no proof," he said. "but I wonder if these folks thought they were just taking knockout drops again without knowing about the cyanide."

A pathologist at the Medical University of South Carolina here, Crook said he was sent to Jonestown only because he was "in the wrong place at the right time."

He had gone to Guyana expecting to treat survivors on a medical flight out of the country. There was an initial report that a poison that hampers coagulation of the blood had been used in the murder-suicide. Crook was to go on the medical flight because he is an expert in that field.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

20 S.F. Examiner

San Francisco, Ca.

Date: 11-29-78  
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Character:  
or SF 89-250  
Classification: 89  
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But once in South America, Crook was asked by the embassy to go to Jonestown with an Air Force colonel. They were to look for any signs of violence and to recommend what should be done with the bodies.

At the incredible site, Crook said he found no evidence of gunplay, except for wounds in the heads of Jones and a woman found in the cult leader's bed, later identified as Jones' nurse, Amy Moore.

"The bodies were all rather orderly," he said in an interview here yesterday.

Crook said it appeared obvious that the Jonestown settlers "had practiced this sort of thing in some form or another before."

Crook nevertheless remained convinced that armed guards threatened what he called "lead

poisoning" to force members to drink the lethal liquid.

He said the 900-plus bodies had been clustered into family groups of about six. The closer to the vat the groups were, the tighter they were gathered, leading Crook to believe the knockout drops worked quickly on most members.

He said most of the victims had lain down to die. "It reminded me of a beach party," Crook said.

The iron tub used for the liquid was surrounded by empty containers. Crook said he found empty one-pound bottles of powdered cyanide, one-gallon jugs of chloral hydrate, and spent packets of Kool-Aid. According to Crook, chloral hydrate is a harmless hypnotic drug commonly used in medicine. He said that when swallowed it will quickly drop the consumer into a sleep that lasts about a half-hour.

"It was quite the rage at cocktail parties 30 or 40 years ago," Crook said. "You put this in a friend's drink and watch them pass out."

The drugs also sound as though they could have been used in the death-to-life stunts used by Jones to awe his following, Crook noted.

Crook wondered if Jones might have used chloral hydrate in previous practices of the mass suicide: members drinking poison and passing out, apparently dead, only to resurrect in 30 minutes or so.

"If this was the case," said Crook, "it might have been possible to line up 50 folks (in Jonestown) and get them to start drinking."

Crook has little doubt about the veracity of reports of armed guards at the death ritual despite his inability to gather any evidence pointing to violence.

He said many of the victims were lying on blankets and covered with blankets: "I doubt that they took the poison and then went inside to get their blankets."

He theorized that Jones' reported talk of the dignity of dying, the painless effect of the lethal liquid, and the shock of seeing so many others commit suicide all contributed to the ritual.

"The guards probably got it going real good and then mass hysteria took over," he said.

Crook said reports that another sort of drink mix — not Kool-Aid — was used were incorrect. "All I know is I saw the packages there," he said. "It was Kool-Aid. The same kind of stuff I buy for my kids."

# INQUIRY ON DEATHS STARTING IN GUYANA

**A Coroner's Jury Will Determine if  
Murders Were Committed —  
Survivors in Jeopardy**

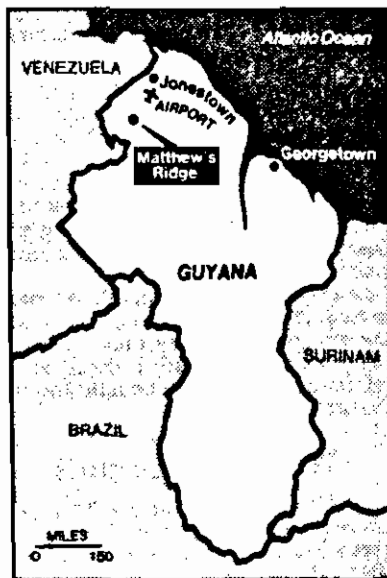
**By NICHOLAS M. HORROCK**

*Special to The New York Times*

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, Dec. 12 — A coroner's jury, sitting at the remote northwest community of Matthews Ridge, will begin an investigation tomorrow to determine whether any of the 909 deaths at Jonestown on Nov. 18 constitute murder under Guyanese law.

If this five-member jury determines that a crime was committed, it could radically change the status of several of the survivors of the tragedy who are still in this country and possibly the status of others in the United States.

The hearing may also shed new light on just how many of the Rev. Jim Jones's



The New York Times/Dec. 13, 1978

**Guyanese investigation will be held  
in Matthews Ridge, a remote area.**

followers in the People's Temple cult actually chose to end their own lives voluntarily.

The United States authorities are coordinating with the Guyanese officials on the inquest and have agreed to withhold final determinations on examinations made at Dover, Del., until the Guyanese jury can decide the issues. This has delayed burial of some of the people at Dover, the police authorities said.

## Marks of Injections

The police and medical authorities are expected to testify that they found more than 70 bodies at Jonestown that showed the marks of recent injections that suggested that those people may not have voluntarily ingested the cyanide and fruit-flavored drink that killed them.

The police are also expected to introduce testimony that may help the jury determine whether Mr. Jones took his own life or was shot by an assailant in the last minutes of the suicide ritual.

The police may also disclose the contents of a letter that they found in a valise full of cash that three survivors said they were ordered to carry to an unnamed embassy. News reports have suggested that this letter was addressed to the Soviet Embassy here. Its contents could well reveal what arrangements Mr. Jones may have had with representatives of the Soviet Government.

There is considerable speculation in legal circles here that the jury will rule that a large number of the deaths were actually murder. In addition to the bodies with the injection marks, there were more than 260 children found dead at the scene and the jury is expected to rule on whether they could freely have chosen to die with their parents.

"I found a 2-year-old child with injection marks," said one Government official privately. "Could that child have voluntarily taken his own life?"

Police sources speculate that there may have been unrelated violence in the final hours when those still living became embroiled in a dispute over the vast amount of cash and jewelry that Mr. Jones had cached away.

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The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
Washington Star-News \_\_\_\_\_  
Daily News (New York) \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times **A-1** \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Atlanta Constitution \_\_\_\_\_  
The Los Angeles Times \_\_\_\_\_

Date **DEC 13 1978**



Associated Press

### There were lots of drugs in Jim Jones' refrigerator

The kids' stuff is the worst. The toys and small shoes of children who died here.

Maybe some of the adults, or even all of the adults, died here for what they believed in. But surely, not the kids. They didn't die with ~~Jim Jones~~ because he exhorted them to.

They died because someone — their parents, a doctor, a nurse — pumped poison into them with a needle.

The kids' stuff is worse, but it's all horrifying. The old peoples' stuff — an expensive chrome wheelchair over there, a blonde-wood cane here — that's devastating, too.

There's a notebook. My first impulse is to grab it and read it. But that seems ghoulish and I

hesitate.

On the other hand, it may be an important document — it may contain the secret of Jim Jones, what made him what he was, what gave him the power of death.

I grab it and read.

It is only neat, precise lecture notes, apparently kept faithfully day by day: "Aug. 30. Chinese Chairman Wu (sic) is

talking to the shah of Iran while the capital is on strike."

"Sept. 5. Somoza's time is short-lived...."

"Sept. 16. The rise of fascism in Italy...."

It goes on and on like that.

I pick up a letter. It is written in a girlish hand on lined three-hole binder paper.

"Hi, Sherry," it begins. "I was really glad and surprised to hear from you. I'm so glad that things have worked out for you."

I know I can't finish reading that one.

Groups of reporters are being shuttled from an airstrip at Matthew's Ridge, 25 miles away, and there is a schedule to keep if we are to get back before dark.

One of the two dozen or so Guyanese soldiers guarding the death camp urges me to see what must be seen, and get back to the helicopter. He emphasizes this point by shifting his grip on a sub-barreled machine gun.

I get the point.

A laundry, a cook house. In the laundry, bags of unwashed clothes.

Staggering through ochre-colored mud toward what appears to be a warehouse, I find a survivor:

A tiny, scrawny kitten.

Two Japanese journalists discover the kitten at almost the same time. One shoots 10 or 12 pictures of the kitten. The kitten looks hungry, mews pathetically.

The photographer grins. He's made some nice pictures. We move on.

On the back stoop, just beside the warehouse, about 30 yards from where the cyanide potion was distributed last Saturday, is a cardboard carton with a

flap torn open.

The carton contains hundreds of packages — not of Kool-aid, the drink that has been reported as used in the cyanide drink — but of something called "Fla-Vor-Aid."

Similar to Kool-Aid, but not Kool-Aid. I've come across a big scoop.

I pocket a single envelope of the stuff. I feel guilty because I've become a ghoul and a looter, and I put it back. Then, once again, I pick up the envelope and put it in my pocket.

Why, I have no idea.

Later, I discover there is other life in Jonestown beside the kitten and the soldier and the newsmen.

In a garden beside a wood-frame house — a barracks, or an apartment — a small, healthy-looking pig is rooting contentedly. Not far away is a black duck.

Several hundred yards away are about 50 smaller cottages, each about 12 by 20 feet, all also neatly built. They are freshly painted in pastel colors — green,

blue, pink and beige. Another reporter gets a peek inside one, and says there are a dozen bunks in the place.

The cottage said to have belonged to Jones is about 100 yards away from the central pavilion. It is perhaps twice as large as the small cottages, but certainly not a palace.

Like nearly all the others, it has been sealed by Guyanese soldiers or police. But on the small veranda, stuff and junk is littered about.

Feeling no guilt at all, now, I kneel and go through it. I find several plastic syringes and a number of bottles of drugs — Penthedine, Penothal I (aren't these truth syrums?) Thorazine and Valium (tranquilizers) and morphine sulfate.

Now one of the soldiers is moving us along toward the heliport. In ten minutes, we are airborne.

From the air, the jungle clearing in which Jonestown is built looks peaceful and almost pretty.

And in the air, moving away from Jonestown at 150 m.p.h., we find the stink of death suddenly gone.



# Toll in Guyana Jumps to 780

## U.S. TEAMS FIND HUNDREDS MORE BODIES IN CULT SETTLEMENT

By Jeremlah O'Leary  
and Henry S. Bradsher  
Washington Star Staff Writer

GEORGETOWN, Guyana — American troops removing the mass suicide-murder victims at the People's Temple settlement at Jonestown now have found 775 bodies, nearly twice as many as had been thought earlier, United States officials said today.

They said the toll may exceed 800. The U.S. Embassy here was informed by radio at 11 a.m. EST that the original body count of just over 400 made by Guyanese police and defense forces now has been found to be

seriously in error. The number of additional bodies at the settlement where the Rev. Jim Jones ordered all his followers to join him in committing suicide last Saturday may now approximate the more than 800 American passports that were found in a locked box at Jonestown.

GRAVES REGISTRATION troops of the U.S. Army reported by radio from the scene of the horror that they found many bodies, including children, underneath the corpses of their parents and other members of the People's Temple.

U.S. officials have been troubled from the first by the insistence of Guyana officials that only 400-odd bodies had been counted in the farming community.

In Washington, the head of the State Department's task force said that the number of bodies now counted plus the number of known survivors "seems to be in the vicinity of what other sources indicate was

the number of persons in Jonestown last Saturday" more than 800.

The official, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State John A. Bushnell, said that there is no trace of any additional survivors still in the jungle around Jonestown but the search is continuing. The United States is providing logistical support to a battalion of approximately 350 Guyanese defense forces troops still searching the region while U.S. helicopters fly overhead.

### BUSHNELL SAID 870 passports

have been recovered from Jonestown, possibly including some duplications. Six hundred single beds were counted in the community, and a recent petition of support for the late Jim Jones contained between 600 and 700 names. Based on these indications, it now appeared that virtually everyone was accounted for.

Bushnell said approximately 485 bodies had been moved by U.S. military personnel from Jonestown by 11 a.m. today. Twenty more have been bagged for movement and 270 more

have been counted. This totals 775. Five other cult members died in Georgetown on Saturday.

Between 70 and 80 survivors were in the cult's Georgetown office or at the airport where Rep. Leo Ryan and four other Americans were killed Saturday, and fled into the jungle, but have since been found.

He said the U.S. government plans to turn the bodies over to "the normal commercial funeral system" after identification and processing at Dover, Del. "We'll be in the middle," Bushnell said of critics who think the U.S. government should not have met

See CULT, A-4

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The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
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The National Observer \_\_\_\_\_  
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Date 11-24-78

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# CULT

Continued From A-1

any of the costs caused by the mass suicides and those who think the U.S. government should provide for final burial, Bushnell noted.

Any unidentifiable or unclaimed bodies will be buried by the government in the Dover area.

He said the Department of Defense has spent between \$2 and \$3 million on the operation so far.

EMBASSY officials have been working night and day trying to match up the passports with the known and identified dead. So far U.S. and Guyanese officials have been able to identify only 200, but until this morning no one was aware that the death toll could be nearly twice the figure that officials have been using all week.

It had been estimated, when officials had put the toll at just over 400 dead in the bizarre suicide-murder rite, that the evacuation of the Jonestown fatalities might be completed by Sunday. Now the American Joint Task Force expects the task to take much longer.

The discovery of the additional bodies added to the near-incomprehensible horrors uncovered at the cult settlement, but it also helped to clear up some of the mystery caused by earlier indications that there were many more hundreds of persons living at the settlement and the discovery of the more than 800 passports.

GEORGETOWN WAS beginning to seethe with rumors that the Rev. Jones might have been carrying out individual killings of untrusted followers at the commune he founded four years ago in the rain forest 150 miles from Guyana's capital. Guyanese officials said there was no evidence of any such killings, but they too were unable to account for the difference between the number of bodies and the number of passports.

Police Commissioner Lloyd Barker and Minister of Information Shirley Field-Ridley said there was some evidence that an unknown number of Jones' followers may have escaped into the jungle because there was evidence of foot travel along paths leading to Amerindian villages in the region. But CID Chief Skip Roberts said today he seriously doubted whether very many survivors had taken flight when Jones used the commune loudspeaker to summon his followers for their last assembly.

A handful of People's Temple followers escaped death by various means when Jones announced that everyone was going to die and ordered the fatal potion of cyanide and tranquilizers mixed with Cool-Aid administered to all. The discovery today that many children, previously uncounted among the dead, were lying under other bodies is not inconsistent with the fact that Jones ordained that the children should die first.

THE SURVIVORS include an elderly woman who was overlooked because she was in the bathroom, a 76-year-old man who wandered away without being stopped by Jones' guards and a handful of young men who escaped by hiding until the mass suicides were completed.

The suicides came after Temple members had killed Rep. Ryan and four other Americans in his investigating group at Port Kaituma, about 7 miles from Jonestown last Saturday.

Meanwhile, a Peoples Temple member who escaped the suicides today told United Press International that when the hundreds of cultists

were told their fate was death by poisoning, only one woman tried to object.

Jones' followers shouted down the protester and branded her a "traitor," the witness said.

The witness to the suicide ritual, Odell Rhodes, 36, of Detroit, said Jones calmly decreed death for his followers last Saturday, and they obeyed his command.

Infants and children were first in line at a table in the group's assembly hall, Rhodes said, where a nurse squirted suicide poison down their throats by syringe, then gave them a grape drink for a chaser.

"The first adult to die was a young woman who went up with a baby in her arms, had the poison shot down her throat, walked into a field and sat down and died," said Rhodes, who managed to escape when he was sent with the nurse to get a stethoscope.

Jones called a meeting minutes after Rep. Ryan and his party had left Jonestown for the Port Kaituma airstrip.

"They will never reach the United States and we will all commit suicide," Rhodes quoted Jones as saying.

JONES ASKED if there was any objection, Rhodes said. Only one woman spoke up. She said suicide was not the only option, that the cultists could go to the Soviet Union or Cuba.

Rhodes said she was shouted down with cries of "traitor!"

Rhodes said the poison worked quickly and each cultist died within four to five minutes — a brief period of agony.

"It was evident that this was not a drill," Rhodes said. "People started going into convulsions, foam came from their lips and many were crying."

The group became panicky, and Jones shouted into the camp's loud-speaker system: "You must die with dignity."

Rhodes said he leaned against the fence while waiting his turn in line and thought about trying to get out of there. At that time the commune's doctor, Dr. Larry Schacht, called out for a nurse to bring a stethoscope, so Rhodes followed her past the guards and walked to the nursing station.

The nurse told him to look for the stethoscope there while she looked in the doctor's office.

He went out the back door and hid until night, when he escaped through the jungle.

"I have no idea how many survivors there are, nor how many people were at the Peoples Temple," said Rhodes, a slender black man who described himself as a former drug addict rehabilitated by the Jones organization.

One of the aluminum caskets that arrived at Dover Air Force Base yesterday contained what were positively identified as the remains of the cult leader who triggered the mass deaths, scotching rumors that the body might be that of a double.

THE COFFIN, marked simply "Rev. Jimmie Jones, 13-B," was unloaded last night. A team of 10 FBI fingerprint specialists concluded that the corpse was Jones.

Former cult members in San Francisco had said they feared Jones directed the mass suicide and then fled with a "revenge squad" bent on killing the people who had brought on his downfall.

Some mystery was developing over the fact that most of the suicide victims returned to the United States were young persons and children — although an 108-year-old man was among the victims. There were boxes of Social Security checks but no old people to go with them.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Some of 780 Forced To Drink Witness Says Most Waited Turn Quietly

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP) — A man who saw hundreds die in the biggest mass suicide in recent history said yesterday there was some hysteria and confusion as parents saw their children writhe in the throes of death from poisoning at the Jonestown settlement.

But Odell Rhodes of Detroit said most people quietly waited their turn to die. He said he saw perhaps 200, of the nearly 800 who died, drink cyanide or have it administered forcibly.

Rhodes said there was no panic or emotional outburst as people stood in line to swallow the poison. He said he escaped by slipping through a ring of armed guards and into the jungle.

"A lot of people walked around like they were in a trance. I don't know if they even tried to get away," said Rhodes, 36, who said he escaped about 20 minutes after the poisoning began.

"There wasn't that much noise," he said. "Children were crying and going through convulsions and some of their grandparents and parents were getting hysterical as they saw their children die."

"But basically a lot of the people were sitting, especially the senior people — just waiting and watching," he said.

Rhodes said the founder and leader of the Peoples Temple colony, the Rev. Jim Jones, called a meeting at the camp assembly hall and told people the time had come for the ritual mass death.

It was called just after U.S. Rep. Leo Ryan left the settlement Saturday and took some cult members with him. Ryan and several others were slain at the strip by gun-wielding cult members.

The "defectors" would never reach America, Jones told the crowd as the bizarre ritual of death began, according to Rhodes.

Jones asked if there was dissent, and one woman said death was not the only option, suggesting a move to the Soviet Union or Cuba.

But the gunmen returned from the airstrip with reports of the killing and Jones said it was too late for anything but suicide, Rhodes said.

Rhodes said Jones had warned his followers that if some were allowed to leave, then family members would come from the United States and take others away.

He had a lot of ego and had to be in control," Rhodes said. "The decision for suicide was based on the fact that he felt he was losing control. I'm just trying to figure out why those people would voluntarily kill themselves."

He said the camp's doctor and nurses brought out containers of a liquid that investigators have since said contained cyanide.

"They would draw up an amount (of poison) into syringes," Rhodes said. Babies and children went first. They would take the syringes and a nurse or someone else would put it into a person's mouth and the people would simply swallow it down ....

"The first person who went up was a young mother, about 27 or so. She had a small baby, about 1½. She administered it to her own baby, then took her own. She walked over to a field and sat down. It was hard to believe," he said.

Rhodes said it took 4-5 minutes for the people to die.

"Parents were talking with their children and a lot of the children were crying," he said. "He (Jones) was telling them not to tell the children they were dying, not to tell them it was painful. ... He didn't seem excited. He was sitting in a chair and seemed very calm."

Rhodes, who taught crafts to camp children, related the horror to a few reporters in the hotel where he and a few survivors are staying.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

A-1 HERALD EXAMINER  
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"It was mass confusion. People  
were standing in groups, saying good-  
bye to each other, walking around  
hugging old friends. All my thoughts  
were on how to get out of there."

He said he walked to the edge of the  
crowd, which was surrounded by  
armed guards, and saw a girl named  
Julie Reynolds, about 13. "One of the  
women who supervised her, and one of  
the nurses were forcing her to take  
poison. They forced her to take it. She  
was spitting it out, but they were  
forcing her to take it".

Rhodes said he slipped away,  
crawled under a building and hid until  
guards were called to take poison.  
Then he stole from house to house and  
into the jungle.

He said he followed the road eight  
miles to Port Kaituma, where he told  
a constable about the killings, but said  
he was told the force was understaffed  
and nothing could be done.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

**THE NEWS IN REVIEW****RELIGION****Murder and Mass  
Suicide in Guyana**

**T**HE SLICE of Guyana jungle was only 60 miles from Shangri La — the place so idyllic in appearance it had served as the location for the movie version of "Lost Horizon."

And in the jungle at Jonestown was a dream of paradise on earth where everyone shared and shared alike and there were oranges on the trees and bananas for the picking and everyone loved everyone — and especially their leader, Father Jim Jones. He wanted to be called "father," like in "creator."

By last week the world knew that Jonestown was neither Shangri La nor Paradise-recovered and that the Reverend Jim Jones somewhere in his ministry had gone horribly awry.

Jones was handsome enough and bright enough and he claimed to be at least part American Indian. He was raised in Lynn, Indiana, once a major center of Ku Klux Klan activity, attended nearby Butler University in Indianapolis and the Cleveland Bible College, where he became an ordained minister of the Disciples of Christ.

In 1953 he established his own interdenominational church in Indianapolis and, with his charismatic personality and his appeal to the downtrodden, he soon had a highly successful interracial congregation.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

S.F. Sunday Examiner  
and Chronicle

pg 5 S.F. Chronicle

This World section

San Francisco, Cal.

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or SF 89-250  
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It was a daring thing to do in the heart of KKKland. He established a soup kitchen and opened it to anyone; he found people jobs and distributed used clothes. Jones became head of the city's Human Rights Commission in 1961 and persuaded restaurants and theaters to change their discriminatory policies.

But Jones was already feeling the pressures that ultimately consumed him and over 400 of his followers. He preached that the nuclear holocaust or fascism was coming; that blacks would be exterminated like the Jews were under Hitler, and in 1965 he looked for some way out. He had become an ordained minister in 1964.

Apparently in an Esquire magazine article on where mankind was most likely to survive a nuclear war, he found his inspiration for his next move.

The move was to Redwood Valley, Calif., a dozen miles from Ukiah. At least 160 faithful followed him to Redwood Valley, where in an idyllic setting he established a People's Temple where the faithful could not only worship but work in the vineyards and till the soil.

His message of love and sharing, of helping those seeking to belong to a "family" attracted thousands of adherents. Again he went in for good works — homes to care for the elderly and for mentally handicapped and delinquent kids; drug rehabilitation; food kitchens.

By 1971 he was ready to expand to the "big time," as a former member of the Temple put it, to San Francisco and Los Angeles.

In San Francisco, Jones bought an old synagogue on Geary off Fillmore and in the same year, 1971, he bought an empty synagogue in Los Angeles. His operation and membership expanded to an estimated 21,000 believers.

The Temple members were

expected to give their worldly goods (including Social Security checks) to the cause, if they lived in the Temple, or contribute 25 percent of their income to it. They were also expected to do what "father" Jones said without question — even commit suicide.

At the same time Jones used members to build political power. As the Rev. Cecil Williams

of Glide Memorial Methodist Church, put it: "Here was a man that with a snap of his fingers could bring out a thousand people. No one had ever done that before."

The thousands of votes Jones controlled could decide close races and politicians were very aware of it — from Vice President Walter Mondale on down. They consulted Jones; some wooed him; (Mayor George Moscone made him chairman of San Francisco's Housing Authority) and they wrote congratulatory letters.

Rev. Jones, meanwhile, was showing signs of paranoia. As a member of the Housing Authority recalled, "He'd call me late at night, one time at 2 a.m., and ramble on about how someone was trying to assassinate him and how rightwing forces were trying to destroy his temple."

He wrote congressmen in the same vein, and he preached — with the Temple doors closed — that a race war was coming.

"Jim told us all along," recalled Birdie Marable, a

black beautician who quit several years ago after running a rest home for the Temple, "that if anything ever happened to him, if the government closed in on us that we would have to kill each other."

Lena McCowan, a former member, said at first Jones wanted to be known as Jim, "but then he began to say he was Jesus Christ incarnated. He always wanted to be called father, never reverend. . . He'd never had any other God."

Meantime, there were increasing demands to investigate Jones. The Temple bought 27,000 acres in the jungle of Guyana 150 miles from Georgetown, the nation's capital, and connected only by seven miles of dirt road to a small landing field at Port Kaituma.

Jones sent down some 130 young people to clear the land and prepare for the move of Temple members en masse to the paradise. Even as Jones and his flock packed for the big move, New West magazine's August, 1977, issue featured an article "Inside People's Temple" by Chronicle reporter Marshall Kilduff and New West's Phil Tracy.

The article quoted former Temple members (admittedly disillusioned and prejudiced) on a host of abuses — siphoning off money from child care operations; poor housing, food and care of members, particularly the elderly; psychological abuse as well as physical beatings. The magazine called for an investigation of the Temple and Jones.

Jones and an estimated 1200 followers (since believed fewer than 1000) fled to Guyana and paradise in mid-1977.

One of the main reasons Jones fled San Francisco, apparently, was John Stoen, the

six-year-old son of Grace and Tim Stoen who Jim Jones claimed he had sired and wanted to keep with him always. Tim Stoen had been the Temple's attorney for many years and Grace at one time had kept books for seven of the Temple's enterprises. Tim took John with him to Jonestown but when Tim defected recently Jones would not let John leave.

Representative Leo Ryan, 53, an activist San Mateo Democrat who always wanted to check out information for himself, began a preliminary investigation that apparently turned up disturbing information. At the urging of some constituents he decided to visit Jonestown, himself — the Temple's flamboyant lawyer Mark Lane had earlier said there was nothing to hide at Jonestown, that anyone was free to come or go.

But when Ryan announced November 7 he was actually going to make the trip and 19 others—media people (including Chronicle reporter Ron Javers) and relatives of Temple members — would go along, he ran into delaying tactics all along the route.

For three days the party was stalled in Georgetown, capital of Guyana, where embassy people and Lane urged they wait until Jonestown was "ready" for them.

On November 17 they finally made the one-hour flight to Port Kaituma and jounced over the muddy road to Jonestown. There they were greeted like royalty. They were given a tour of the fields and orchards and some of the tin-roofed buildings.

They were fed pork Sloppy Joe sandwiches, greens and potatoes grown on the 200 cultivated acres. Singers of all ages and the Jonestown band

provided an assortment of music — rock, jazz, disco — while others danced and clapped. Jones watched proudly from his "throne."

Congressman Ryan rose to the festive occasion. He went to the microphone near Jones' raised chair, under the roofed, open meeting house and said, "From what I've seen, there are a lot of people here who think this thing that has happened is the best thing that has happened in their whole lives."

Wild applause. Jones stood and applauded, although he had not looked well.

As the Ryan group left for the evening drive back to Port Kaituma, where they would spend the night in a tin-roofed disco, a young man slipped Don Harris, an NBC reporter, a message written on a child's slate saying, "Please help me get out of Jonestown." There were four signatures on it.

In Port Kaituma local Guyanese regaled the party with horror stories about Jonestown.

Saturday morning when the party returned to Jonestown the atmosphere seemed tense. Temple member Edith Parker ran up to Ryan and said she wanted to leave with him. By the time they were ready to leave 20 people had asked to go.

Ron Javers, the Chronicle reporter, said that Jones struck "us as a madman. We watched him as he kept taking pills until he seemed dazed by them. He listed a whole catalogue of diseases he said were afflicting him starting with cancer."

Jones said the 20 were free to leave. Suddenly a young white man (later identified by Lane as Don Sly) grabbed Ryan and put a knife to his throat. Lane and Charles Garry, the

other Temple attorney who had flown in with Ryan, grabbed Sly, who was cut as they wrestled the weapon away, spurting blood on Ryan's white shirt. Jones became nervous. He was afraid Ryan's report would be negative. Lane and Garry stayed behind to calm Jones down.

Ryan and the rest of the party hurried to the truck that was to take them to the Guyana Airways plane on the Port Kaituma strip.

"I wouldn't be alive if it wasn't for Mark Lane," said a shaken Ryan. It was 4:20 p.m. There was the two-engine plane ready to take the Ryan party back to Georgetown and a single-engine plane to accommodate the refugees from the colony.

James Cobb, a former Temple member who had tried to talk his mother, three sisters and two brothers into leaving, warned Examiner reporter





Photo by Gregory Robinson

Copyright 1978, S.F. Examiner

RYAN

*Jones had  
'planned' to  
kill the  
whole Ryan  
party*



AP ph

THE SUICIDE SCENE AT JONESTOWN



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Early Count Was 'in Error' 780 Bodies at Jones town

## Corpses Were Piled Four Deep

Georgetown, Guyana

U.S. military personnel, finding "smaller bodies under larger bodies and children under those," discovered yesterday that "as many as 780" Americans died in Jonestown last Saturday when cult leader Jim Jones ordered them to commit suicide.

A week-old estimate of about 400 bodies, apparently based only on a rough count made by the Guyanese authorities, who were the first to reach the death scene last weekend and did not move the bodies, was "found to be seriously in error," according to a U.S. spokesman, when military personnel packing the dead in plastic bags neared 400 and realized there were many more to go.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state)

1 S.F. Chronicle

San Francisco

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"The way all this happened was that nobody in the U.S. military task force stopped to count" when they reached Jonestown early this week, said another U.S. official. "But as they bagged the bodies, they noticed the pile wasn't going down."

"We simply began to discover more and more and more bodies," said Air Force Captain Don J. Moscatelli, spokesman for the U.S. Military rescue task force here.

"Under adults we found smaller adults and children, and more small babies than anticipated."

Most of the previously overlooked bodies were found at the bottom of what turned out to be a three- and four-deep pile off to the side of the open-air pavilion from which Jones supervised the distribution of the poisoned Kool-Aid to followers herded around him by encircled armed guards. Jones himself was later found shot to death on the altar at the front of the pavilion.

Yesterday's unexpected discovery was a swift, shocking blow to both U.S. authorities and relatives of Peoples Temple church members that both doubled the death toll at Jonestown and snuffed out hope that many more survivors might be found.

"You don't know whether to be

relieved or horrified," said U.S. Consul Douglas Ellis, who has been the liaison between the embassy here and the 32 known survivors of Jonestown as well as relatives of Jonestown residents seeking to discover whether their loved ones are dead or alive. "It appears that there may not be anybody to search and rescue."

All week long, officials had agonized over the mystery of what had happened to several hundred Jonestown residents apparently not counted in the original estimate of about 400 dead. U.S. military helicopters were scheduled to begin flying over the dense rain forest surrounding Jonestown and broadcast loudspeaker appeals to any survivors who might have fled there.

Now, however, the numbers that had been in contention here all week appeared to be adding up.

The Guyanese government said yesterday that its records showed 950 Peoples Temple church members had entered Guyana since the Jonestown agricultural commune was founded five years ago.

Meanwhile, the U.S. embassy yesterday examined and photocopied 803 U.S. passports the Guyanese authorities had recovered in Jonestown. The copies will be sent to Washington for a determination of how many persons they cover. That number could be more than 800 because some children may have traveled on parents' passports, and others may have been born in Jonestown. Markers in a small cemetery found in Jonestown indicate that only about ten residents died there before last weekend.

Against that evidence are these numbers:

• "As many as 780 bodies" counted in Jonestown by yesterday afternoon.

• A petition "pledging loyalty to Jim Jones," signed by between 600 and 700 persons, found in Jonestown.

• Four other Peoples Temple church members dead inside the Georgetown headquarters Saturday night, and one defector from the commune who was shot to death along with Representative Leo J. Ryan and three newsmen after they left Jonestown earlier Saturday.

• Thirty-two other Jonestown residents who escaped Saturday's violence, some of whom left with Congressman Ryan's group and survived the ambush at the Port Kaituma landing strip near Jonestown, and others who slipped out of Jonestown before and during the forced mass suicide.

• Forty-six other Peoples Temple church members still under armed guard and house arrest inside the Georgetown headquarters house.

They include Jim Jones' son

and top lieutenant, Stephan Jones, and other members of the Jonestown basketball team, which was in Georgetown playing the Guyanese national team last weekend during Congressman Ryan's visit to Jonestown.

According to Guyanese police sources, some cult members now in that house are being investigated for the murder of Peoples Temple member and house resident Sharon Amos Harris and her three children, who were found in the Georgetown house Saturday night with their throats slashed.

Police sources in Georgetown said that Edward Bikman, 43, hometown unknown, will be charged today with four counts of murder in the killing of Amos and her children.

Survivors from Jonestown have told authorities that members of the basketball team were trained sharpshooting security guards who practiced with firearms in the forest around Jonestown.

- Four other Jonestown residents found aboard the cult's coastal freighter, the Albatross, when it landed in Trinidad this week after leaving Guyana well before last weekend's violence. Those four are being temporarily held by Trinidad authorities, who are in communication with Guyana.

- Two or three more Jonestown residents reportedly found by a Guyana defense force patrol boat aboard the cult's fishing boat, the Cudjoe, three days ago just 20 miles north of its Port Kaituma dock. They are being questioned by the police here. A third boat used by the Jonestown commune, named the Marceline after Jim Jones' wife, is still missing.

These numbers make a total of between 850 and 900 Peoples Temple church members now accounted for in Guyana.

The only remaining live lead on more possible survivors from Jonestown is a report from a Venezuelan government agent that the pilot of a Venezuelan military plane patrolling its disputed border with Guyana saw what appeared to be 30 or 40 people heading west toward the border from the rain forest around Jonestown and Port Kaituma. Guyanese government spokesmen denied knowledge of such a report.

Meanwhile, the grim airlift of bodies from Jonestown continued at a brisk pace yesterday. By midday 485 bodies had been taken during the past three days in plastic body bags by helicopter from Jonestown to Timehri International Airport, where they were transferred to aluminum holding coffins and put into military cargo planes bound for the U.S. Air Force base in Dover, Del.

Yesterday afternoon, the government of Prime Minister Forbes Burnham made its first public report to the Guyanese people about the Jonestown affair. Deputy Prime Minister Ptolemy Reid delivered the report in a 15-minute statement to Parliament that was broadcast across the country by the Guyanese Broadcasting Service radio.

Reid's address, in the crowded House Chamber of the 50-year-old pink-and-white neo-classical Parliament, was essentially a chronological listing of the steps his government took at Jonestown after the violence occurred. Nothing not already known was revealed.

Reid, a large black man with a full gray beard, who, like the 50 members of the House and observers and members of the press, wore an open-necked shirt and no coat in

the tropical heat, also stated his nation's "deep regret and sympathy" to the American people for the tragedy that occurred at Jonestown.

He pointedly indicated throughout his statement that he believed his government acted as quickly as possible at every stage of the emergency.

For example, he said that after the ambush of Congressman Ryan's party at the Port Kaituma airstrip, "one of the more seriously injured persons was conveyed that very evening to the hospital in Georgetown where a medical team was on standby and the injured person received immediate attention. Others were flown out the following day."

Later, he pointed out that, after the first report was received of a possible mass murder or suicide at Jonestown, the Guyana defense force mobilized troops as quickly as possible at Matthews Ridge, 20 miles away, and "moved by foot and train to Port Kaituma and then to Jonestown Sunday on foot."

"It should be noted that all this was done under very adverse conditions," Reid told Parliament, explaining that the terrain was very rough and rain was falling heavily.

Reid ended his address by saying that he wished to "reiterate our deepest sympathy to all who are grieving. We mourn with all of them."

After finishing, Reid strode hurriedly off ~~the~~ House floor, pushing his way through reporters and bystanders. He was chased by catcalls from members of the opposition Peoples Progressive party, whose acting leader tried to insist that Reid answer questions, as is frequent parliamentary procedure.

When the speaker of the House ruled that, for technical reasons, the Jonestown matter could not be discussed on the floor, cries of "Shame, shame," and "coverup" rang out.

Some members of the opposition party and its newspaper here have raised questions about the apparently close relationship between Ptolemy Reid in particular and the Burnham government generally with Jim Jones. Jones and Reid met together on several occasions, and the Burnham government has been accused here of looking the other way when the Jonestown commune, using its three boats, allegedly shipped out produce and brought in supplies without going through customs.

*Washington Post*



A truck on the rain-soaked runway of Dover Air Force Base in Maryland carried its cargo of metal caskets



AP Wirephoto

**Ptolemy Reid, Guyana's deputy prime minister, recounted the tragedy at a meeting of Parliament**

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# JONES TOWN TOLL NOW UP TO 775

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

1 S.F. Examiner

San Francisco, Ca.

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RYMURS

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# Adult corpses covered children

180 victims  
under age 15,  
the U.S. finds

By Jim Willse  
Examiner City Editor

GEORGETOWN, Guyana — Apect to find more victims of the Temple mass suicide elsewhere in the Jonestown outpost.

The increase in the numbers of dead at the Jonestown outpost apparently was reached when it was discovered that many bodies of children were found under the corpses of adults.

The State Department in Washington said 180 of the dead are children under the age of 15. A witness to the gruesome suicide ritual said the children were lined up and given the lethal mixture of Kool-Aid and cyanide first, then their parents drank the potion and fell atop their children.

"It now appears the count will be as many as 780 bodies," said Stephen Kibble, information officer at the U.S. Embassy in Guyana.

At the Peoples Temple headquarters in San Francisco, members said they believed there were 972 people in the Jonestown camp. With 780 now dead and 32 members who escaped the ritual mass suicide, that leaves 160 people unaccounted for, according to the temple figures.

As of 8 a.m. today, 485 bodies had been removed from Jonestown to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware and 20 more had been placed in Air Force "body bags."

U.S. troops at the scene counted the remaining bodies and found 270.

Officials said they didn't expect to find more victims of the Temple mass suicide elsewhere in the Jonestown outpost.

The reason for the earlier body count — at 409 — was that the Guyanese who discovered the bodies made no attempt to disturb them.

Only after U.S. Army and Air Force personnel arrived and began removing the bodies was it discovered that there were more bodies under those already counted. In some areas around the central meeting hall, the concentration of bodies was so dense that one couldn't see the ground.

The figures, sent to Washington by U.S. officials on the scene, almost double the number of those known dead at the colony of Peoples Temple leader Jim Jones. They account for most of the large number of settlement members until now listed as "missing."

One of those bodies is Corpse No. 13B, wrapped in plastic and encased in an aluminum transfer

box. The name scrawled on the side of the box by a soldier: "Rev. Jimmie Jones."

Jones was identified positively yesterday with fingerprints provided by the Los Angeles Police Department. The State Department said no autopsy will be performed on him at Dover.

The evil preacher left Guyana yesterday surrounded by the bitter fruit of his labors. In two days, the bodies of 270 men, women and children had been brought from the Peoples Temple mission by U.S. helicopters and loaded aboard big, droopy-winged Air Force transports for a flight to Dover Air Force Base.

All the bodies must be brought the 150 miles to Temehri Airport outside the capital city of Georgetown.

There were 162 bodies taken to the United States yesterday in three flights. Another 68 bodies were at the airport for removal to the United States today.

There was some doubt that the Dover military mortuary — where victims of the Vietnam War were processed — could handle the larger number of bodies found. But Army Maj. Brigham Shuler, spokesman for the bodylift, said the base will handle all the bodies — though he said processing them now will take at least three weeks, instead of the eight to 10 days forecast at first.

The Peoples Temple in San Francisco said it was sending medical records and pictures of its members to Washington to aid in the identification. Officials urged that any medical or dental records or fingerprints be sent to Dover Air



## Info number for victims' kin

An information center for people who believe a relative may be one of the Guyana victims has been established at the Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

The phone number at the information center, manned around the clock, is 302-678-6767.

Force Base or to the State Department.

The government has said that families of the dead will have to pay to have them transported home — at least \$450 from Dover to San Francisco.

Today, San Francisco Supervisor Quentin Kopp said he is asking federal authorities to send the Jonestown dead to San Francisco "because almost all were Californians, most were from Northern California."

Bodies left unclaimed will be buried in Dover at government expense.

In Georgetown, Sgt. Boy Petrie, one of the 200 airmen called in to assist in removing the bodies, said: "There are a lot of little kids — that's the toughest part."

"You can tell they were kids by the weight of the hags. They just didn't have any choice."

Only 32 members of the temple in Jonestown are known to have escaped the mass suicide ritual. Few attempts have been made to find any other members who may have escaped in the jungle.

Despite the State Department's

statement in Washington that U.S. helicopters were already blaring messages to return over the swampy terrain at Jonestown, a U.S. official here said no such effort would be made until today and that the American search-and-rescue effort was minimal.

One helicopter flew low over the trees yesterday in an attempt to spot survivors. Bullhorns were added to the flight equipment today, according to Capt. John Moscatelli.

The State Department said that so far 870 passports — all but four American — have been checked, but a spokesman said there may be some duplication. He also said 600 single beds were counted at Jonestown. These figures have led the State Department to believe that there are few, if any, survivors still unaccounted for.

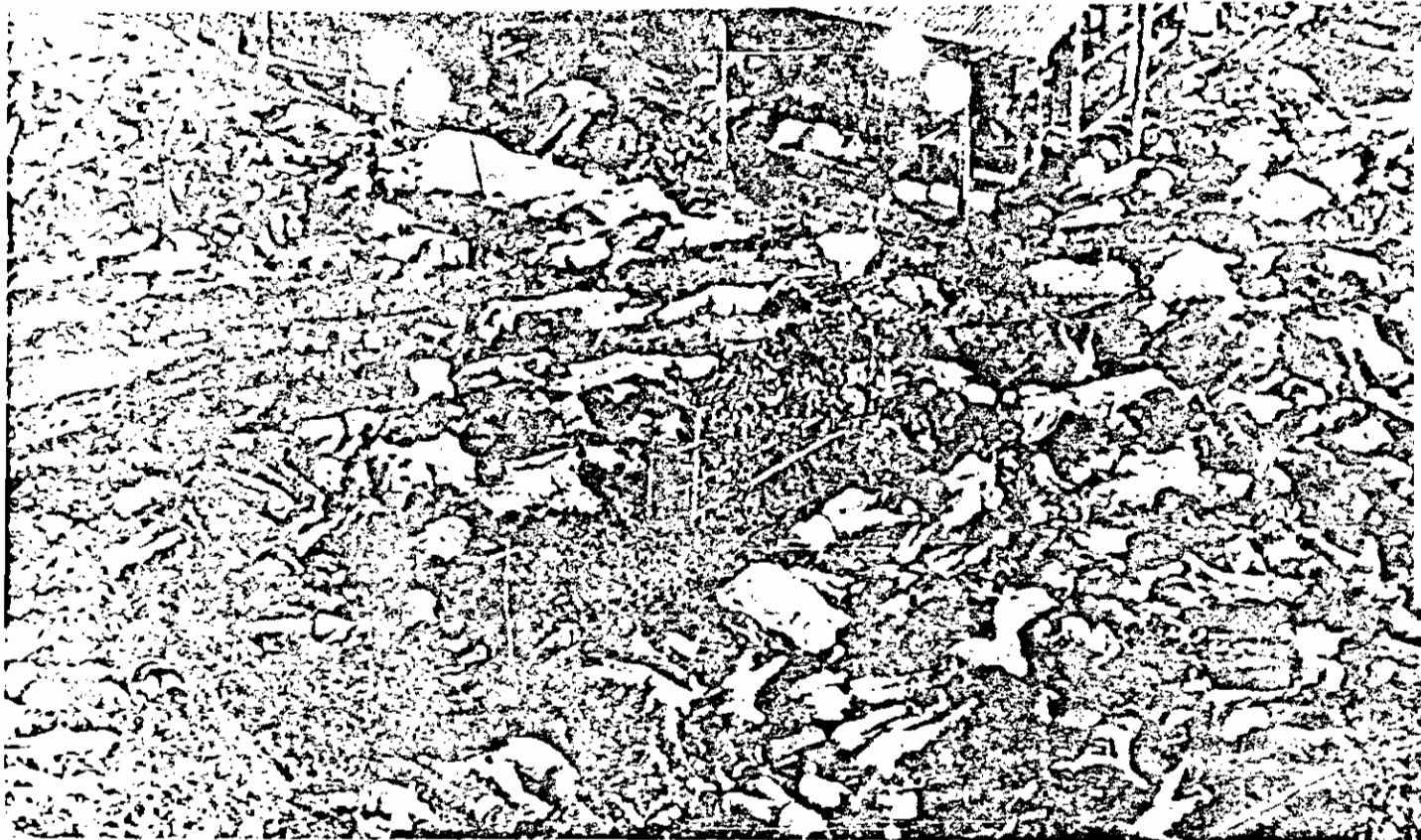
The number of persons at the outpost at the time of the suicides has been a major question all week. Interviews last night with survivors of the Saturday horrors added weight to the estimate of 800 to 900 residents.

Another source of names could be a petition last week to Rep. Leo Ryan, opposing his visit to the agricultural mission. That list was said to contain 1,200 signatures, but a State Department spokesman said today that it carried only 600 to 700 signatures.

Jones eventually relented and allowed the Ryan delegation of journalists and "concerned relatives" to visit the mission. Ryan, Examiner photographer Greg Robinson and three others were shot to death as they prepared to board a return flight. One temple member, Larry Layton, has been charged with the deaths.



A worker in Georgetown prepares coffins for shipment — including 'Rev. Jimmie Jones 13B'



Jonestown settlers gathered in family groups to await death. Their bodies surround the open-air pavilion at the center of the village.

## The Bizarre Tragedy in Guyana

Young and old, they died on orders from a man who likened himself to Christ and Lenin. Why? Life in the jungle commune provided answers.

Jonestown died the way it lived—tragically and on command.

In the end, only a cult's bizarre regimen of fear, violence and unthinking devotion could explain the chain reaction that claimed the lives of at least 784 Americans shortly before sunset on November 18.

Murdered were a member of Congress from California, three newsmen and an 18-year-old woman fleeing the fanaticism of an agricultural commune at Jonestown, Guyana, on South America's northeastern shoulder.

Dead by suicide, murder and infanticide, according to a count on November 24, were at least 779 residents of the jungle outpost, including almost 200 children and its founder, Jim Jones, a minister who claimed he was the dual embodiment of Lenin and Christ.

Practically wiped out in the process was a mysterious San Francisco-based cult called Peoples Temple that bound its followers with a blend of brotherhood and blackmail, prophecy and

punishment. Investigations had long been urged by former members of the church and some relatives of about 900 blacks and whites who followed Jones into the rain forest. The allegations included beatings, brainwashing, forced labor and imprisonment.

Yet the pleas sparked little government interest until Representative Leo Ryan, a 53-year-old Democrat, decided to check out complaints by constituents of his district, south of San Francisco. Six days after the prosperous district elected Ryan to a fourth term, he and 18 others flew to Jonestown on a fact-finding mission.

The party entered the teeming Jonestown compound 150 miles northwest of Guyana's capital of Georgetown on November 17. The settlement had been hacked out of a 42-square-mile tract leased from the Guyanese government.

"So peaceful." "Everything was so alive and so peaceful that Friday night, at least on the surface, that it was impossible to know that this carefully cultivated little world would soon be destroyed by a man gone mad," one visitor recalled.

Ryan's party found "a collection of rough but clean, communal log buildings" and knots of suspicious settlers

that scattered like leaves when visitors approached. A soul-music combo provided entertainment at an outdoor pavilion as Ryan interviewed residents and commune leaders.

"I hear many of you saying that this is the best thing that has happened to you," a church statement quoted Ryan as saying. "The reception has been very friendly. We've all had a very good time here."

The apparently cordial atmosphere unraveled the next day. NBC correspondent Donald Harris irked Jones with questions about weapons in the camp. Church members began appealing to investigators for help in getting out. Jones became increasingly irritated. "The only thing I feel is that every time they [settlers] go, they lie," Jones told reporters accompanying Ryan.

"The satanic situation [was] building up," recalled attorney Mark Lane. A critic of the official versions of the John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King assassinations, Lane and attorney Charles Garry acted as go-betweens for Jones and the congressional probe.

A Jones lieutenant attacked Ryan with a hunting knife amid a couple's dispute over whether to stay or leave. Splattered with the blood of his assailant, Ryan quickly left the compound

with 16 defectors and headed by him to the Port Kaituma airstrip eight miles away. Afterward, Jones worried aloud that the knife attack might jeopardize a favorable report by Ryan. "There are things you don't know," Jones told his lawyers who had stayed behind. "Those men [Jones's lieutenants] who left a little while ago to go into the city are not going there. They love me and they may do something that will reflect badly on me. They're going to shoot at the people and their plane."

Trouble erupted at the airstrip. A Jones aide faking defection pulled a pistol inside a five-seat chartered Cessna, and wounded two passengers.

Outside, a tractor pulled a wagon with several men toward the other plane, a 19-seat twin-engine de Havilland DHC-6. NBC sound technician Steve Sung saw the men wave goodbye to the departing party and then pick up weapons.

"This is crazy." "I remember thinking this is crazy," wrote *Washington Post* reporter Charles A. Krause, who dived for cover behind a wheel. "It couldn't be. I was going to die in the middle of the jungle of Guyana, so far away from my family and friends."

NBC cameraman Bob Brown, 36, filmed as shooting began.

Said NBC field producer Robert Flick: "There were 50, 75 shots. People with shotguns would walk over and at point-blank range shoot people in the head."

Gunmen deliberately ignored the U.S. Embassy official and the Guyanese government escort to deliver *coup de grâce* shots to Ryan and newsmen, said Sung, who was wounded in the shoulder. "They never said a word. They knew exactly who to kill."

Five Americans were dead: Ryan, Harris, Brown, *San Francisco Examiner* photographer Gregory Robinson and Patricia Parks, a refugee from Jonestown. Ten others were wounded.

The flight crew fled the airfield in the Cessna with one wounded woman aboard and flew to Georgetown to report the incident. The others stayed.

Guyanese troops—delayed because the tiny airstrip had no lights for night landings—arrived at dawn the next day, November 19, 13 hours after the attack. But already, the tragedy in the Jonestown compound was complete.

Told of the attack on Ryan's party, Jones summoned his predominantly black followers for a mass meeting at the open-air pavilion. Armed guards circled the gathering.

"The time has come for us to meet in another place," said Jones, who had formed a suicide pact with each member of the sect. The fundamentalist preacher hailed "the dignity of death, the beauty of dying," recalled Lane, who heard the sermon as he and Garry fled into the jungle.

The ritual had been repeatedly rehearsed, with disciples sipping a supposedly lethal brown liquid to show loyalty and courage, only to find the suicidal act merely a test.

This time, the camp doctor ladled a soft drink spiked with potassium cyanide and painkillers into cups, as Jonestown settlers dutifully lined up near the crude altar of the church. Parents squirted the poison down the throats of squirming infants and children. Even cats and dogs were poisoned, and the camp's mascot, Mr. Muggs the chimpanzee, was shot. Cyanide kills by paralyzing the lungs.

"They started with the

babies," said Odell Rhodes, 36, a settler who evaded death by volunteering to go for the doctor's stethoscope. Once the dying began to convulse and gasp for air, "it just got all out of order," Rhodes said. "Babies were screaming, children were screaming, and there was mass confusion."

Gunmen forced reluctant followers to drink. Victims gathered in family groups, clutched each other or held hands, waiting for death to strike. It came within 5 minutes.

Jones's final words, blared into the surrounding rain forest over the public-address system: "Mother, mother, mother..."—believed to be a reference either to his mother, who was buried at Jonestown, or to his wife, who was found dead nearby. The 46-year-old son of a white mother and a part-Indian father apparently then took his own life with a gun.

Afterward, Jonestown "looked like a garbage dump where somebody had dumped a lot of rag dolls," an eyewitness said. Guyanese troops found the bodies stacked so thick that the ground was blanketed in some places.

**Guns and money.** Troops discovered \$500,000 in currency scattered around the camp, \$500,000 in gold bullion, more than 30 automatic weapons, hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition, envelopes with uncashed Social Security checks and a trunk brimming with 800 passports.

The U.S. flew in more than 200 troops to help identify bodies and more than 30 U.S. cargo planes to ferry the bodies back home. The first bodies reached the Air Force mortuary in Dover, Del., on Thanksgiving Day.

The body count almost doubled as U.S. troops wearing contamination masks began removing bodies for shipment back to the U.S. in a humanitarian mission with a cost of at least 3 million dollars.

Almost 80 settlers were found alive, either near the commune, in Georgetown or on boats.

Days later, authorities still were piecing together details of the final days of Jonestown. But to those who had been following the peculiar cult, the rigors of life in the socialistic enclave had been known for months.

Located near an old manganese mine and authorized by the Guyanese government, Jonestown was the kind of settlement the Georgetown regime wanted. It was an outwardly law-abiding, socialist community in a socialist country, with settlers willing to civilize a part of the 83,000-square-mile country that few others wanted.

Settlers worked long hours with little food in the soggy equatorial climate,

Deadly potion: The tub contained a grape-flavored soft drink spiked with cyanide and a variety of painkillers.



cultivating cassava, a South American staple, and other crops. One former Jonestown settler recalled 73-hour workweeks, marathon services six nights a week and six-hour diatribes by Jones over a public-address system.

The diet was meager: rice for breakfast, rice water soup for lunch and rice and beans for dinner. Vegetables were served two or three times a week and eggs once a week.

Loyalty was proven by "giving up everything, even basic necessities," Deborah Layton Blakey, 25, a former Jones aide, said in an affidavit. "The most loyal were in the worst physical condition—dark circles under one's eyes or extreme loss of weight were considered signs of loyalty."

Settlers lived in dormitories with bunk beds, with the lone concession to husbands and wives being blankets hung over their beds for privacy.

"Human-service goals." The agricultural project was launched by the Peoples Temple in earnest in 1977, when planeloads of Californians began leaving for Jonestown. The cult said the commune was established "to further the human-service goals that have characterized the Peoples Temple for many years"—goals fulfilled in San Francisco with legal advice and medical care, drug-rehabilitation programs and soup kitchens.

Most of the Jonestown settlers were transplants from San Francisco, where Jones's old-fashioned, foot-stomping blend of religion and politics drew 5,000 people a night to a buff-colored former synagogue. The church drew down-and-out blacks as well as black and white middle-class humanitarians who gravitated to the church to live the equality they preached during the civil-rights struggles of the 1960s.

"When we first joined, it was beautiful, interracial humanitarianism," remarked a onetime member. "When you walked into the church, everybody greeted you with hugs. I had never experienced this kind of love before."

The charismatic founder masterminded the growth of his offbeat religious sect into a powerful political force in California. Jones's disciples were given credit, for example, for helping to elect George Moscone mayor of San Francisco in 1975—assistance that was recognized when Jones was named chairman of the City Housing Authority the next year.

But the church had a darker side, both in California and later in Jonestown. Members often signed over everything of value to Jones, who by some accounts amassed 5 million dollars. Real-estate holdings climbed to 1.5 million dollars—much of it tax-ex-

## People of the Week®

# Sect Leader: Fake Miracles and Secondhand Suits

### SAN FRANCISCO

Jim Jones was a man of many faces.

As a young man in Indianapolis, he was known as quiet, nonaggressive, a preacher whose concern for the poor and minorities won him a post as director of the city's Human Rights Commission in 1961.

When Jones went to California in 1965, he began to show another face. He turned into a flamboyant leader who built a strange religious cult into a congregation of thousands and became a political force, a friend of high officials.

When Jones died at age 46 in Guyana, he had been exposed in yet another and quite different face—that of a tyrant who abused hundreds of fanatical followers, then led them to mass suicide.

Jones grew up in the small town of Lynn, Ind., where the Ku Klux Klan was strong and blacks were not supposed to be seen after sundown. His father, who was partly Indian, worked as a railroad section hand and was a Klan member.

But Jones soon turned against racism. He attended Indiana University, Butler University and a Bible school, was ordained a minister of the Disciples of Christ, and became an advocate of civil rights for blacks. He went to California because he felt Indiana was too racist.

**Faith healing.** With about 100 followers, he set up a biracial church near the Northern California town of Ukiah. There, his preaching and his personality changed. He claimed the power of faith healing, performing fake miracles in which he pretended to draw out of human bodies cancerous tumors that were really chicken organs. He pretended to raise people from the dead.

In appearance, Jones was a short and slightly pudgy man with straight black hair. He wore glasses, often wore secondhand suits.

But somehow Jones exuded a cha-



Cultist Jim Jones "became a fascist," says his son, Stephan, shown at left.



risma—a quality that attracted people, especially troubled persons. Many of the people he

attracted were white, some of them well-to-do, with responsible jobs. But most were black, and many were poor. Jones ran self-help programs, promised his flock protection against racial discrimination and the race war that he predicted was inevitable in America.

**Success story.** As Jones's following grew, he moved to San Francisco. There, in 1971, he established a Peoples Temple. His cult spread until he claimed 20,000 followers. He was appointed to the San Francisco Housing Authority in 1976.

Jones's political contacts included Rosalynn Carter, wife of the President. On March 17, 1977, Jones wrote to Mrs. Carter urging medical aid to Cuba and expressing "deep appreciation for the privilege of dining privately with you prior to the election." He got a reply in which Mrs. Carter said, "I enjoyed being with you during the campaign," and "your comments about Cuba are helpful."

It was not until mid-1977 that the darker side of Jones's nature began to emerge with published reports of his abuses. It was then he moved to Guyana. Near the end, some of his followers said, Jones appeared to be a madman, believed he was incurably ill and was taking drugs. Even his son, 19-year-old Stephan Jones, turned against him.

After Jones died in the mass suicide, the son said: "I can almost say I hate this man because he has destroyed everything I have stood for. I now see him as a fascist because he became one."



empt as religious property. Too, church members said they were forced to confess to crimes that they hadn't committed just to give Jones ammunition if they ever betrayed the church. Members were spanked before the congregation. Elderly women were humiliated by being forced to disrobe. Teen-age girls were punished by being made to parade in their underwear.

The punishments, leaders said, hardened members for atomic war or the racial strife that Jones forecast.

Punishment and isolation were even more rigorous at the settlement in Guyana. Rule breakers were put in an underground box in the sweltering heat for days at a time.

Visits to "Bigfoot." Misbehaving children were sent to see "Bigfoot," a peculiar punishment in which the child was thrown into a dark well where adults pulled the offender below the surface, making sure that he came up for a breath.

"If he doesn't scream loud enough how sorry he is, then he [Jones] will send the child back down," a Jonestown defector reported.

It was just such tales that prompted Ryan to launch his probe. The on-site inspection of Jonestown followed State Department investigations that consistently came up empty-handed.

Said John Bushnell, deputy assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs: "More than 75 temple members talked to our consular officers over the last year and not one confirmed any allegation of mistreat-

ment." Four trips to Jonestown this year found nothing amiss, he said.

Ryan "knew there was danger there," said one of his aides, "but he went anyhow. He felt that his job was to inspect things personally." Ryan was buried near San Francisco on November 17.

Clement Zablocki, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, vowed to investigate "all aspects" of the tragedy as well as allegations that the U.S. Embassy at Georgetown responded inadequately to relatives' complaints about forced labor at the camp. The FBI, too, was investigating Ryan's death under a statute making it a federal offense to kill a member of Congress. Arrested by Guyanese authorities and charged with murder for the airport attack was Larry Layton, 32. Six others were being held.

Continued investigations were certain, but the future of the bizarre cult that shocked the world was clouded. Former church members remained worried about retaliation, and police in California provided protection to almost 200 parishioners who had broken with Bishop Jim Jones. The settlement at Jonestown was abandoned.

"Someone should say that Leo J. Ryan was right," wrote *Washington Post* reporter Krause, who survived the airport attack. "He knew something was terribly wrong at Jonestown. He sensed—even if he might be ridiculed for making the trip—that he should come and try to unmask horror." □

# Why Cults Turn to Violence

**Rootless followers, strong leaders—these are key ingredients that can lead to hysteria and bloodshed, says a prominent psychiatrist.**

**Q** Dr. Galanter, how are cult leaders able to mesmerize people into such blind obedience as apparently occurred in Guyana, where hundreds committed suicide at their leader's behest?

**A** Cult leaders awaken certain psychological needs in people which then become a focal point for people's behavior and beliefs. Strong leaders are sought because people in general are basically dependent on others and want to have somebody else solve their problems of uncertainty.

A cult leader can win the confidence of people by his own individual personality and magnetism. He may also be helped by a supporting organization that joins in persuading individuals to believe in the leader.

**Q** A belief that extends even to violence or suicide on the orders of leaders?

**A** Any group of people with an absolute belief in a social structure lacking in the stability of normal behavior are vulnerable to being persuaded to do all sorts of things. Many of the cults, because they're new and have not become institutionalized, are examples of this phenomenon.

Some leaders, if they happen to be psychologically or socially changeable, may come across with a variety of ideas which may seem peculiar but have no countervailing structure opposing them.

**Q** And, among these ideas, violence is one possibility—

**A** Violence is a possibility.

**Q** How exactly is a follower persuaded to defend the faith through violence?

**A** In Western society, there's not much previous orientation in this direction except in the most bizarre and alienated of cults like the Charles Manson group in California.

There's a gradual drawing in of an individual into a belief system, and it's a stronger and stronger commitment as time goes by. The individual comes to translate the world more and more



Going home: Bodies of jungle-commune members, including leader Jim Jones, are readied for shipment to military mortuary in Dover, Del., aboard U.S. cargo planes.

## Interview With Dr. Marc Galanter, an Authority on Religious Cults



Dr. Galanter is an associate professor of psychiatry at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City. He has written several articles on religious cults and will head a special session of the American Psychiatric Association on cults early in 1979.

in terms of the ideas presented by the cult, until eventually he may be to a great extent entirely vulnerable to seeing the world in terms of what the cult offers him.

At that time, the cult may get him to do rather peculiar things. But there's a spectrum of behavior involved here, and it's very uncommon for people to be so totally drawn into a cult that their traditional attitudes toward violence would be profoundly altered.

**Q So how do you explain what happened in Guyana?**

**A** In Guyana, it's evident that many members of that cult were divorced from the normal values around them—divorced both physically, because of their isolation, and psychologically. The influences on their behavior and their plans may have come almost exclusively from the word of the leadership.

Because of that, in a crisis situation they were much more vulnerable to group hysterical reaction. And once that begins to sweep through a group, behaviors that are entirely unpredictable and unexpected may arise. So it isn't terribly surprising that such a group fell upon a bizarre and tragic solution to an overwhelming disruption in their perspective on what the world around them was about.

**Q What are the personality traits people find magnetic in cult leaders?**

**A** They can be very variable. They have to fit in with the social context and with the belief system presented.

For example, someone who speaks allegorically and who mystifies his listeners would be an appropriate leader

for a religious sect. Someone who presents a highly intellectualized framework for a social system might be more suitable for a political group.

The individuals who gravitate toward either leader are often very different. It depends a lot on what the individual's interests are.

**Q Which types of people are easily susceptible to following cult leaders?**

**A** People who are in social and/or psychological transition often are susceptible to a leader who presents strong beliefs. These people often are uncertain and unhappy about their social background and where they see themselves heading, or they can have personal and psychological instability.

**Q Are most followers rootless?**

**A** In the United States today, cult leaders have the most appeal among people who are socially mobile and disaffiliated from their family and economic background. At present, there are areas of the country—such as the urban centers and parts of Northern California—where there are a lot of people with less-stable ties to family and social backgrounds. In those areas, the cults are probably more active.

**Q At a time when social unrest has quieted down somewhat, why do the cults continue to have so much appeal?**

**A** I think the number of people joining these groups now is less than it was a few years ago. They appear to have had their biggest impetus toward the end of the counterculture generation that was probably created by a confluence of drugs and anti-Vietnam feeling.

Both those issues have leveled off. The cults now are picking up on the remainder of people who feel their interests have been overlooked.

**Q Is there a pattern to the way cults can change a person's beliefs?**

**A** Most successful cults and cult leaders have stumbled into what is a

homemade science of how to influence people. They each develop their own formats and then go about implementing them in the way that works best.

They develop—often without realizing it—highly sophisticated techniques, probably more sophisticated than the ones developed for brainwashing in wartime. That's because the cults are in close contact with human nature and human needs immediately around them.

Many of their methods are strictly individualized, but there are some traits in common. Robert Lifton, who wrote *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*, outlined some of them. Among them is a definition of what information is exchanged with the individual in the cult, and between individuals and persons outside the cult. This control over the import and meaning of information acquired is very important.

Cults also capitalize on the knowledge that a person wants social acceptance by his peers in the group, and so he becomes more and more eager to do what is expected of him. These ties of social bonding between peers appear to be very potent in influencing the way one perceives the experience around him.

It should be noted, however, that our contemporary religions and many very constructive undertakings have begun in the context of a cultlike setting. Often, undertakings against great odds are not considered by persons unless they find themselves in such a psychological context.

**Q Can cult members be talked out of their beliefs?**

**A** By and large, a stable cult member is not talked out of his beliefs—not by conversation or by coercion.

It appears that, in many situations, the more you have to fight against opposition to your beliefs, the more you come to espouse them. There are ample illustrations of this throughout history.

**Q Is this spell a long-lasting one?**

**A** I began looking into the cults about a half-dozen years ago and met with people in one sect who I thought would eventually change their point of view and join the mainstream again in a year or two. They haven't done this, and they appear to be no less committed now. So my experience has been that, given a stable social organization, people may remain in religious cults indefinitely. □



Charles Manson, a convicted murderer, was head of a "bizarre, alienated cult."

# Behind the Cult Craze

In the wake of the Guyana nightmare, Americans are probing more deeply into the growth of sects—and the possible consequences.

The bloodbath in Guyana that snuffed out many hundreds of lives has rekindled bitter controversy over the role of cults in America.

Leading clergymen describe the vast majority of new religious sects in this country as peaceful and law-abiding. But many of these same theologians are alarmed about possible consequences of the violence on November 18 that consumed the Peoples Temple—a sect, centered in San Francisco, that set up a farming community in Guyana in 1974.

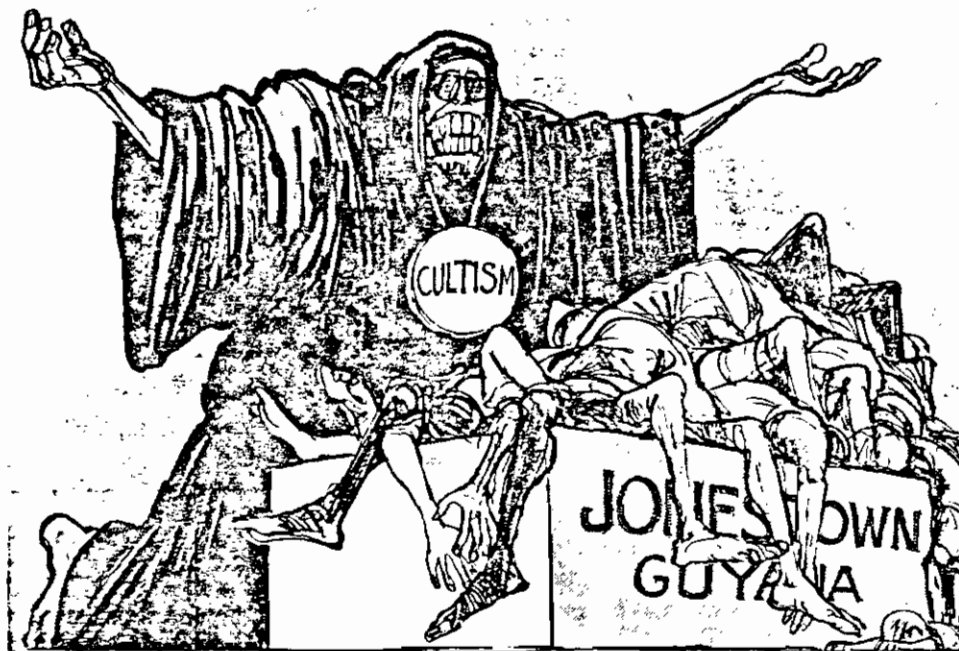
The concern among religious leaders and law-enforcement officials is that such violence might spread.

The questions they are asking: How could such a bizarre tragedy have happened in the first place? What has impelled thousands of Americans to join newer sects, rejecting older, larger religious bodies? Are any other religious sects similarly prepared to kill and die for their causes?

**A search for roots.** Martin Marty, professor of religious history at the University of Chicago, attributes the growth of cults to the frustrations of rootless people. He is convinced that the seemingly endless choices afforded in modern life frustrate or overwhelm many individuals. He says: "They short-circuit and try to hook their lives to any guiding spirit."

Psychiatrist Marc Galanter, a specialist in research on cults, says in the interview starting on page 28 that many people join such groups in a search for strong, charismatic leaders. He notes that "cults now are picking up on the remainder of people who feel their interests have been overlooked."

Sociologists who have studied cults find that many converts are young people, often without strong family ties.



"Latest offering."

who are unsuccessful in dealing with life's problems and are seeking instant solutions supplied by others.

An immediate result of the Guyana tragedy was a revival of the controversy over a variety of practices attributed—rightly or wrongly—to some of the newer religious groups.

Even though the Peoples Temple had no apparent close ties to other organizations, the deaths inflamed suspicions nurtured during years of struggle between leaders of new religious movements and family members trying to get relatives out of the groups. Some of the organizations caught up in this tug of war have memberships estimated at 5,000 to 20,000.

Offshoots and smaller sects bring to about 1,300 the number of newer religious groups that have attracted mostly youthful followings in the aftermath of the 1960s counterculture, according to an authoritative estimate.

Groups of parents who have abducted thousands of young people from such sects are calling the Guyana

nightmare an extreme result of the brainwashing they say is practiced by several—but not all—cults.

Dr. William J. Winter, a Florida neuropathologist whose daughter was once involved with a large sect, says conversions are most successful when young people are highly disturbed over crises, such as loss of a lover or failure in college.

**Welcoming committees.** At secluded weekend recruiting sessions, he says, the most vulnerable candidates are separated from doubters. They are hugged and showered with expressions of love by members, who often have not even mentioned the name of their sect.

Dr. Winter says that by the time preaching begins, the minds of the prospective members "have been so focused on the intense feelings of warmth and pleasure provided by cult members that they experience strong pangs of guilt and betrayal unless they believe and obey."

Expressing outrage at the deaths in



Guyana, some parents are demanding that government outlaw "kidnapping by mental coercion," revoke tax exemptions of groups whose leaders appear to be profiting from the sects, and restrict the organizations' soliciting.

Molly Koch, founder of a Baltimore anticult group called the Personal Freedom Foundation, says: "Now maybe people in government will wake up to the horrors that are going on in those cults."

While cautioning against any violation of religious freedoms, Representative G. William Whitehurst (R-Va.) called for a congressional investigation of controversial religious groups. Previous requests for federal probes have been rejected by the Justice Department on the ground that such action would violate constitutional provisions for separation of church and state. But, says Whitehurst, "in view of Congressman Ryan's death, I expect Congress will give us nearly unanimous support."

Leaders of fledgling religious movements, with backing from sympathetic authorities, deny the charges of brainwashing and warn of a witch hunt that could trample individual rights. Bracing for a fresh wave of abductions and deprogrammings—the use of trained inquisitors to reverse members' allegiance to their groups—sect leaders promise to continue resisting through public protests and legal complaints.

**Disavowals of violence.** Leaders of controversial religious groups point out that violence of the kind that occurred in Guyana is almost unknown among most sects. Nearly all instances of alleged violence linked by police to cults in the U.S. involve tiny local organizations, such as a polygamist group of excommunicated Mormons called the Church of the Lamb of God. Authorities in Utah and other Western states have been trying to find the head of that sect for questioning about the murders or disappearances of several religious dissenters.

Another excommunicated Mormon, Immanuel David, who claimed he was God, was head of a small Utah cult that was apparently broken up by the suicide of David and the deaths of seven members of his family who jumped or were pushed from a hotel balcony in August.

In 1977, a small sect known as the



report of repeatedly breaking federal laws in attempts to found a worldwide government centered on the church. After an 18-month investigation, the subcommittee concluded that the church has used its thousands of members

and millions of dollars in various Moon-related businesses and political activities in this country and elsewhere.

These activities, the subcommittee said, violate immigration statutes, financial laws and tax codes designed to restrict the business and political activities of churches that receive federal tax exemptions.

Officials of the Unification Church claim they are being hounded by federal officials.

**Words of caution.** Traditional religious leaders, whose own organizations are coming under closer scrutiny from the Internal Revenue Service, have warned against allowing government to intrude too far into religious affairs. Many churches are upset over new rules requiring some of their tax-exempt auxiliaries to file financial statements with the IRS. In addition, a substantial number of Catholics and Protestants have protested what they regard as government interference in the running of church-related schools. Even anticultist Molly Koch concedes that "we can get into all kinds of trouble if the government starts defining what is a valid church."

Instead, many express hopes that the shock of the Guyana bloodbath will lead to a more temperate attitude among cults and their antagonists.

Says Eugenia Mandelkorn, a Virginia Beach, Va., anticult organizer: "Which ever way it goes, we're going to look back years from now and say this tragedy was the turning point." □

Hanafi Muslims seized several buildings in Washington, D.C., in an incident that resulted in one death and three injuries.

Other religious bodies, although not involved in violence, are nevertheless caught up in the controversy, which started years ago.

In a series of trials and grand-jury investigations, some believers and their parents have been charged with such offenses as kidnapping and assault. Others have been accused of the theft of federal documents.

One group that has been involved in many legal battles—the result, it says, of government persecution—is the Church of Scientology. Next month, 11 officials of that organization are scheduled to be tried on charges of conspiracy to burglarize government offices, steal documents and plant spies and bugging devices in federal agencies.

The indictments grew out of a long battle over the Internal Revenue Service's largely unsuccessful attempts to eliminate Scientology's tax exemptions on the ground that it fails to qualify as a nonprofit church.

On November 1, Korean preacher Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church was accused in a House subcommittee

TIME/DEC. 4, 1978

COVER STORY

## Nightmare in Jonestown

*A religious colony in Guyana turns into a cult of death*

**T**he large central building was ringed by bright colors. It looked like a parking lot filled with cars. When the plane dipped lower, the cars turned out to be bodies. Scores and scores of bodies—hundreds of bodies—wearing red dresses, blue T shirts, green blouses, pink slacks, children's polka-dotted jumpers. Couples with their arms around each other, children holding parents. Nothing moved. Washing hung on the clotheslines. The fields were freshly plowed. Banana trees and grape vines were flourishing. But nothing moved.

So reported TIME Correspondent Donald Neff, one of the first newsmen to



born humanitarian who degenerated into egomania and paranoia, had first ambushed a party of visiting Americans, killing California Congressman Leo Ryan, 53, three newsmen and one defector from their heavily guarded colony at Jonestown. Then, exhorted by their leader, intimidated by armed guards and lulled with sedatives and painkillers, parents and nurses used syringes to squirt a concoction of potassium cyanide and potassium chloride onto the tongues of babies. The adults and older children picked up paper cups and sipped the same deadly poison sweetened by purple Kool-Aid.

All week long, a horrified world marveled at new details of the slaughter and



fly in last week to the hitherto obscure hamlet of Jonestown in the jungles of Guyana, on the northern coast of South America. The scene below him was one of almost unimaginable carnage. In an appalling demonstration of the way in which a charismatic leader can bend the minds of his followers with a devilish blend of professed altruism and psychological tyranny, some 900 members of the California-based Peoples Temple died in a self-imposed ritual of mass suicide and murder.

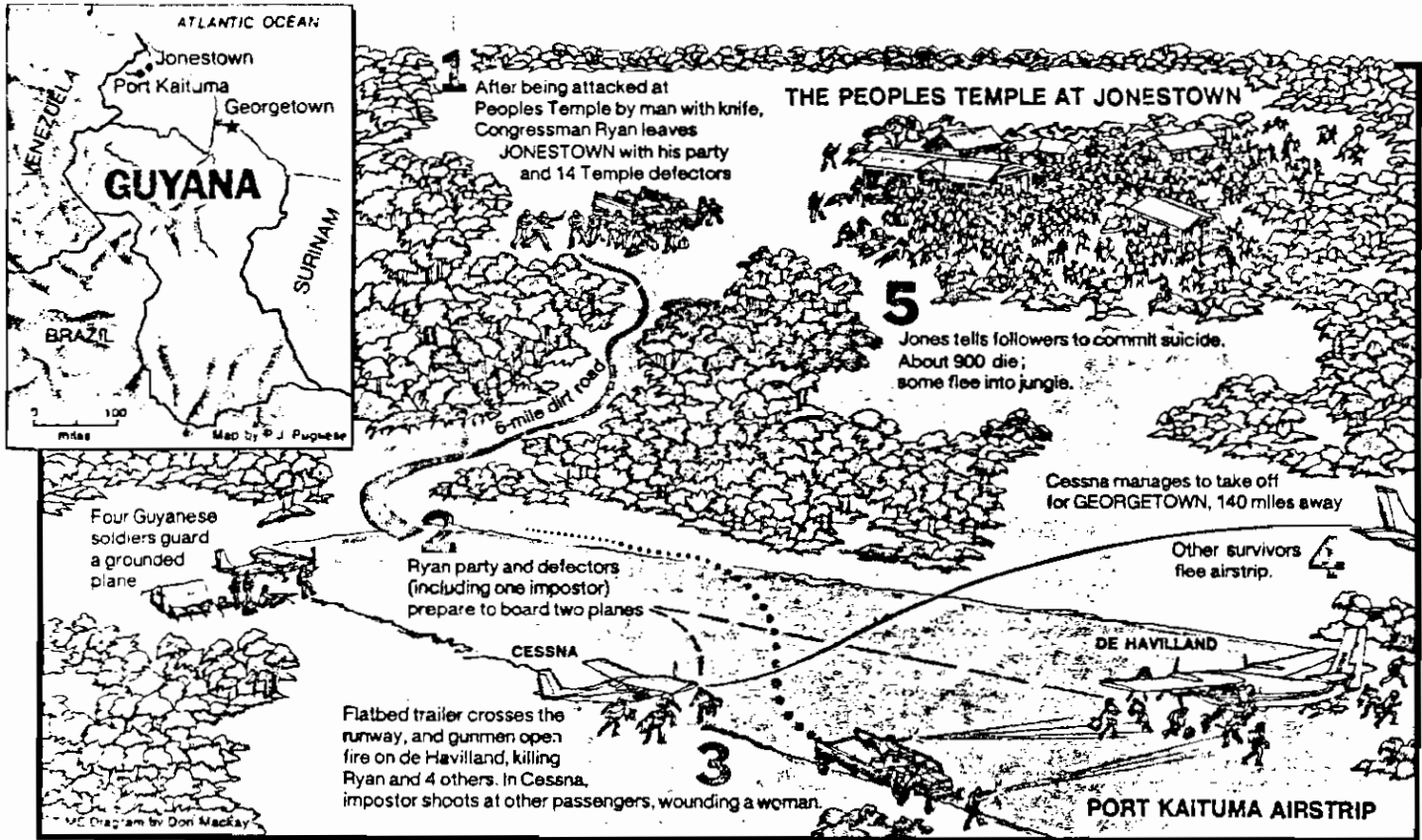
Not since hundreds of Japanese civilians leaped to their deaths off the cliffs of Saipan as American forces approached the Pacific island in World War II had there been a comparable act of collective self-destruction. The followers of the Rev. Jim Jones, 47, a once respected Indiana-



Ryan (top) just after knife attack; the disabled plane with the bodies of Ryan and his party; Jones being interviewed on the day of the massacre; the suicide scene in Jonestown (facing page)

new mysteries about Jones' cult. While the bodies swelled and rotted in the tropical sun, two U.S. military cargo planes flew in to bring back the remains to grieving relatives. At the same time, helicopters whirled over the jungles to search for survivors who were thought to be hiding from the cult. There were reports that the colony had been terrorized by Jones, who was rumored to be dying of cancer. Police found huge caches of illegal arms, ranging from automatic rifles to crossbows, but hundreds of thousands of dollars had disappeared from the colony's

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG ROBINSON - SAN FRANCISCO LEARNER



safe. And only at week's end did officials declare that there were virtually no survivors in the forest, and that the death toll was not 409, as first announced, but about 900.

Psychiatrists and other experts on group psychology and mind-control techniques offered rational explanations of how humans can be conditioned to commit such irrational acts (see box). Yet the stories told by those who survived were both fearfully fascinating and ultimately inexplicable. How could such idealistic, if naive, people set out to build an idyllic haven from modern society's many pressures and turn it into a hellish colony of death? This is how the Jonestown dream turned into a nightmare:

**I**n the spring of 1977, Ryan, a liberal but maverick Democrat, spoke with a longtime friend, Associated Press Photographer Robert Houston. Houston, who was ill, told Ryan that Houston's son Bob, 33, had been found dead in the San Francisco railroad yards, where he worked, just one day after he had quit the Peoples Temple. Though authorities said his son died as the result of an accidental fall, Houston claimed the cult had long threatened defectors with death.

A loner who liked doing his own investigating of constituents' concerns, Ryan began inquiring about Jim Jones and his followers, who had just started clearing some 900 acres in the rain forests of Guyana. Other unhappy relatives of temple members, as well as a few people who had fearfully left the cult, told

the Congressman that beatings and blackmail, rather than brotherly love, impelled the cultists to work on the new colony. Articles in *New West* magazine and the San Francisco *Examiner* in August 1977 further documented the temple's increasing use of violence to enforce conformity to its rigid rules of conduct. Members were routinely scolded by Jones before the assembled community and then whipped or beaten with paddles for such infractions as smoking or failing to pay attention during a Jones "sermon." A woman accused of having a romance with a male cult member was forced to have intercourse

with a man she disliked, while the entire colony watched. One means of indoctrinating children: electrodes were attached to their arms and legs, and they were told to smile at the mention of their leader's name. Everyone was ordered to call Jones "Father."

Ryan repeatedly asked the State Department to check into reports about the mistreatment of Americans in Jonestown. The U.S. embassy in Georgetown sent staff members to the colony, some 140 miles northwest of the capital. They reported they had separately interviewed at least 75 of the cultists. Not one, the embassy reported, said he wanted to leave.

That did not satisfy Ryan, who decided to find out what was happening in Jonestown by going there. Ryan wrote Jones that some of his constituents had "expressed anxiety" about their relatives in the colony. Back came a testy letter, not from Jones but from controversial Attorney Mark Lane, who has built a career on his theories of conspiracies behind the assassinations of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. Lane charged that members of the Peoples Temple had to flee the U.S. because of "religious persecution" by the Government and implied that Ryan was engaged in a "witch hunt." If this continued, he said, the temple might move to either of two countries that do not have "friendly relations" with the U.S. (presumably Russia and Cuba), and this would prove "most embarrassing" for the U.S. Lane asked that the trip be postponed until he was free to accompany Ryan. Ryan refused.



Jonestown family huddled in death



The Rev. Jim Jones was found shot



Bottles of the fatal cyanide on a table at the commune

Lane then found the time to go along.

Ryan took along eight newsmen as well as several relatives of temple members, who hoped to persuade their kin to leave the colony. The visitors arrived in a chartered aircraft, an 18-seat De Havilland Otter, at an airstrip in Port Kaituma, six miles from Jonestown. They rode to the colony along a muddy and barely passable road through the jungle in a tractor-drawn flat-bed trailer. At Jonestown all were greeted warmly by a smiling Jones.

**T**he members of the Peoples Temple put on a marvelous performance for their visitors. Reporters were led past the central, open-air pavilion, used as both a school and an assembly hall. The visitors saw the newly completed sawmill, the 10,000-volume library, the neat nursery, where mosquito netting protected babies sleeping peacefully on pallets. The colony hospital had delivered 33 babies without a single death, the tour guides said.

The highlight of the visit was an evening of entertainment in the pavilion. As a lively band beat out a variety of tunes, from rock to disco to jazz, the colonists burst into song, including a rousing chorus of *America the Beautiful*. Even the skeptical Ryan was impressed. He rose to tell his assembled hosts: "From what I've seen, there are a lot of people here who think this is the best thing that has happened in their whole lives." The audience applauded loudly. Jones stood up and led the clapping.

Privately, Ryan expressed a few reservations. He found some of the people he interviewed unnaturally animated. Yet no one had expressed any dissatisfaction with life at Jonestown. At the head table,

Jones told newsmen, "People here are happy for the first time in their lives."

Next day, however, NBC Correspondent Don Harris asked Jones about reports that his colony was heavily armed. Jones, who had been swallowing lots of pills, blew up. "A bold-faced lie!" he cried. "It seems like we are defeated by lies. I'm defeated. I might as well die!"

The colony's facade was crumbling. One Jonestown resident had nervously pushed a note into Harris' hand. "Four of us want to leave," it said. Ryan was getting other furtive pleas from cultists asking to go back to the U.S. with him. Jones was asked about the defectors. "Anyone is free to come and go," he said magnanimously. "I want to hug them before they leave." But then Jones turned bitter.

"They will try to destroy us," he predicted. "They always lie when they leave."

As divided families argued over whether to stay or go, Jones saw part of his congregation slipping away. Al Simon, father of three, wanted to take his children back to America. "No! No! No!" screamed his wife. Someone whispered to her: "Don't worry, we're going to take care of everything." Indeed, as reporters learned later from survivors, Jones had a plan to plant one or more fake defectors among the departing group, in order to attack them. He told some of his people that the Congressman's plane "will fall out of the sky."

The first violence occurred as Ryan conferred with Jones about taking those who wished to leave with him. Lane and

Jones' longtime attorney, Charles Garry, sat in on the negotiations in a room inside the pavilion. Suddenly a cultist later identified as Don Sly ran up to Ryan from behind, grabbed him around his throat with one arm and brandished a knife with the other. "I'm going to kill you!" Sly shouted. Lane and Garry wrestled the knife away from Sly, accidentally cutting the assailant. The blood spattered Ryan's clothes. Jones watched impassively. He made no move to interfere.

Outwardly, Ryan appeared calm and seemed to shrug off the attack. The visiting newsmen and relatives were alarmed. The colonists who wanted to flee were frightened. But the plans for departure proceeded. The party again headed down the rutty road to Port Kaituma, where the two aircraft awaited them. Lane and Garry stayed behind at Jonestown, knowing that the aircraft would be overcrowded. They expected to be picked up the next day.

At the crude landing strip, the party split up as

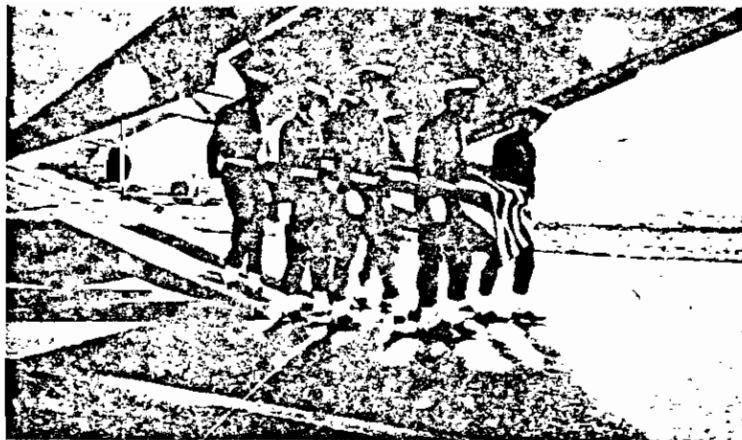
The bodies in the community hall







Cultist Layton under arrest



Ryan's body arriving in San Francisco



Grieved relative at temple's gate

its leaders tried to decide how to get everyone in the Otter and a smaller five-passenger Cessna brought in to help take the defectors out. A slim youth boarded the Cessna. "Watch him," one of the defectors warned Ryan. The Congressman, the newsmen and most of the fleeing cultists prepared to get into the larger craft. Then a tractor pulling a long trailer approached the field. The three men standing in the trailer did not appear to be armed, but the departing cultists were terrified.

The tractor crossed the airstrip. The men in it suddenly picked up guns and began firing at the people near the Otter. Before he could seek cover, Ron Javers of the San Francisco *Chronicle* was hit in the left shoulder. He crawled behind a plane wheel. NBC cameraman Bob Brown stayed on his feet, filming the approaching riflemen. "He was incredibly tenacious," Javers reported. "Then I saw him go down. And I saw one of the attackers stick a shotgun right into his face— inches away, if that. Bob's brain was blown out of his head. It splattered on the NBC minicam. I'll never forget that sight as long as I live. I ran, and then I dived head first into the bush and scrambled as far into the swamp as I could."

Inside the Cessna, the young man, later identified as Larry Layton, 32, proved that he should have been watched. He opened fire with a pistol, wounding a woman, Vernie Gosney, who was seated beside the pilot. Layton ran from the plane. After the assailants withdrew, the Otter was found to be too damaged to fly. Its crew rushed over to the Cessna and managed to take off for Georgetown with five survivors.

When the shooting was over, Ryan, Harris and Brown lay dead on the runway. Killed, too, were Greg Robinson, 27, a photographer for the *Examiner*, and Patricia Park, one of the cultists who had hoped to find freedom in the U.S. At least ten others were wounded.

The survivors spent a night of terror in a small bar near the Port Kaituma airstrip. They feared that the Jonestown gunmen would return to finish their deadly task. Drinking coffee laced with rum through the long

night, the defectors from Jones' colony told how far their community had fallen from their utopian ideal. They lived in fear, one reported, because "Jim Jones said the Guyanese government gave him authority to shoot anybody who tried to leave."

**T**he fugitives recalled the "white night" exercises in which loudspeakers would summon all Jonestown residents from their sleep. They would convene in the central pavilion, and Jones would harangue them about "the beauty of dying." All would line up and be given a drink described as poison. They would take it, expecting to die. Then Jones would tell them the liquid was not poisonous; they had passed his "loyalty test." But if ever the colony were threatened from without, he told them, "revolutionary suicide" would be real and it would dramatize their dedication to their unique calling.

The survivors of the landing strip massacre had no way of knowing that the

ultimate white night—a ghastly and irrevocable test of loyalty—had already taken place back in the Jonestown commune. Equally unaware of the murders at the airfield, Lawyers Lane and Garry witnessed the ominous signs of the impending disaster. Recalled Garry: "When 14 of his people decided to go out with Ryan, Jim Jones went mad. He thought it was a repudiation of his work. I tried to tell him that 14 out of 1,200 was damn good. But Jones was desolate."

After the Ryan party left for the airstrip, the two lawyers took a walk, comparing impressions of the visit. When they returned to the center of the village, they found all its residents assembled in the meeting hall. "You and Mark better not attend because tension is running pretty high against you," Jones told Garry. He and Lane retreated to a guest house several hundred feet from the pavilion.

The attorneys became frightened when they saw eight men run toward a nearby building and take out rifles and boxes of ammunition. Said Garry: "Then two young men whom I knew very well came to us with rifles at the semi-ready. They were smiling, very happy. 'We're going to die for the battle against fascism and racism,' they said. 'We're going to die in revolutionary suicide—with dignity and honor.' They were both black, maybe 19 or 20. I got the impression that perhaps they were sent down to get rid of us."

But the quick-witted Lane had a suggestion. Said he: "Charles and I will write the history of what you guys believed in." The gunmen paused. Then one said, "Fine." The ready-to-die cultists hugged both lawyers. Lane had another apt thought. "Is there any way out?" he asked. The armed men pointed into the bush and said the road to Port Kaituma lay in that direction. The attorneys plunged into the jungle. As they fled, they heard Jones shouting: "Mother, mother, mother." They heard shots and screams, then nothing.

The outer world would not get an accurate report of what had happened for nearly two days. But one survivor, Stanley Clayton, 25, reported that there may have been more coercion and fear than loyal devotion when the final test came. Clayton was cooking



Jones' lawyers Garry and Lane in Georgetown last week  
"Charles and I will write the history."

black-eyed peas in the colony's kitchen when the call to assemble was sounded. He recalled: "A security guard came into the kitchen, pointed a pistol at everybody and told us all to go to the pavilion." Jones had already ordered that preparations for mass suicide be started. But one woman, Christine Miller, was protesting. Continued Clayton: "She was telling Jones she had a right to do what she wanted with her own life. Guards with guns and bows and arrows pressed in on her, and Jones tried to make her understand that she had to do it."

Then a truck drove up to the pavilion. Said Clayton: "The people in the truck rushed up to Jones. He announced that Congressman Ryan was dead and we had to do what we had to do. He told the nurses to hurry with the potion. He told them to take care of the babies. He said any survivors would be castrated and tortured by the Guyanese army."

"The nurses started taking the babies from the mothers. Jones kept saying, 'Hurry, hurry.' But the people were not responding. The guards then moved in and started pulling people, trying to get them to take the potion." Clayton had seen enough. "It was dark by now. I went around to each of the guards, embraced them and told them, 'I'll see you later.' I skipped out into the bushes. All the time I kept saying to myself, 'I can't believe this. Jim Jones is mad.'"

Another survivor, Odell Rhodes, agreed that the armed guards helped persuade the cultists to kill themselves. But many, Rhodes reported, had taken their lives willingly. When Christine Miller challenged Jones' claim that "we've all got to kill ourselves," Rhodes said, "the crowd shouted her down." Many mothers, he added, voluntarily gave the cyanide to their children, then swallowed the poison themselves. Seated on the high wicker chair that served as his throne, Jones kept urging the crowd on, holding out the vision that all would "meet in another place." The scene quickly turned chaotic. Said Rhodes: "Babies were screaming, children were screaming, and there was mass confusion."

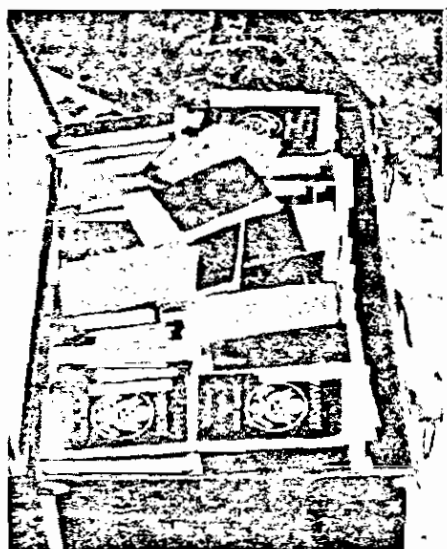
**N**evertheless, the lethal drinking continued. Cultists filled their cups from a metal vat on a table at the center of the pavilion, then wandered off to die, often in family groups, their arms wrapped around one another. The tranquilizers in the liquid concocted by the temple's doctor, Larry Schacht, 30, may have dulled their senses; it took about five minutes for them to die.

No known survivor had witnessed the entire ritual of death, so just how Jones died remained uncertain. He was found at the foot of his pavilion chair with a bullet wound in his head, an apparent suicide. A pistol lay near by. An autopsy disclosed that Jones had not consumed the poison and had not been dying of cancer, as he had often told his followers.

TIME Correspondent Neff arrived on the scene in the same Cessna that had flown away from the gunfire at Port Kaituma. He reported:

"The first of the bodies was a man by himself, face down, his features bloated, his torso puffed into balloon shape. Then more bodies, lying in a yard. Grotesque in their swollenness but looking relaxed as though comforted in their family togetherness. Nearly all of them were on their faces, eerie figures of slumber."

"I turned a corner, and the whole mass of bodies came into view. The smell was overpowering, the sight unworldly. There were no marks of violence, no blood. Only a few bodies showed the gruesome signs of cyanide rictus. Outside there were three dead dogs, poisoned. Down the road in a large cage was 'Mr. Muggs,' the commune's pet gorilla. He had been shot. In a tree-shaded area was Jones' home, a



Close to 900 passports

By Friday, the discrepancy disappeared.

three-room bungalow. Bodies were scattered through all three rooms, some on beds, others on the floor. The quiet was broken only by the meowing of a cat beyond the porch."

Skip Roberts, the Guyanese assistant commissioner of crime, told Neff that the first troopers arriving in Jonestown had found Jones' house ransacked and a large safe standing both open and empty. Two of the victims in the house had been shot: one of Jones' bodyguards and Jones' mistress, Annie Moore. Most of the eight men suspected of having taken part in the airport ambush also lay dead of poisoning in the house.

The first searchers reported finding \$500,000 in cash, many U.S. Treasury checks, an unspecified quantity of gold—and about 870 U.S. passports. The fact that Jones was rumored to keep some \$3 million in cash at his commune raised a mystery as to whether large amounts of money were missing. The passports far exceeded the number of bodies first re-

ported to have been found in Jonestown, prompting belief that hundreds more of the cultists had fled into the jungle.

Not until week's end did Guyanese authorities report that they had miscounted the bodies. Instead of 409, as first related, the count was about 900. U.S. embassy officials confirmed the discrepancy, attributing it at first to the finding of many children's bodies underneath the piles of others. The State Department later explained more plausibly that additional bodies had been found in outlying buildings—but failed to explain why those buildings had not been searched earlier.

**A**s the U.S. sent large Air Force cargo planes to return the mounting numbers of American bodies to the East Coast (at a cost of some \$3 million), the FBI moved into the case on the basis of a 1971 law making the assassination of a Congressman a federal crime. The FBI was also probing persistent reports by surviving members of the cult that Jones had decreed that if his community was destroyed, a "hit team" of other members would be dispatched to hunt down and kill any defectors who had turned against the cult, as well as any public officials considered guilty of harassing his group.

In San Francisco, outside Jones' remaining temple, a crowd gathered despite a chilly rain. Some were anguished—and angry—relatives of those who died in Jonestown. Inside the temple, Guy Young, 43, said he had "one son and a son-in-law that I know are alive." Then he sobbed, and another member explained: "His wife, four daughters, son and two grandchildren have been reported dead." Young recovered and added: "I don't regret one moment they were there. That was the most happy and most rewarding days of their lives."

Inevitably, bitterness erupted over whether the tragedy at Jonestown could have been prevented. Members of Congressman Ryan's saddened staff claimed that the U.S. embassy in Georgetown should have known of the cult's potential for violence and warned him. Sorrowing relatives of the victims charged that both the State Department and FBI should have long ago heeded their warnings about Jonestown. Yet both agencies had a valid point in claiming that there are important legal restrictions against the Government's prying into the private affairs of Americans living abroad, as well as constitutional protection of groups claiming to be religious.

The bickering, the probes, and the fear of hit men stalking their prey will not soon end. Yet the blame for the tragedy at Jonestown must rest primarily on Jim Jones. Even his 19-year-old son Stephan admitted, "I can almost say I hate this man." His father, Stephan said, "claimed he was afraid of nothing, which I know was bull. My father was a very frightened man."

# The Lure of Doomsday

**T**he Jonestown story, like some Joseph Conrad drama of fanaticism and moral emptiness, has gone directly into popular myth. It will be remembered as an emblematic, identifying moment of the decade: a demented American psychopomp in a tropical cult house, doling out cyanide with Kool-Aid. Jonestown is the Altamont of the '70s cult movement. Just as Altamont began the destruction of the sweet, vacuous aspirations of Woodstock, Jonestown has decisively contaminated the various vagabond zealotries that have grown up, flourished and sometimes turned sinister.

All new religious enterprises, of course, are liable to be damned and dismissed as "cults." The term is pejorative: cult suggests a band of fierce believers who have surrendered themselves to obscure doctrine and a dangerous prophet. Yet some religions that are institutions now, more permanent and stable than most governments, began as cults.

Although Jonestown has prompted a widespread revulsion against cults, both fairness and the First Amendment suggest that one standard of judgment can still be applied: "By their fruits ye shall know them." Visionaries, even when they operate from a cult, can bring dimensions of aspiration and change to religion, which otherwise might be merely a moral policeman. But the historical record of cults is ominous and often lurid. Jonestown, for all its gruesome power to shock, has its religious (or quasi-religious) precedents.

Jonestown has even been rivaled as a mass suicide. The Jewish Zealots defending the fortress of Masada against besieging Roman legions in A.D. 73 chose self-slaughter rather than submission; 960 men, women and children died. The event occupies a place of some reverence in Jewish memory and is not really comparable to Jonestown, the Zealots faced the prospect of slaughter or slavery, and their choice therefore possessed a certain passionate rationality. In the 17th century, Russian Orthodox dissenters called the Old Believers refused to accept liturgical reforms. Over a period of years some 20,000 peasants in protest abandoned their fields and burned themselves. In East Africa before World War I, when Tanganyika was a German colony, witch doctors of the *Maji-Maji* movement convinced tribesmen that German bullets would turn to water; they launched an uprising, and the credulous were slaughtered.

Religion and insanity occupy adjacent territories in the mind: historically, cults have kept up a traffic between the two. The medieval Brethren of the Free Spirit, the heretical Beghards and Beguines who practiced in Cologne and other Northern European cities, became nihilistic megalomaniacs. They began in rags but then, in the conviction of their spiritual superiority, which they eventually believed to surpass God's, adopted the idea that the general run of mankind existed merely to be exploited, through robbery, violence and treachery. In 1420 a cult of Bohemians called the Adamites came to regard themselves, like the Manson gang, as avenging angels. They set about making holy war to cut down the unclean; blood, they said, must flood the world to the height of a horse's head. They were finally exterminated after committing uncounted murders. In 1535 an army of Anabaptists under Jan Bockelson proclaimed its intention "to kill all monks and priests and all rulers that there

are in the world; for our king alone is the rightful ruler." They, too, had to be forcibly suppressed. Cultists, of course, are sometimes the victims of persecution. The heretical Albigensians, or Cathari, were broken by church crusade and massacre in the 13th century.

The U.S. also has had its bloody moments. Mormons were slaughtered in Illinois and persecuted elsewhere. But it was some 60 Mormons disguised as Indians who, in September 1857, committed the Mountain Meadows Massacre. With the help of 300 Indians, the Mormons killed more than 120 men, women and children in the Fancher party that was passing through Utah on the way to California. It was, says Historian William Wise, "the logical and culminating act of a society whose leaders believed themselves superior to the rest of mankind and who maintained that their own ecclesiastical laws took precedence over the laws of their country."

The tendency to join cults seems to come roughly in 50-

year cycles in the U.S. A wave broke in the mid-19th century, then again after World War I, and now in the '70s. For several thousand years, the rule has been that cults flourish in times of great social change. The success of cults today is based partly upon an edifice of unhappy sociological clichés: the breakdown of the family and other forms of authority, the rootlessness and moral flabbiness of life.

At their worst, the cults acquire a psychosis of millennialism. This chiliasm, playing at the drama of the last days, flourishes when life is no longer seen as ascendant. But no matter how democratically

advertised, visions of the New Jerusalem, Utopia or an Edenic Jonestown are bathed in a totalitarian light. And they are shadowed by glimpses of enemies: Antichrist, Gog and Magog; paranoia is often a cult's principal instrument of discipline. Even in 1978, one catches whiffs of an old dementia and witchfire.

**T**raditional religions allow people to live inside history, but still give sacramental expression to their spiritual longings. Cults too often strain to escape from history, through the reconstruction of Eden or a vision of the Second Coming. Experiments in earthly paradise have a way of ending in horrible irony. Zealots become infected with a fierce nostalgia for a mythical lost wholeness, an ecstasy of spiritual servitude. In Jones' cultish socialism, the spiritual and political were joined. In their terrific surrender, cultists reduce a multiform, contradictory world to cant formulas, and thus they become as dangerous as anyone whose head resounds with certainties. Cults are apt to become miniatures of the great totalitarian systems built on Nazi or Hegelian and Marxist foundations. There are eerie similarities of style: intolerance, paranoia, submission.

Such movements, wrote Historian Norman Cohn, strive to endow "social conflicts and aspirations with a transcendental significance—in fact with all the mystery and majesty of the final, eschatological drama." To be human is to live inside history, to accept a reality that does not respond to dogma or a megalomaniac's discipline. One escape is that found by the people in Jonestown.

— Lance Morrow



Albigensian heretics being assaulted by the faithful

Everywhere are glimpses of enemies: Gog and Magog.



# Messiah from the Midwest

*The sad story of a boy and his Bible*

The most vivid memories that childhood companions have of James Warren Jones—or "Jonesie," as they called him—are of his funeral sermons for dead animals in the Indiana town of Lynn, where he was born 47 years ago. Once, when he was 13, Jones invited a group of boys to his family's barn, recalls Harlan Swift, now a Chicago insurance executive. Amid burning candles, the aspiring preacher carefully opened a matchbox, revealing a dead mouse. "He had a service all organized," recalls Swift, "a very, very intense dramatic service for that dead mouse." A former classmate, Tootie Morton, was leery of these pet funerals: "Some of the neighbors would have cats missing, and we always thought he was using them for sacrifices."

The major industry in Lynn (pop. 1,360) is casketmaking; there are now four such factories. It was prime territory for the Ku Klux Klan, and George Southworth, now of Miami, recalls that Jones' father took part in the weekly meetings, with sheets and hoods, on a field near town. But other childhood acquaintances do not remember any link between the Klan and the elder Jones, a railroad man who worked only rarely after being gassed in World War I. Jones claimed his mother was an American Indian, but his cousin Barbara Shaffer says, "He made that up to impress somebody." He was an only child; the three lived in a one-story, tin-roofed frame house that has since been replaced by a supermarket.

Before he entered his teens, Jones picked up religion from a neighbor. Mrs. Myrtle Kennedy, who was a devout member of the Church of the Nazarene. He took to carrying a Bible, but no one made fun of the husky boy, who got into fights easily. He was a natural leader, gathering friends around him and telling them what to do.

He would preach to them, sometimes frightening his listeners with visions of a hell where, with senses undiminished, sinners burned forever. His first chance to mount a real pulpit came when he was 14 and working at a nearby hospital: some of his black co-workers invited him to bring his Bible and give a sermon at their church. "You could see there was something haywire even at that time," says Swift. But Mrs. Kennedy's daughter Thelma Manning remembers Jones more fondly: "He had a little white shaggy-haired dog. They were inseparable. I want people to know Jim Jones had a good side."

In 1945 his parents split up (his father died alone in a Lynn hotel six years later; his mother lived until 1977), and

he moved with his mother to Richmond, 16 miles away. The Richmond High School 1949 yearbook shows a handsome young man with slick black hair, staring ahead with a slight smile. That year, at 18, he married Marceline Baldwin, a nurse whom he had met at the hospital where they both worked.

Jones briefly attended Indiana University in Bloomington, but left for Indianapolis to preach and later form his own church. He went to night school at Butler University there, and ten years later he finally won a degree in education. At matriculation, he listed his religion as Unitarian, and for a time linked himself



Jones, at 22, with the monkeys he sold for his church  
"He had no wild streak at all."

to the Methodists, but the first church he founded, called the Christian Assembly of God, had no affiliations. It was in a poor neighborhood, and he won worshippers by distributing free food and helping people find jobs. He raised money by importing monkeys and selling them for \$29 apiece. He eventually made enough to pay \$50,000 for an old synagogue in a black neighborhood.

He had one son and adopted other children, ultimately eight in all, including blacks and Koreans. He once heard an affluent black doctor at an adoption agency reject a child because he was "too black." Snapped Jones: "Well, I'll take him then." The mayor appointed him the first full-time director of the Indianapolis human rights commission. Jones became increasingly embittered at the racism he encountered. His wife was spat upon while walking with their black child, and when one of his Korean children was killed in a car accident, he later said, he could find no white undertaker to bury her.

These frustrations were accompanied, late 1961, by a kind of vision of a nuclear holocaust destroying Indianapolis. Having read a magazine article listing a selection of the best places in the world to avoid an atomic war, Jones took his wife and three children to one of them. Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Belo Horizonte did not present many opportunities, however, so Jones moved to Rio to teach at the American school there. "Jim was no fanatic," said a woman who befriended him there. "He had no wild streak at all. They were just normal, rather naive and provincial Midwesterners. They led a simple life, and Jim's main concern was always for those people he saw suffering. He used to stop children in the street and talk to them, help them if he could."

But the church in Indianapolis, now called the Peoples Temple, was suffering from a lack of a charismatic leader, and Marceline was homesick, so Jones decided to return. He affiliated with the Disciples of Christ, a 1.3 million-member denomination, and in 1964 was ordained a minister by that group. But he still considered Indianapolis narrow and racist. A good friend, the Rev. Ross Case, also of the Disciples of Christ, had moved from Indiana to California, and Jones decided to follow him. He eventually brought more than 100 supporters to Redwood Valley in Mendocino County, north of San Francisco. Robert Kauffman, a former bank executive from nearby Ukiah, recalls that Marceline Jones walked into his bank and opened an account of nearly \$100,000.

Once established, Jones and his faithful began making evangelistic forays to San Francisco and beyond. He again bought an old synagogue, this one in the run-down Fillmore area of San Francisco's inner city. Using it as his headquarters, he opened an infirmary, a child-care center, a carpentry shop and kitchens for feeding the neighborhood poor. His services were dazzling, with soul and gospel music and dance groups. He attracted increasing numbers of black parishioners (the Peoples Temple was more than 80% black). He involved them in liberal causes, busing them to protest demonstrations, making them canvass for politicians he favored, and ordering them to undertake letter-writing blitzes.

He took them on pilgrimages, one of which brought eleven busloads to Indiana and Florida (to visit his then-retired spiritual mentor Myrtle Kennedy); another brought part of his flock to Washington, D.C., where he had them pick up trash on the Capitol grounds. Editorialized the Washington Post in August 1973: "The hands-down winners of anybody's tourists-of-the-year award have got to be the 660 members of the Peoples Temple... who bend over back-



wards to leave every place it visit more attractive than when they arrived."

Politicians were particularly impressed. Governor Jerry Brown came to the Peoples Temple. San Francisco Mayor George Moscone, who received important help from Jones in his close 1975 election, appointed him to the city's housing authority in 1976. (Said the mayor about last week's horror: "I proceeded to vomit and cry.") The sheriff and district attorney were temple visitors, but Lieutenant Governor Mervyn Dymally outdid them all by dropping in on the 27,000-acre plantation in Guyana that Jones had acquired in 1974. Vice President Walter Mondale recognized Jones' help in the 1976 campaign and invited him aboard his private plane. When Jones helped a rally for Rosalynn Carter in San Francisco by busing in 600 loud supporters, he was rewarded with a "Dear Jim" thank-you note hand-



Jim and Marceline Jones and family in California (1966)

They "leave every place they visit more attractive."

written on White House stationery. Jones claimed to have received appreciative letters from Senators Hubert Humphrey and Henry Jackson, and HEW Secretary Joseph Califano, among others.

The temple swelled with new members—up to 20,000, Jones claimed. But

his services became stranger and stranger. Jones would "heal" parishioners by pretending to draw forth "cancers" that actually were bloody chicken gizzards. And his megalomania soared. Said his old associate the Rev. Case: "Jim stopped calling himself the reincarnation of Jesus and started calling himself God. He said he was the actual God who made the heavens and earth." Jones ordered his followers to buy, and sell to the public, small pictures of him to ward off evil. He demanded for the temple's coffers all members' savings and earnings, amassing a fortune that a former mem-

ber estimates at \$15 million. Discipline gave way to brutal beatings. It was a progression perhaps foreshadowed way back in Indianapolis when the young preacher once threw his Bible to the floor and yelled at his associates, "Too many people are looking at this instead of looking at me!"

## Why People Join

*[He has] no more pressing need than the one to find somebody to whom he can surrender, as quickly as possible, that gift of freedom which he, the unfortunate creature, was born with.*

—Dostoyevsky. *The Brothers Karamazov*

The landscape of their minds was as grotesque as the corpse-littered village they left behind. They had started as seekers after meaning, direction, comfort and love. The Peoples Temple, which provided a number of social services to the poor, had filled their lives with purpose. But in the jungle of Guyana, it had all turned into fear and hatred.

Why did they join an organization like the Peoples Temple? And why did they stay in it? Few if any of the thousands of cult groups in the U.S. are as violent as the Guyana group was in its last days, but many of them share a number of unusual characteristics. Social scientists who have studied these groups agree that most cult members are in some sort of emotional trouble before they join. Says Dr. Margaret Thaler Singer, a psychologist at Berkeley: "About one-third are very psychologically distressed people. The other two-thirds are relatively average people, but in a period of depression, gloom, being at loose ends." Such people are vulnerable to well-planned recruitment techniques. These usually involve displays of effusive affection and understanding, or "love bombing," as one psychiatrist puts it. Once recruits start going to meetings, they are frequently subjected to various drills and disciplines that weary them both physically and emotionally, producing a sort of trance.

Cut off from family and friends, the new member gets repeated infusions of the cult's doctrines. The lonely, depressed, frightened and disoriented recruit often experiences what amounts to a religious conversion. Former members of such cults frequently say that something in them "snaps." report Flo Conway and Jim Siegelman, authors of *Snap-ping*, a new book on what they call "America's epidemic of sudden personality change."

At this point, the cultist's life is no longer his own. Personalities change from the lively and complex patterns of normality to those of an automaton reciting what he has been taught. The usual problems of living have been replaced by a nearly childish existence in which the cult and its leaders supply all rules and all answers. Erich Fromm, in his classic treatise on the rise of Nazism, called this process the "escape from freedom."

"Most members have little or no sense of inner value," says Stefan Pasternack, associate clinical professor of psychiatry at Georgetown University School of Medicine. "They have a desire to be part of something meaningful. In joining, they regress and relax their personal judgments to the point that they are supplanted by the group's often primitive feelings. With a sick leader, these primitive feelings are intensified and get worse. The members develop a total identity with the leader and in the process take on his sickness."

Just as the cult members give themselves up to the group, the leader too takes his entire identity from his followers.

Both leader and followers thus see an overwhelming necessity to keep the group alive and intact. Dissenters are often punished severely. Loyalty is intensified by claims that the outside world is evil and threatening. Return to normal life becomes more and more difficult, even terrifying.

"The gravest threat imaginable to such a group is for someone to try to take members out of the 'family,'" says U.C.L.A. psychologist David Wellisch. Leo Ryan's mission to Guyana may have been just such a threat, the spark that triggered the tragedy.

With Jones' own behavior growing more paranoid and the sudden presence of the Congressman and the press, some experts believe there was almost a psychological inevitability to the disaster. "Following that type of fragmentation, there was only one thing left," says Dr. Stanley Cath, a Boston psychiatrist. "They could return to the world of reality, but they would have had to face their own inadequacies, the world they had already discarded, the families they had already discarded. So for them, death was preferable because death had already been proclaimed rebirth."



Betsey Lane

Moonies in Yankee Stadium, 1976: 37,000 have devoted their lives to the South Korean 'messiah'

## THE WORLD OF CULTS

**T**hey crouch in dark basements in New York and San Francisco, worshipping the Devil. They wait patiently for the Second Coming or scan the skies for the spaceship that will bring the New Age. A few practice polygamy in isolated mountain communes. Tens of thousands have abandoned their families, friends, educations and careers to follow the teachings of a leader they will never meet.

By one estimate, 3 million Americans espouse the teachings of 3,000 religious and nonreligious cults. The groups run the gamut from the Bible-toting pacifists of The Way in Ohio to the marijuana-smoking Rastafarians from the Caribbean, who revere the late, deposed Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie as the Messiah. Some cults condemn all forms of violence and serve as unquestioned forces for good in the world: The Farm, for example, a 1,200-member commune in Tennessee, has donated more than \$1 million to build homes and hospitals for earthquake victims in Guatemala. The Bible of the Church of Satan, on the other hand, declares: "If a man smite you on the cheek, smash him on the other."

### DEFENSIVE ALLIANCES

Cults have ebbed and flowed through American history almost from its beginning, and there are signs that the latest wave may have peaked in the mid-1970s. But after the horror of Jonestown, warns sociology Prof. Jim Richardson of the University of Nevada, "there's a possibility of a backlash. There is already an anti-cult movement that has tried to get investigations and tax rules against cults." In reaction, some cults are exploring defensive alliances; last April, the Church of Scientology, the Unification Church and the Children of God formed APRL, the Alliance for the Preservation of Religious Liberty. Synanon donated at least some supplies and equipment to the Peoples Temple, and links have

been reported between Synanon and the Hare Krishnas.

Among the more conspicuous—and controversial—cults now active:

**SYNANON:** When Charles Dederich, a former alcoholic, founded Synanon in 1958, it was considered a revolutionary therapeutic community. Hundreds of alcoholics, drug addicts and down-at-the-mouth toughs moved into the California drug- and alcohol-rehabilitation center and, through a rigorous self-help pro-

gram, emerged healthy and happy. Aided by a skillful PR and contributions from wealthy liberals, Synanon became a \$5 million business. But as the community grew and prospered, it changed. Dederich, a powerful, hypnotic leader, came to see Synanon as an alternative to the outside world. He ordered his followers to shave their heads and swap spouse. When he decided there were too many children, Synanon, he mandated vasectomies for men (himself excluded) and abortions for women. Dederich, 65, began a campaign of intimidation against the media and anyone else who criticized the community. One lawyer who won a \$300,000 judgment

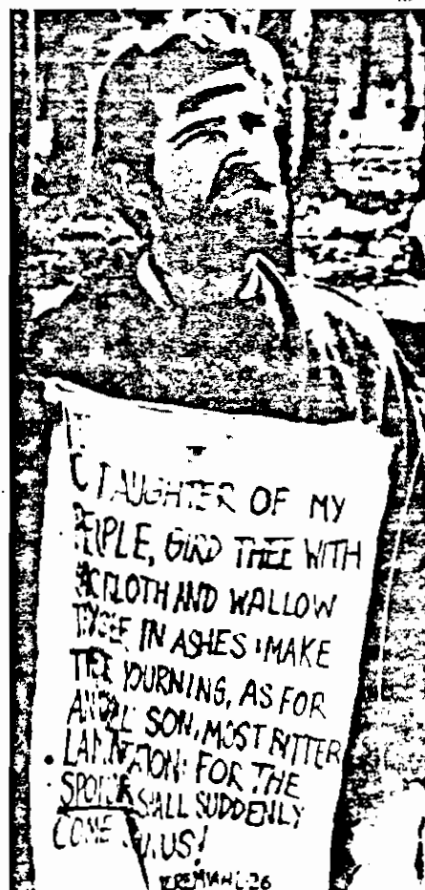
against Synanon was bitten by a rattlesnake left in his mailbox—allegedly by two members of Synanon. Today, the 900-member community resembles a cult far more than it does a drug center, and Dederich is trying to have it formally incorporated as a religion.

**HARE KRISHNA:** "We don't consider ourselves something that's sprung up in the '60s, founded by some man, but followers of an ancient tradition stemming from Krishna himself," says Laxmi Natl, president of the Berkeley, Calif., temple of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. The Hare Krishnas began in the sixteenth century in India, where they were just one of many sects worshipping a reincarnation of the Hindu god of creation, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada brought one version of Krishna worship that was never very popular in India to the U.S. in 1966, and it turned into an easily identifiable cult. Young Hare Krishnas shaved their heads, put on saffron robes and took to the streets with their Hindu chants. They studied the ancient Vedic texts and promised their followers inner peace as an alternative to political chaos.

The Krishnas can be aggressive in the repeated requests for money, and some members have had serious run-ins with the law. But for the most part, they live quietly on several large farms they own or in the houses they rent in metropolitan areas. Since Prabhupada died earlier this year, the group has not had a charismatic leader and may now be becoming more sect than cult. Most members now dress conventionally in public, and have stopped their street-corner chanting. Stillson Judah, who has studied the Krishnas at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, believes the group wants to find a "way of accommodating itself with society."

**UNIFICATION CHURCH:** South Korean evangelist Sun Myung Moon, 58, con-

Child of God: A gospel of sex and doom



REMANE 26

trols the lives of 37,000 U.S. fol. When they join the Unification Church, young Moonies (their average age is 24) are encouraged to break all ties with their families and work as long as eighteen hours a day soliciting donations. As is typical of many cult leaders, Moon lives in comfort on a \$625,000 New York estate while his followers reside in communal centers and are encouraged to give all their possessions to the church.

Moon preaches a contorted blend of Christianity, Puritan morality and Oriental philosophy. His followers hardly seem to notice that his spiritual message—that all the world's religions should be merged into a single movement headed by Moon himself—sounds secondary to his financial and political motives. He controls an empire of at least \$75 million that ranges from a Wyoming delicatessen to a Tokyo trading company, and the U.S. Congress has investigated his ties to the authoritarian government of South Korea. Moon, who came to the U.S. in 1972, does not seem worried. "God has been very good to me," he says.

**CHILDREN OF GOD:** They began standing on street corners in the late 1960s, exhorting passers-by to give up their worldly ways and follow God. At first it was hard to tell them from the other Jesus freaks of the time. But the Children of God were clearly different. Their leader, David (Moses) Berg, now 58, taught that doomsday was just around the corner—and that he was God's messenger for the final days. He communicated with his followers through rambling "Mo letters."

Many of these epistles show a preoccupation with sex. In recruiting, Berg urged his female disciples to use their charms: "You roll those big eyes at them and peck them with that pretty little mouth and you flirt all around them," advised one Mo letter. By at least one report, things didn't stop there: on the island of Tenerife, COG women were accused of taking prospective recruits to bed. When local prostitutes complained of the competition, Berg reportedly put a curse on the island—and shortly after that, the worst accident in airline history took 583 lives on the runway at Tenerife.

Life with Berg isn't easy. Former COG members tell how they had to memorize Bible verses before they could sleep or eat, and pick through garbage for food and clothes. Berg fled the country in 1974, just before the New York attorney general published a highly critical report on the COG. But the cult still claims 10,000 members in 120 communes around the world, and Berg still keeps in touch with periodic Mo letters.

Some organizations can come to resemble cults even though their members do not live communally or share religious beliefs. Werner Erhard, for example, has impressive power over thousands of Americans who have taken his est courses. He promises them spiritual and emotional fulfillment in 60-hour seminars in which the chief techniques are attacking the ego, restricting food

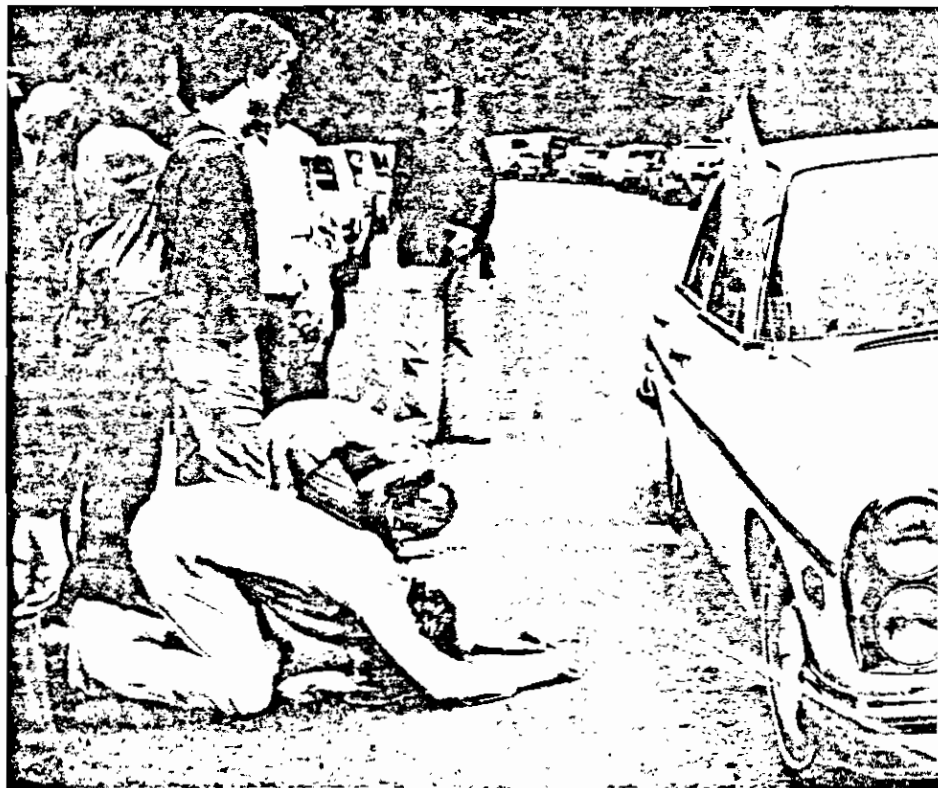
and drink and inducing mental str

Growing numbers of parents of cult members are worried enough about losing their children to take the extreme, and costly, step of kidnapping and "deprogramming" them. Ever since deprogrammer Ted Patrick was sentenced to a year in prison in 1976 for such a kidnapping, many have first sought legal sanction through "conservatorships" to temporarily gain court-ordered custody of their adult children. The process is clearly working. Hundreds of devotees of various cults have been deprogrammed in the last few years. But some cults are fighting back with lawsuits to bar deprogramming as an infringement on religious freedom, and sometimes the faith of the young believer is not shaken. Several

monitor a group only when there is evidence that it has broken Federal law or poses a security risk. Many government officials say they would not change the present laws, even if they could. "We can't have it both ways," said Homer Boynton, bureau spokesman. "In a democracy, in order to have freedom and liberty, there has to be a certain amount of risk-taking."

#### 'ATTRITION IS VERY HIGH'

But cults—even the most religious—are not above the law. The government can prosecute a group when it appears to have committed a crime. Last summer, for example, eleven Scientologists—members of the quasi-scientific, self-help cult founded by former science-fiction writer



Janet Fries

Krishnas bow to their leader in 1976: Now, trying to blend in

have successfully sued their deprogrammers for invasion of privacy.

In desperation, some parents have asked the Federal government for help. But government spokesmen say their hands are tied by the Constitution's guarantee of religious freedom, lack of hard evidence that specific cults are committing crimes, and by agency guidelines. The Justice Department must have information that a "kidnap" victim is being held against his will, for ransom and has been taken across state lines before it can prosecute a case. (Before last week's tragedy in Guyana, the FBI had only one complaint against the Peoples Temple: a letter from the worried mother of a cult member alleging kidnapping, but there was no evidence that he was being held against his will.) The Federal Bureau of Investigation can

L. Ron Hubbard—were accused of breaking into a government office and were indicted on 28 counts of conspiracy, stealing government property, obstruction of justice and perjury. Six states outlaw use of marijuana and other drugs in cult religious ceremonies.

In the end, the best hope for those concerned about the power of cults may be that many members are dropping out of their own accord. "A lot more people leave these groups voluntarily than the or the deprogrammers would like to admit," says sociologist Richardson. "Attrition is very high." Even within the mind-bending anthills of the cults, Americans seem to retain at least some of their native wit—and their stubborn independence

—MELINDA BECK and SUSAN FRAKER with ELAIN SHANNON in Washington, JEFF B. COPELAND in San Francisco and bureau reports



# HOW THEY BEND MINDS

**H**ow could more than 900 people be twisted to the point of swallowing fatal doses of poison?

Clearly, the immolation at Jonestown wasn't entirely voluntary. But the orderly rows and heaps of dead and the linked arms of family groups were powerful testimony that Jim Jones's disciples hadn't enough will to resist his orders, backed up by a few armed guards. And perhaps the greatest horror in the scene lay in the realization that more or less ordinary people had been so indoctrinated—and in the seed of fear that nearly anybody might be manipulated the same way.

Erica Heftmann, 26, who left the Unification Church of self-styled Korean messiah Sun Myung Moon more than two years ago. "I was drilled and instructed to kill." Isolated from the real world and pressured by their peers, converts become wholly accepting of the leader's power—and his paranoia—and they put their welfare and their will totally in his hands. Jones's people even practiced suicide drills, in which they swallowed a drink of bitter liquid he said was poison. "I would think, before being told it wasn't poison, that soon I would be dead," recalls Wanda Johnson, 42, who

most successful use much the same methods of indoctrinating converts.

Most cults know exactly which kind of recruits they are looking for. Synanon guru Charles Dederich prefers drug addicts, whom he can rehabilitate and then bind to his community for life. Jones sought out the oppressed—especially poor blacks, prostitutes and other outcasts—who would welcome his message of egalitarianism and his offer of a communal home. But religious groups such as the Moonies, the Children of God and the Hare Krishnas prefer college students of above-average intelligence and idealism who will be a credit to the cult. In her own interview with more than 300 former cult members, University of California psychologist Margaret Singer found that no more than a third were suffering from marked psychological distress at the time of their induction.

## 'A SENSE OF BELONGING'

Timing is the key factor in seeking converts. Religious recruiters like to hit the college campuses at exam time, sit in libraries, waiting to make "eye contact" with students who are having difficulty deciding on a course of major study or recovering from a broken romance. In cities and resort areas, proselytizers seek out footloose backpackers who have taken time off from school to "find" themselves. "These kids are looking for a sense of significance and belonging," says UCLA law professor Richard Delgado, who has been studying cults for years. "Everybody is vulnerable. You and I could be Hare Krishnas if they approached us at the right time."

Studies indicate that the Moonies have devised the most sophisticated methods of luring converts. They call the first phase "love bombing." Once recruiters spot lonely students, they draw them into friendly conversation that typically ends with an invitation to dinner. Surrounded by smiling strangers who hold their hands and shower them with compliments, the students are then invited to a weekend retreat. "As instructors, we didn't tell them the truth," recalls Erica Heftmann. "If we had told them that we believed Moon was the Messiah or that we stayed up all night praying in the snow, they'd never join."

During the retreat, guests are subjected to an endless round of games, singing, exercise and vague religious discussions, with little time for sleep. Only the most discerning recruits realize that they are not being allowed to ask probing questions or make close friends. Yet ev-



*Kamikaze pilots: Certain death in the name of discipline and love of country*

In a sense, such mind-bending is only an extreme form of familiar human experience. In military training, soldiers are taught to take appalling risks in the name of discipline and love of country; extending that process, Japan's kamikaze pilots in World War II accepted certain death. Jailers can be permitted to abuse and even torture their prisoners, and citizens easily shut their eyes. At the extreme, Adolf Hitler engineered the Holocaust that massacred 6 million Jews. Powerful personalities often gather groups of dependent admirers: the demonic charisma of Charles Manson mesmerized his ghoulish groupies to murder total strangers with sadistic pleasure. Jones was only the latest extreme in the wave of cult leaders of the past decade.

To many scholars who have studied the new American cults—and to many ex-cultists themselves—the behavior of Jones's following was shocking but not surprising. "As a Moonie, I would have done exactly what they did," maintains

spent eight years in the Peoples Temple and lost her youngest child at Jonestown. "I would think, 'It doesn't matter if I'm dead.' I felt relief."

Almost any passionate enthusiasm can generate cultic behavior if there is a charismatic figure to beguile disciples. In recent decades, cults have coalesced around crusading politicians, rock stars, visionary intellectuals and gurus of the human-potential movement.

## CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

In religion, sociologists typically distinguish cults from mainline churches, which serve as custodians of normative values, and from sects, which partially withdraw from society in order to purify established doctrine. Cults emerge when groups wholly withdraw from prevailing religious practices and members commit themselves completely to the leadership of charismatic and highly authoritarian figures. Although today's cults vary widely in their ideologies, the



Remains of Jews who took their lives at Masada:  
A decision for death rather than enslavement



Charles Manson and his ghoulish  
groupies: Mesmerized to murder



explains Stanford University psychiatrist Donald T. Lunde. "It's a very tragic mental defense mechanism exploited the hilt by the charismatic leader."

Cults may also exploit members sending them into the streets to solicit funds or sell things like flowers, usually on behalf of pseudonymous organizations. "The leader tells you to go out and get \$250," says Sherry Dietrich, 28, who joined the Children of God after a divorce in 1974. "Believe me, you beat your

brains out to get that \$250 and you don't come home until you get it."

In virtually all cults, sex is a central means of controlling members' lives. Some cult leaders, like Manson and Jones, use some of their followers—both male and female—for their own pleasure. But most religious cults rigidly segregate males and females and teach them that sexuality itself is evil. "For the Moon not only ranges all marriages

every recruit is assigned a monitor who accompanies him everywhere, even to the bathroom. On Sunday, the potential converts are pressured to stay on for one last party. "Once they called their family or employer and told them they weren't coming in on Monday, we knew we had them for seven full days," says Heftmann. "And if they stayed seven days, they almost always became a member."

Isolation—from family, friends and all contact with the outside world—is the first step in what Los Angeles psychiatrist Frederick Hacker calls "the washing stage" of cultic mind control. Next, recruits are made to feel guilty about their past lives and recognize their need to be reborn like their all-knowing "brothers and sisters" in the new family of the cult. Several cults, such as the Children of God and Hare Krishna, even give recruits new names or devise private measurements of time to underscore the cult's new reality. But the development of a new personality is gradual. It requires various forms of sense deprivation, inculcated through loss of sleep, low-protein diets and exhausting rounds of chanting, praying and indoctrination in the thought of the new father figure.

#### TOOL OF SATAN

"It's all so simple," observes Tufts University psychiatrist Stanley Cath, who has studied the conversion techniques used by cults. "Converts have to believe only what they are told. They don't have to think, and this relieves tremendous tensions." Indeed, at Synanon, members tell recruits, "We will

do your thinking for you," and inside Moon's camps independent thought is labeled a tool of Satan.

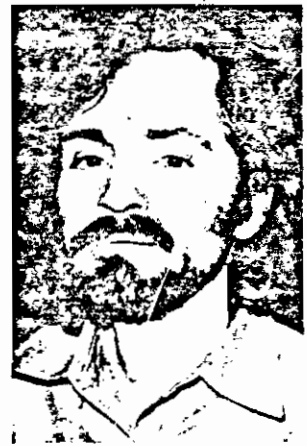
A critical point in the conversion process occurs when recruits are forced to make a major commitment to the cult. This may mean signing over one's property, bank account or children to the group, as in some religious cults, or even joining in drug or sex orgies, as demanded by Charles Manson in his "family." "Once you've done something that major, it's very hard to admit even to yourself that you've made a mistake, and subconsciously you will go to great lengths to rationalize what you did,"

also demands such powerful repression of sexual feelings that many members revert to pre-puberty innocence. "Women stop having their periods sometimes and men may find that they do not share as often," reports ex-Moonie Christopher Edwards, 24. "People begin to look younger. I was 22 when I came out and people told me I looked 15."

#### OUTLET FOR AGGRESSION

To bind members tighter to the cult, leaders create the image of an evil outside group that is supposedly trying to destroy them. For Hitler, it was the Jews. For Manson, it was blacks. For Jones, it was the FBI, the CIA and the Ku Klux Klan. For Synanon's Dederich, it is the government and the news

Los Angeles Times



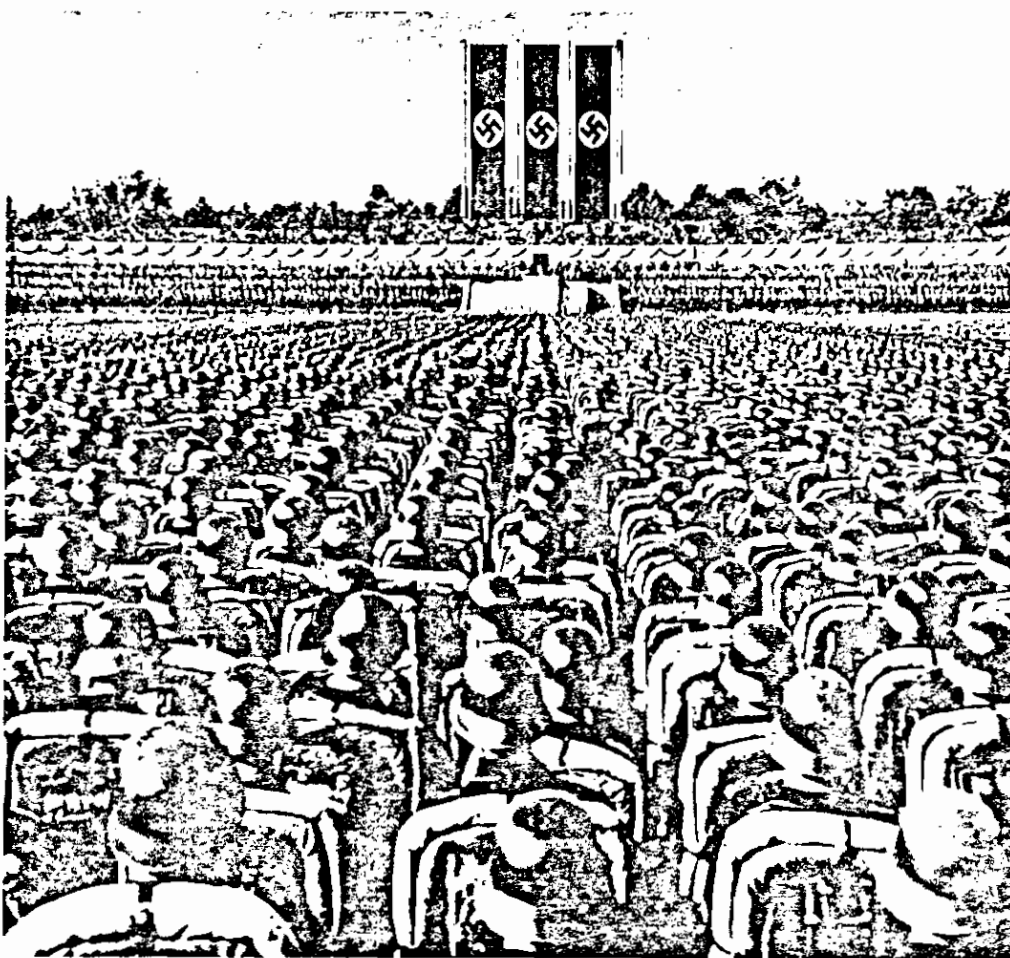
media. And for most of the militant religious cults, the enemy is the members' natural parents. "Cults allow people to hate without feeling guilty and provide a safe, group-sanctioned outlet for aggression against the enemy," observes psychiatrist Hacker. Cult leaders also persuade members that they will die, either at the hands of enemies or cult loyalists, if they defect. The Children of God tell defectors that either God or Satan will strike them dead, and perform exorcisms on those who persist in leaving. Ex-Scientologists recall warnings of the "2-45" solution—anyone who drops out should get two .45-caliber slugs.

### BASIC NEEDS

What transforms some cult leaders from spirited humanitarians into frenzied despots? Jones, for one, began his career by providing a humane haven for society's outcasts, yet ended up crushing those in his care. In such cases, a charismatic leader, who may be slightly disturbed, discovers that he is fulfilling a basic human need for increasing numbers of people. "Pretty soon, he is believing more and more in his own power, and it grows so that he begins to be burdened by it and a little paranoid," reasons psychiatrist Ari Kiev of the Cornell University Medical College. So he develops new, more punitive measures for binding his followers to him. "And if there comes a threat, a terminal illness or exposure, the leader resents the idea of anyone surviving him," adds New York psychiatrist Herbert Hendin. "He doesn't want any part of whatever is left to survive."

Jim Jones's Peoples Temple differs from other cults because of its emphasis on suicidal imagery, says Yale psychiatrist Robert J. Lifton, a specialist on death and thought control. Last week's atrocity, Lifton believes, "was a mixture of submitting to mass suicide and submitting to murder." As his own mind deteriorated into paranoia, Jones prepared his people for collective death by running them through suicide rehearsals. This enforced group commitment and the illusion that death for them would merely be a transition to an eternal community. "When Jones asked them to die for him, some may have gone willingly with him, but a large number probably just didn't know how to resist," Hendin argues. "You're dealing with a suicide, not of the mass group, but of the leader, who is taking the group with him."

Thus the tragedy at Jonestown was only superficially like past cases of mass suicide—the Jewish Zealots at Masada who killed themselves rather than be captured by the Romans, for example, or the Japanese who died on Saipan rather than surrender to the Americans in



Hitler leading a Nazi rally at Nuremberg: The power to command a 'final solution'

World War II. Instead of patriotism, religious faith or a cause larger than themselves, Jones's followers were ensnared by Jones himself. And like most charismatic figures, he left no one who could replace him as the personal embodiment of the cult. Although survivors in San Francisco insist that the Peoples Temple will go on, ex-members say, it cannot survive without Jones.

Inevitably, the Jonestown atrocity has triggered national debate over cults and whether they can—and should—be curbed. Church scholars caution that the religions of Jesus, Muhammad and Buddha all began as cults, and civil libertarians warn that religious practices, no matter how odious, are protected by the First Amendment. The only legal way to attack them would be to prove that the psychological techniques practiced by some cults amount to coercive mind control, leaving their victims legally impaired. But the theory is tenuous. Dr. Stephen P. Hersh, assistant director of the National Institute of Mental Health, believes that the brainwashing attributed to cults is, in most cases, "high-pressure salesmanship." "Just because converts adopt beliefs that seem bizarre to their families, it does not follow that their choices are dictated by cult leaders," he says.

Historians say cults emerge whenever there is a serious break in the structure of

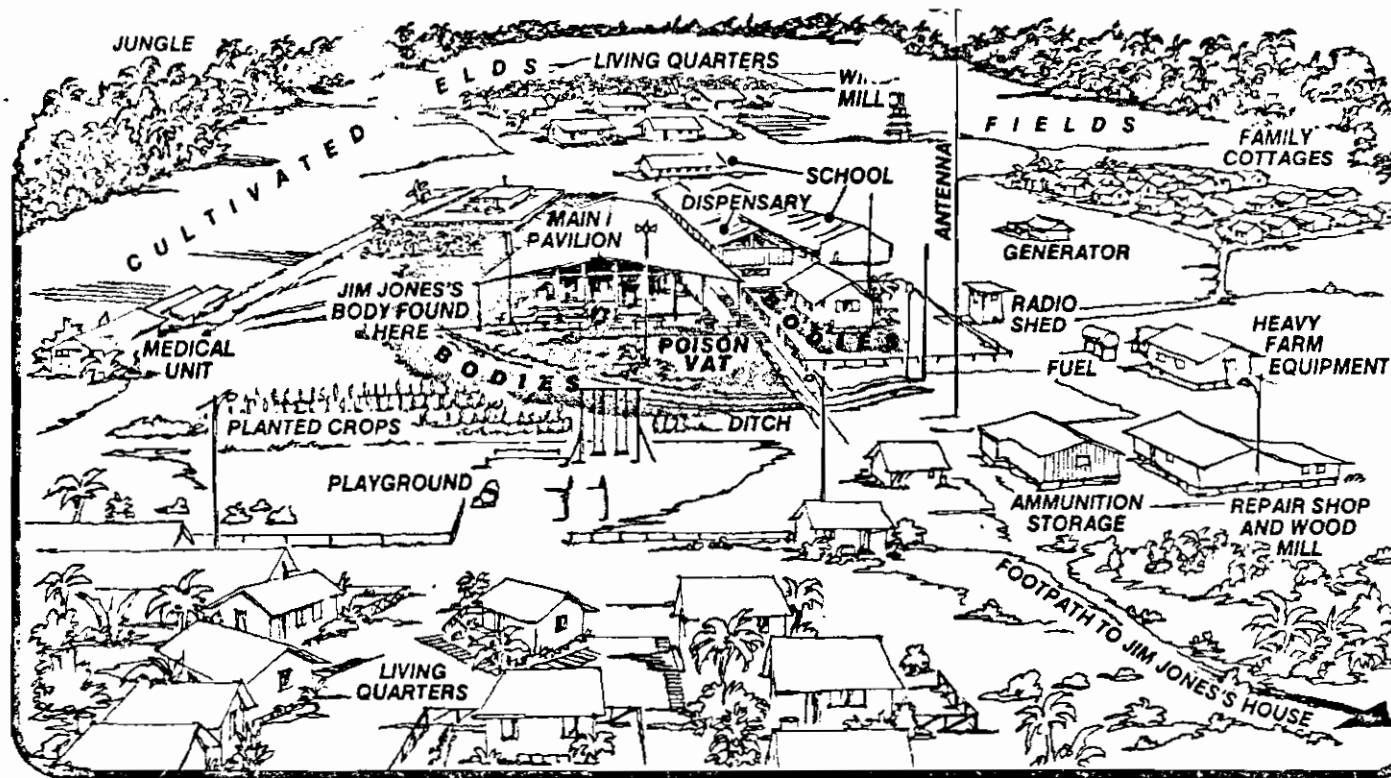
society. The Industrial Revolution in England, the French Revolution and the westward movement in the U.S. all spawned new religious sects. Some scholars believe that the traumas of the '60s attracted young Americans to charismatic politicians and then, after the war in Vietnam, to equally charismatic religious figures. Although some experts think the current interest in cults has peaked, most insist that the better-financed groups, such as Moon's, will be around as long as the basic institutions of society—the family, schools and established churches—continue to turn out emotional orphans susceptible to a cult leader's blandishments.

### A HEAVY PRICE

Even critics concede that many of today's cults work for social good and individual need by drawing recruits away from drugs and anomie into a steady life of service. But at best, the price is a heavy one in a free society: in joining a cult, the recruit surrenders a large measure of personal responsibility and potential growth in exchange for spiritual security. The mass deaths at Jonestown may yet do some good if they make searching young people think twice before seeking a family among the cultists.

—KENNETH L. WOODWARD with MARY HAGER in Washington, JANET HUCK in Los Angeles, MICHAEL REESE in San Francisco, RACHEL MARK and WILLIAM D. MARBACH in New York and bureau reports





Jones's jungle outpost: A tropical socialist commune that turned into a fear-ridden concentration camp

# LIFE IN JONESTOWN

**T**he color movies and glossy promotional brochures painted the picture of an idyllic tropical paradise, a love-filled commune dedicated to good works and racial harmony. They showed smiling, suntanned women cheerfully making bread and doing laundry. They showed comfortable, well-furnished cottages, complete with drapes and carpeting. As the leaders of the Peoples Temple told it, their devout and dedicated members had conquered 900 acres of hostile jungle and in its place they built Jonestown—"an interracial, sharing community" with lush fields, a school, a clinic and even the beginnings of industry. And every day at Jonestown, the brochures said, "the laughter of children rings through the air. Our children are our greatest treasure."

There may have been a day when some, perhaps much, of that was true. In 1974, the followers of Jim Jones heeded his call to build a Christian, socialist commune in the wilds of Guyana. They planted their crops and built substantial, if plain, housing. They established medical facilities that were advanced by Guyanese standards. There was little racial friction. Children seemed especially happy. "I just picked up a hurt monkey out of the jungle and he's going to be all mine," Maury Janaro, 16, wrote to her mother in San Francisco. "I love it here."

Then, about a year ago, life at Jonestown began to change. Meat, served twice a day at first, was served once, then

not at all. The workday increased from eight hours to eleven. The commune's security forces began to impose harsher discipline. Jones himself seemed to deteriorate physically; he began gaining weight, he started to slur his words, he looked dazed—and the rumors began to spread that he was on hard drugs, or seriously ill. Last spring, Deborah Blakey, once a trusted aide, escaped from Jonestown and Jones went into a frenzy. He shouted endlessly over the loudspeakers, "I am the alpha and the omega." From then on, well before its grisly end, Jonestown turned into a virtual concentration camp.

## RICE AND GRAVY

By day, all but a select handful of Jonestown's residents labored under the broiling sun; by night, they endured endless re-education meetings and sleep-destroying harangues that boomed out over the camp's public-address system. Their living quarters—the pleasant cottages of the film—were crammed with as many as 30 people. Their food was rice and gravy. Their sins—drinking a glass of wine or snitching a packet of powdered fruit-drink mix—were punished by public beatings. Not even the children were exempt. When they misbehaved, they were tied up and left in the jungle at night, or dropped into the waters of a well, to be pulled out only when they screamed for forgiveness. In every sense, says Edith Bogue, who escaped

from the camp hours before the mass suicide, Jonestown was "a nightmare."

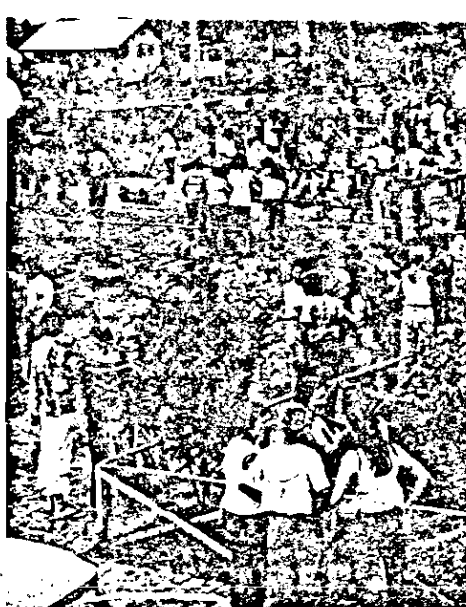
Jonestown's day began at 6 a.m. The public-address system blared out a wake-up call, and the communards lined up in a tent for the food they were given at every meal: boiled rice, occasionally flavored with bits of pig offal or a bit of green vegetable that the cult members called "pig weed." Then they set off to the fields, for what was often a full day's work. "We had agronomists, biologists and chemists out there," recalls Harold Cordell, 42. "But you could make anything grow. The weeds would come back and choke the plants within 24 hours." Each day, Jones's security forces followed the workers to the fields, lurking in the shade of the surrounding jungle to spy on them. "We'd work temperatures as high as 120 degrees a day with only a ten-minute break," says Bogue's daughter, Juanita, 21. "If you stopped to rest and leaned on your back, the security forces would write down the time you wasted."

The commune was billed as an agricultural experiment designed to help Guyanese people. But there was even enough food to feed Jonestown's settlers, and the few who escaped the week's mass suicide were undernourished, with half-healed sores covering their bodies. "They just popped boils and blisters," says Jim Bogue. "They weren't getting enough protein." The commune had cattle, pigs and chickens at Jonestown.





Politikens Pressefoto



Greg Robinson © 1978, San Francisco Examiner

Before the apocalypse: Cult members at Jonestown entrance (left), waiting for Ryan's party to leave, welders at work



Politikens Pressefoto

town, but meat was either sold or reserved for "selected people"—namely Jones, his family and his favorites. The community's elite enjoyed imported coffee and soft drinks, canned ham and tuna fish. When Jones wanted to reward a cult member, he occasionally did so by passing that person a few leftovers from his second heaping plate of food.

Jones and his handpicked lieutenants regulated every aspect of life at the commune, even the sexual lives of the cult members. A couple who wished to live together applied to the camp's Relationships Committee for approval, and had to spend a three-month trial "dating period" before they could have sexual relations. Even then, they received no special living arrangements. Like single members of the commune, couples slept on a narrow mattress, separated from others in their living cottages only by a sheet hanging from a cord. "There was no privacy," says Harold Cordell. "People could hear your every noise, cough and whisper. We were packed in like cattle."

#### PUBLIC HUMILIATION

Interracial "partnerships" were encouraged in Jonestown. Promiscuity was not, and commune members who violated Jones's moral code were subject to beatings and public humiliation. One woman who had had sex with a male cult member without the permission of the Relationships Committee was forced to have sex with a second man—while all other members of the cult watched. At the evening meetings, Jones often ordered women and men to tell of their sexual relations with him. "I've been ----- by Jim Jones and believe me, sisters, it's the best ----- I've ever had," women would say.

In the early years of the commune, the "business meetings," as Jones called them, were held only once or twice a week. In Jonestown's final months, they became a nightly ritual that often lasted from 7:30 until 3 a.m. Jones would

ramble on for hours, railing against everything from the white man's sins in Africa to the venality of some communards who balked at giving him their wristwatches. "If you started to nod off, the security people would come up behind you," recalls Cordell. "They would hit your shoulder and tell you, 'Wake up. Stand up if you have to. Stay awake.'" After the exhausted cult members finally went to sleep, Jones would often flick on the public-address system, screaming "Alert, alert, alert!" He would then order all of Jonestown's residents to gather in the commune's pavilion to listen to his warnings about impending attacks by the U.S. Army, the Central Intelligence Agency or other "enemies" of the settlement.

To Jones, almost everyone—including the cult members themselves—was a potential enemy. The inhabitants of Jonestown were unable to communicate with their families, and letters from relatives in the U.S. were never delivered to those in the commune. When Edith Bogue tried to speak to her husband by shortwave radio before she moved to Jonestown from San Francisco, she was invariably told, "Sorry, too much atmospheric static. Maybe next time." Only carefully selected members were allowed outside the camp, and even then their children were kept at Jonestown as hostages to ensure their return.

The strict isolation of the communards was only part of Jones's rule. In the commune's final weeks, rebellious teenagers were put in Jonestown's "extended-care unit"—isolation cells where they were pumped full of sedatives and other drugs. "When they came out a week later, they were changed," says Cordell. "They couldn't talk to you and they walked around with empty faces." Cult members considered to be guilty of minor infractions, such as taking an extra rest period during the workday, were called on "the floor" at the nightly meetings. Forced to stand in front of the chair

that Jones called his "throne," they were harassed and threatened by the armed security forces until they broke down, wept and pleaded to be forgiven.

More severe "crimes"—attempts to run away, unwillingness to give personal possessions to Jones, direct criticism of Jones—were punished with severe beatings. The beatings were usually administered by the security forces as the other commune members watched. On one occasion, Jones ordered a group of elderly communards to beat a woman with their canes, explaining, as one witness recalls, that "it will be good for your hypertension."

#### WEIGHTED GLOVES

At other times, transgressors were forced into boxing matches with husky members of the security forces wearing weighted gloves. One woman, whose husband turned her in to the authorities when he caught her drinking wine, was lashed 100 times with a leather belt. When another communard, Tommy Bogue, 17, tried to escape, he was called on the floor and beaten unconscious by a security guard while his fellow commune members were ordered to shout, "Kill the little bastard." After the beating, Bogue was dragged out, shackled in red-hot metal cuffs and put in a hard-labor work detail clearing away a section of the jungle.

There were special tortures reserved for errant children. Sometimes they were taken into a darkened room where electrodes were attached to their bodies; after the electric shocks, they were told

that was what happened to children who failed to smile at Jim Jones or forgot to call him "Dad." At other times they were blindfolded, tied to a stake in the jungle and told they would be left there until poisonous snakes bit them.

When Jones wanted to punish children especially harshly, he threatened them with a mythical creature that the communards called Big Foot. After dark, a child would be tied up and taken to a well in which two commune disciplinarians were hiding. The youngster would be lowered into the well where the cultists would grab his feet, pull him under the water and then let him be pulled out—only to be dragged in again and again. As one commune member recalls:

"You could hear the child screaming all the way there and all the way back. 'I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Father. I'm so sorry.' And if he didn't scream loud enough how sorry he was, then [Jones] would send the child back down."


#### "WOULD YOU KILL?"

Toward the end, Jones called the cultists together for one of his White Nights, this one a three-day period of brainwashing and intimidation. "Would you kill one of your children?" he asked. "You would if you loved them enough." He pointed to people in his captive audience and asked, "How would you kill your child?" When some suggested a violent method, Jones said, "Well, I wouldn't kill them that way.

I would do it gently with a sedative. I put them to sleep."

Announcing that the commune was on the verge of being destroyed, Jones then ordered a 50-gallon vat filled with orange drink brought into the pavilion. He told the commune members that they must drink, and sacrifice themselves for the Peoples Temple. They would be to feel dizzy, Jones told them, and when they did, they were to move outside to a grassy area and lie down. The commune members drank. Two women among them, apparently shills, began to move and toppled over, and suddenly dozens rushed outside and began to keel over. There was no poison in the orange drink—they had been felled by the power of suggestion. That White Night was just a rehearsal for the deadly performance that was to come.

—RICHARD STEELE with TONY FULLER  
TIMOTHY NATER in Georgetown



Larry Jones Age 13

SELF Analyst TO DAD

1. I'm guilty because in the states I would always steal pamphlet money and go by ice cream, candybars. And stuff like that.

And another guilt is I always would fight and get in trouble and put waist DAD and six peoples time on the floor.

I'm guilty because I do not show enough time with seniors.

True confessions: An exercise in self-analysis by a Jonestown youth

## LETTERS TO 'DAD'

NEWSWEEK'S Chris Harper examined a number of letters that members of the Jonestown commune wrote to Jim Jones. Excerpts:

From Rosa Keaton, 71:

Thanks for all the wonderful opportunities which you have provided for us all who are members of this beautiful Socialist family ... You, Dad, have bought six months food for us here in Jonestown, at the cost of \$675,000. No one else would do that. You practice the highest principle of Socialism-Communism than anyone else in the entire universe. We should emulate you and Mother because you are the best Father anyone can have. Mother is the best Mother that we can have ... I have given material things, money and time to the cause, but I will not betray my trust to the cause knowingly. I do not have a commitment to anything but the cause ... I know that

one is due to obey authority and respect authority. I try daily to be obedient and respectful ... I have no hostility towards Dad for anything and I do not regret being in the cause. I only am sorry that I did not know about it 20 years ago ... Up until 1959, I was afraid of death and dying, but since then I have thought of death and dying as just going to sleep ...

From Larry Jones, 13:

... I'm guilty because in the states I would always steal pamphlet money and go by ice cream, candybars. And stuff like that ... I'm guilty because I do not show enough time with seniors. I tear down structure in class. I take advantage of people kindness. I talk about the states. I gossip about people, specially sisters. I don't like to stop my games and listen to the news. I sleep in service because I like to act had and tough in front of my friends, I talk

back to my teacher when he or she confronts me in class ...

From Osislee Hilton, 84:

... I am so glad to be in Jonestown. This is the happy time of my life. Started August 18, 1977 when I got here ... Dad, you no the first white night we had here before then I was afried to die, I stood in the rain that night. I saw divided time between life and death, I have not ben aferid cience. I have something to die for now and something to live for. I love the little childrens, see them grow here, them crying, see them smiling. Watching the elders, hoping they are glad as I am because they are here ... I brought four blankets here. Have not got one now, someone els have them. I love to have one nice blanket. Thank you ...

From Stephanie Jones, age unknown:

... Sometimes I'm over hard on the children I teach which Im sure studds their groth. Im lazy in my work and I dont put your examples you show me into action ... I think that when people say oh I want to dies its selfish as hell and I hate the fact that people say it. It pisses me off because they arn't thinking of the children that hafe to try to understand it ... I also think its selfish because they want to die so bad and they can take so much pain but they cant take the pain to work ...

# LEO RYAN'S LAST MISSION

**T**o some of his wary colleagues, Rep. Leo Ryan looked like one of those moral grandstanders not unfamiliar to their ranks—a reformer who liked causes, and liked his publicity, too. Whether donning jailhouse denims for an inmate's-eye view of California prison conditions or wrapping himself in an arctic windbreaker to witness the slaughter of baby seals in Newfoundland, the 53-year-old Democrat seldom failed to get his picture taken in the process. This fall, when he tried to enlist fellow lawmakers for an on-scene investigation of the Peoples Temple colony in Guyana, he didn't get a single taker. Said one Californian who declined the invitation: "I just thought, 'There goes Leo on another one of his things'."

But to constituents and staffers, Ryan's commitment to oppressed citizens—or seals—seemed genuine. Outrage at the witch hunting of the McCarthy years propelled him into politics, they said. As the son of a crusading Nebraska journalist, he displayed an affinity for press people, and as a Shakespeare buff, he had an admitted instinct for the theatrical. Yet he withheld announcing the Guyana trip until after his landslide reelection last month to avoid any implication of a vote-grabbing ploy, and aides claim that reporters, scenting a good story, joined the journey largely on their own initiative. Ironically, they speculate now, Ryan might have survived the chancy venture had he gone without the newsmen and TV cameras.

## EYE-CATCHING SORTIES

Lanky, silver-haired Leo Ryan was a congenital activist. Born in Lincoln, Neb., he emerged from a World War II Navy stint to earn a master's degree in Elizabethan drama and teach English in Nebraska. Moving to California, he embarked on a political career that carried him from the city council of South San Francisco to the state legislature and on to Congress in 1972.

As the first Democrat from San Mateo County in 39 years, he attracted notice with some of his eye-catching investigative sorties: having already taught school in Watts and served eight days in Folsom prison, he rushed off to Newfoundland to denounce the annual seal-pup "harvest." Yet, he was not so much flamboyant as headstrong. "On issues," says California Rep. John Burton, "he would take on anybody, sometimes just for the sake of taking them on."

Even though the Peoples Temple stood outside his district, he took it on at the behest of an old friend whose son had mysteriously died after proposing to quit the cult. San Francisco Examiner reporter Tim Reiterman, who had been following the story closely, got permission to accompany Ryan, together with photographer Greg Robinson. The San Francisco Chronicle asked him to make room for reporter Ron Javers. Meanwhile, West Coast free-lancer Gordon Lindsay, who had been pursuing the story on his own, contacted NBC and The Washington Post. NBC's "Today" show decided to send him as a consultant along with investigative reporter Don Harris and cameraman Robert Brown, and the Post dispatched South America correspondent Charles Krause.

There was a mutual convenience in the suddenly swollen Ryan contingent. For the reporters, the congressman's mission gave them entree to Jonestown. For Ryan, his aides say, the presence of reporters and TV cameras seemed to provide insurance against possible violence. But inevitably the expedition hit Jonestown like a blunderbuss. Reporters began wandering around on their own, asking hard questions. When tough-minded fact-finder Don Harris handed Jones a letter from cult members seeking to leave, it was plainly provocative to a man who seemed explosively primed for provocation. In the violence that followed, Ryan, Harris, 42, Brown, 36, and Robinson, 27, were fatally shot; Krause, Reiterman, Javers, NBC producer Robert Flick and sound man Steve Sung survived (Lindsay had been barred from entry into Jonestown).

After last week's funerals for Ryan and



Ryan with seal: A reformer who went on scene

the slain newsmen, there was some agonized reflection in San Francisco city rooms and network studios. Said one NBC staffer: "We had long talks about our fault in sending Harris and Brown. We believe we did the right thing. But the toughest thing to face is the question, would it have happened without a TV camera?" Others argued that violence was implicit in the Jonestown situation and would have burst forth anyway. "Any guy who's going to hold suicide drills and pull a trigger is going to do it whether there are cameras rolling or not," said ABC news producer Av Westin.

## 'ACTION PEOPLE'

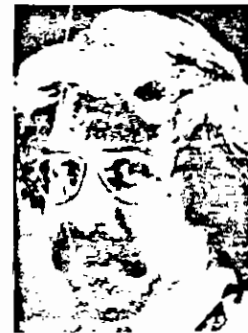
Ryan himself was not insensitive to the dangers, but he followed his usual penchant for investigating things firsthand. "You have to put fear aside and do what you think is right," he told Holsinger on the eve of the trip. Holsinger recalls that when Ryan met Harris and his camera crew, an immediate rapport developed. "They were action people," he said. "You could see the camaraderie forming."

Harris, too, had been troubled by the "gray area" of conflicting reports out of Jonestown. According to co-workers, he was determined to get the answers. But in sad retrospect, it was as if the adventurous group had been drawn together inexorably, for an appointment in Samarra.

—DAVID GELMAN with GERALD C. LUBENOW in San Francisco, BETSY CARTER in New York and bureau reports

Newsmen Harris, Brown, Robinson: Victims in a chancy venture

San Francisco Examiner





Jones as loving master and preacher in early 1970s: 'Just look at my hands. They're not dirty.'



# THE EMPEROR JONES

**H**e was a self-proclaimed messiah in a polyester suit, a man who played God from behind mysterious dark glasses that gave his followers the impression that he was omniscient. With Ganyesque oratory and "miracles" of healing that were pure medicine-show hokum, he mesmerized his flock and demanded fanatical loyalty and adoration. His appeal to the poor, the black and the troubled—and his ability to deliver their votes and their support—made him a friend of public figures. But behind locked temple doors, he flaunted his power over people and forced them to fulfill his consuming needs for financial, egotistical and sexual gratification.

## PARANOID ILLUSIONS

Jim Jones wanted to be many things: a con man and a cult hero, a political force in California and a dictator in his own Utopia. But as his public and private lives began to tear him apart and his foulest paranoid illusions loomed as realities, Jones reached out for the one dream that probably dominated all his actions. Godlike, he dealt out death.

Among grieving relatives of the dead, embarrassed friends of Jones's in high places and millions of horrified onlookers, the search for answers will go on long after the last bloated body has been counted. This was no firebrand revolutionary, but a man who preached a nonviolent socialist brand of love and racial equality. This was not a Manson, transforming the wounded birds of society into deadly weapons, but a leader who told young people who felt like "nothing going nowhere" that they

could "be someone" and do good. "He had this soft, beautiful voice," says a former member of his Peoples Temple. In and out of the Temple, it was difficult for many people to recognize the monster that was growing within the man who could always smile and reassure them: "Just call me Jim."

Perhaps the story should begin with the dream. Lynetta Jones was once a young anthropologist, working with primitive tribes in Africa and trying to decide between her career and marriage. Torn, she dreamed repeatedly of her dead mother. Finally, from the far side of a river, Lynetta's mother called to her that she would bear a son who would right the wrongs of the world. Lynetta accepted a proposal of marriage. Her first child was a boy. And she was convinced that James Warren Jones was a messiah.

Jim was born in 1931 in Lynn, Ind., a hamlet of 900 about 70 miles east of Indianapolis. His parents were white and his father, James Thurmond Jones, was a member of the Ku Klux Klan. Young Jim claimed that Lynetta was part Cherokee, and would later refer to himself with pride as "an All-American mongrel." Jim's father was in poor health and

died when he was young. The family was poor, and Lynetta worked occasionally in a factory 20 miles away, leaving her son in the care of a neighbor. But Jim was close enough to his mother to give her reason to keep believing in the dream.

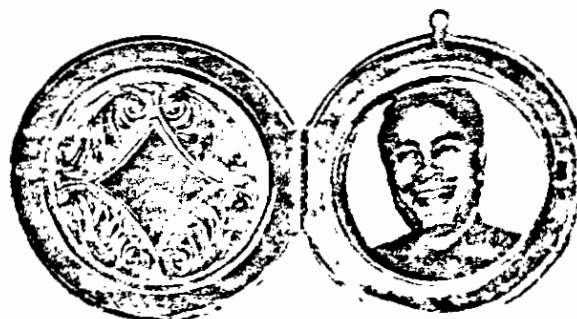
"Jim always had several animals," she calls his cousin Barbara Shaffer. "I took in strays all over town. He befriended everyone, animals and people." Lynetta Jones was thrilled by her son's work with animals. She saw it as a gift from Saint Francis.

## SEEDS OF HORROR

Raised as a Methodist, Jim was fascinated by pulpit oratory. "We used to pretend-church," says Vera Price, who played with him as a child. "He'd always be the preacher, standing up making sermons." Another neighbor says that even when he was only 7, the boy would place his speeches with calls for strict discipline. "He would have ten or twelve youngsters and put them through their paces," recalls the neighbor, now 73. "He'd hit them with a stick and make them cry. He had a power that most boys don't have."

High-school classmates don't recall any such displays of power. They say that Jones was popular but not a leader. They noticed his growing interest in religion, but never thought of him as a fanatic. Only in retrospect does anyone claim to have spotted seeds of the horror to come. "I had a hunch something bad was going to happen to him," says a middle-aged man in Lynn. "He was smart as a whip. But he had some strange ideas. He never fit in with the town. He was different."

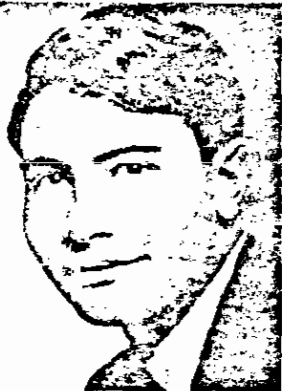
Twisted love: The Temple sold souvenir lockets







HAPPY SCHOOL DAYS  
1937



JONES, JAMES WARREN. *Academic*  
Senior Hi-Y. *Jim's six syllable medical vocabulary*  
*astounds us all.*

Jones in grade school and high school, at a 1953 choir broadcast and with the monkeys he sold in 1954: His roots were Methodist and his childhood game was pretend church—but one Indiana neighbor saw 'a power most boys don't have'



Indianapolis Star photo.

After graduating from Richmond High School, 20 miles from Lynn, Jones required ten years of on-and-off studies before receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree from Butler University. During that decade, he worked part-time as a hospital orderly and met and married nurse Marceline Baldwin. He also became pastor of a Methodist church in Indianapolis, where his strong integrationist views made him a target of bigots who jeered him and even tossed dead cats into his church.

Soon Jones decided that "there was no love" in the Methodist Church. Disenchanted, he carried his message into a church of his own, the Community National Church. He also served briefly as associate pastor of the Laurel Street Tabernacle. But his belief that blacks should be admitted there stirred up a furor on the church board, and he became committed to the idea of his own liberal-minded church. To raise the money, he sold pet monkeys door to door, at \$29 each. When bigots knocked him off his bicycle during his selling rounds, he only grew more determined. By 1956, he opened the doors of his new place of worship on North New Jersey Street in Indianapolis: the first Peoples Temple.

At that site and then at a former synagogue on North Delaware Street, the Temple seemed to flourish as a model of integration and liberalism. A soup kitchen fed anyone who was hungry. An employment desk was staffed with volunteers who helped people to find jobs. A

nursing home provided health care. Jones and Marceline, parents of one boy of their own, eventually adopted eight children of varying racial backgrounds; they encouraged members of the racially mixed congregation to follow their example. In 1961, Indianapolis Mayor Charles H. Boswell appointed Jones as director of the city's Human Rights Commission. As his mother's dream had promised, Jones seemed to be making at least a dent in the wrongs of the world.

#### A STRANGE POWER

But while he remained unshaken by local bigots, Jones appeared vulnerable to forces within his own mind. "I think perhaps he started out to do something good," says the Rev. Raymond Bosler, a retired Roman Catholic priest who served with Jones on the Human Rights Commission. "But he had a strange power over people, and that kind of power tends to go to the head."

Ross Case, a Disciple of Christ minister who worked with Jones for several years, echoes that theme: "I've never seen anyone relate to people the way he could. He would build them up, convince them that anyone as intelligent and sensitive as they were ought to do whatever it was that he wanted them to do."

At about that time, Jones's sense of his own powers drove him toward Father Divine, the famous black cult leader in Philadelphia. He took a group of young people to visit Divine and returned with some of Divine's gospel songs, as well as

the evangelist's insistence on fierce personal loyalty. Soon Jones instituted an interrogation committee in the church to question anyone who dared to speak against him. "He said everybody ought to love him," says his former associate minister, Thomas Dickson. "If they didn't, he'd get awfully violent—not physically, but verbally." Adds former disciple Judy McNulty: "I knew that was when he got his idea to play God. Not too long after that, I got out."

Those who remained witnessed some startling changes. The poor people's socialist set up several corporations and began flexing his capitalist muscle in the real-estate market. Going over the ledgers of Jones's profitmaking Jim-Lu-Ma Corp., one accountant chuckled that he was glad the Internal Revenue Service couldn't see the books. Later, when purchasing a building for one of his two nonprofit corporations, Jones coolly told his friend Case: "We'd better put this one under Christian Assemblies, because Wings of Deliverance won't stand investigation."

Cynicism was also eroding the religious beliefs of the young man who had once loved to play "pretend-church." "He tried to get me to be a minister once," recalls Edward Mueller of Indianapolis. "He said there was no easier way to make it. Once he told me, 'Just look at my hands. They're not dirty.'" Mueller was put off by that approach, but was even more distraught when his 70-year-old mother turned over \$25,000 in

cash and property to Jones, then disinherited her son.

By 1961, Jones was going public with his doubts. He confessed to his congregation that he no longer believed in the Virgin Birth—and demanded to know who agreed with him. Only one hand was raised—and that single ally was immediately made a trusted aide to the minister. During other sermons, Jones began to rant against the Bible. His associate Dickson recalls breaking away from Jones after the pastor threw a Bible to the floor and complained, "Too many people are looking at this instead of me." To the consternation of his fundamentalist-style flock, the man who had walked with dignity past segregationists who spat on his adopted black child was now seen spitting at the Bible.

As some followers became uneasy about him, Jones himself grew restless. He said that he had a vision of a nuclear holocaust, and he wanted to find a place that would be safe from bombs as well as bigots. He had read a magazine article about the nine safest spots in the event of nuclear war, and in April of 1962 he moved his family to one of them—Belo Horizonte, a Brazilian industrial city of nearly 2 million people, about 250 miles north of Rio de Janeiro.

#### MESSIANIC IMPULSES

In Brazil the dream seemed rekindled. Jones and another American, Jack Beam, threw open the doors of their large house to the poor and the desperate. Jones took out newspaper ads offering help to the populace, and spent almost two years

doling out food, clothing and counsel. He also used that period to study the work of the fire-and-brimstone Brazilian faith healer David Martins de Miranda, who is known to his followers as "Envoy of the Messiah." But Jones' own messianic impulses were never parent to neighbors. "He told us he was a pastor," said one. "But he never preached racial harmony and integration. I wouldn't say he had followers."

Amid all the good works, however, there were hints that Jones was being pursued by darker forces. He was paranoid about nuclear war, one neighbor says, "There were times when the sound of an airplane flying overhead would start him crying." He also suffered frequently of health problems. "He told me that he had some sort of skin disease that had turned into cancer," recalled attorney Elza Reis Rocha. "He also told a lot about having been operated on for some warts and moles on his neck, but big fear was cancer."

In 1963, Jones visited Guyana, where he apparently had his first fleeting vision of a remote utopian settlement. The mingled fears and dreams drove him north toward home and Indiana.

There his followers sensed something other change. While his earlier gestures of power grabbing and apostasy had been mercurial and sporadic, he now turned in a purposeful mood—a messianic hurry. "If you had money to donate to the church, he would still grab you away from you," says former disciple Wanda Jackson. "But if you didn't, he would still grab you. You weren't welcome if you didn't have any money." His stay in Brazil seemed to have heightened Jones' sense of exaggeration. "He stretched the truth," says Johnson. "If he brought people to the altar, he would say there were twenty."

#### LUSTFUL GIANT

Among intimates, his hypochondria soared even higher. "You go out and preach me," he told black assistant Archie James, "and I'll back you up with miracles." Ross Case says that when Jones returned from Brazil, "Jim was even a Christian." But the concept of Christianity was very much with him. Jim Jones began telling friends that himself was Jesus Christ.

In 1965, the messiah rushed on to Redwood Valley, a hamlet near Ukiah in far northern California—an area also deemed safe from nuclear holocaust. Only about 100 of the Indianapolis faithful followed him, and many left as services focused increasingly on Jesus Christ. But California proved fertile ground for the Peoples Temple. Eventually Jones built a new flock that grew to several thousand—about one-fifth of his own inflated estimates.

Among the redwoods, God as caricature of the Biblical God emerged as a wrathful, lustful giant who doled out unspeakable punishment.

Jones exhorting his flock: An awesome caricature of a Biblical God



along with his "miracles" and appeals before various audiences in whatever shining guise would serve his purpose. To build a just society, he told his listeners, people needed a living God rather than a scriptural one. And Jones was willing to resort to almost anything to seize that role.

The "healings" were strictly carnival stuff. Whitie Freestone, who claims to have been skeptical even while his wife was following Jones west from Indiana, offers an outline of a typical cure: "Jim had people go to a house and use the bathroom. They would look into the medicine cabinet and find medicine for, say, heart disease. Then they'd get this person to come to the church, and Jim would pick the guy out, scare him to death, and say 'You've got heart trouble.' Other times he would tell a person he had cancer. Then they would send the person to the bathroom—usually Jim's wife would go, too—and his wife would carry back a towel with bloody meat in it. Jim would holler, 'Don't get too close, that's cancer.' But I would look right at it and you know, it was the same piece of meat every week. I think they kept it refrigerated."

Eventually Jones refined the cancer act, commanding his top aides to find a better prop. They devised a mixture of chicken entrails and their own blood. Then they left it in a warm room until it congealed into a rancid and apparently convincing mess. Jones also allowed congregations to eavesdrop on his conversations with "spirits"—aides who hid in crawl spaces in the ceiling. Once he even healed himself of a mysterious gunshot wound from an unseen sniper—and he displayed his bloody shirt in a glass case like an icon. The stunts were often orchestrated to suit the audiences. The elderly blacks who formed a majority of his followers usually witnessed old-fashioned tent-revival-style cures, for example, and visiting radical celebrities might be treated to a seance with the soul of sainted labor leader Joe Hill.

#### INTRAMURAL TERROR

Jones was just as meticulous in structuring his congregation. The paranoia that was his constant companion was also his weapon; he forged loyalty by convincing many members that without him they would be killed or imprisoned by the Ku Klux Klan, the CIA or any number of free-floating forces of evil. But as an extra safeguard, he encouraged intramural terror. Members were encouraged to inform on spouses or children who trans-

gressed, and his supposedly classless society was set up according to a rigid and unforgiving hierarchy.

Closest to Jones were a dozen or more "Angels," who handled Temple finances, acted as advance men when he approached public officials and meted out vengeance and punishment—perhaps including the ambush of Rep. Leo Ryan and his party. The second echelon, the Temple Planning Commission, was assigned many day-to-day chores such as organizing bus pilgrimages to San Francisco and Los Angeles and enforcing petty rules. But when Jones called for acquisitions of members' property, severe public paddlings or the serving of fake poison in suicide-practice rituals, he usually called on the Angels.

He also called on them for sex. Jones's sexual self-image was as tormented and

homosexual." Straight or not, Jones also had several male lovers. But sex with males was used as a tactic to control, humiliate or blackmail them. Often he would require a male follower to engage in sex with him and call in some female member to observe or photograph the act. "He'd explain," says Mills, "that the only reason he went to bed with anyone was to help the cause."

#### SEXUAL BOASTS

The contradictions in Jones's sex life were as blatant as those in his theology. On his organizational charts he was listed as the "main body," and he took the term literally. Everyone in the cult was expected to recognize "Father" as the only meaningful source of guidance, discipline—and sex. Jones also took pleasure in rising above his own rules.

While underlings were beaten for homosexual acts, Jones would arrogantly flaunt his own such behavior.

Like his crowd estimates at services, however, his sexual boasts may have been exaggerated: he once told his attorney Charles Garry that he had had sex sixteen times in one day—with fourteen women and two men. For all his posturing Jones had a scared and secret side. Five years ago, he was arrested for making a lewd advance to an undercover cop in a Los Angeles adult theater. Charges were dropped because of insufficient evidence.

The sexual theme was central to the survival of the Temple. Young women with posters of movie stars were forced to replace them with huge portraits of Jones. Parents were required to prove

their love for their leader by signing away not only their possessions but their children; some signed bogus confessions claiming that they had hideously molested their kids. In the Temple, no love counted but love of Jim Jones. Those who experienced such twisted love would not leave and expose his secrets. The rest, Jones hoped, could not leave—out of shame and terror of the photographs and documents they would have to leave behind.

While old members hesitated to depart, new members kept joining. In 1971, Jones purchased new temples in San Francisco's Fillmore district and in Los Angeles. To create the impression of vast local followings, he required hundreds of members to ride a fleet of eleven buses to his sermons at the distant temples. The groups traveled in the overcrowded vehicles—with children often sleeping on overhead racks and some members



Klan skit at Peoples Temple: For blacks, a theater of fear

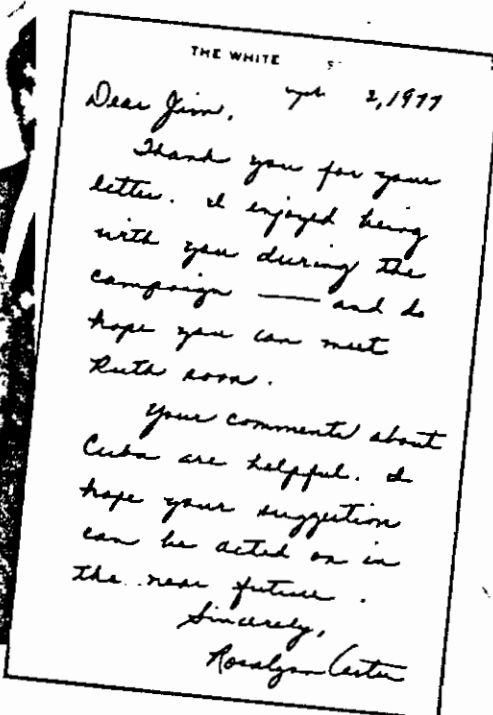
exaggerated as his religious one. Night after night he would harangue his followers about the "curse" of his huge penis, which he said made women plead constantly for his attentions. To make that particular gospel come true, Jones required every woman who was close to him to have sex with him regularly. Often that idea was instilled early in church training. "Once Jim handed out a questionnaire that asked, 'Do you fantasize about 'Father' sexually,'" says former member Sandy Rozynko Mills, 19, who left the Temple three years ago. "Here I was 14 years old and I was thinking, 'What...?' But we all knew we were supposed to say yes, so I said yes."

Jones was also intrigued by homosexuality. "He'd say that everybody else in the Temple was gay and he was the only heterosexual," says Mills. "And we didn't question it. If Father said we were homosexual, then we must have been





Jones with Rosalynn Carter during the 1976 campaign: A polite note from the White House



riding for hours in airless luggage compartments—while Jones alone enjoyed a private compartment at the rear of his bus. Perhaps the enormity of Jones's public mirage can best be shown by the juxtaposition of those nightmarish all-night rides against a state assemblyman's gushing tribute: "Anytime you wanted a crowd, you called Jim."

But the public acclaim of Jones was all too genuine. His people earned much of it by establishing effective drug-rehabilitation programs, clinics and nursing homes—although much of the state funding for the latter appears to have supported Jones rather than elderly patients. Jones also had a keen sense of public relations. He contributed money to local police forces and to newspapers in "defense of the free press"—and received kid-glove treatment in return from both sources. Above all, when a solid liberal politician needed telephone volunteers, enthusiastic crowds or a few hundred crucial votes, Jim Jones was the man who could deliver.

#### CELEBRITY STATUS

Jones's clout was strikingly illustrated in 1975, when he delivered a bloc of votes that helped liberal Democrat George Moscone to edge a conservative rival in a tough San Francisco mayoralty race. The grateful Moscone offered Jones a seat on his city's Human Rights Commission. Jones thought the reward wasn't good enough, or so it's said, and turned it down. Then he was made chairman of the Housing Authority. He soon turned that fairly routine position into his kind of podium, packing meetings with his supporters and basking in their adulation when he solved what he described as crises.

Such bizarre scenes failed to trouble many politicians. In addition to Mayor Moscone, Temple visitors included San

Francisco District Attorney Joe Freitas, Assemblyman Willie Brown and Gov. Jerry Brown. When Walter Mondale campaigned for the Vice Presidency in 1976, Jones was invited aboard his plane. When Rosalynn Carter appeared, Jones helped gather one of her largest campaign crowds—and dined with her later at the Stanford Court Hotel.

Ironically, it was his sudden celebrity status that led to Jones's ruin. Apart from an occasional appreciative feature about one of his community projects, the press had largely ignored him until he began to wield political power. But in late 1976, a San Francisco Chronicle reporter, Marshall Kilduff, proposed a probe behind the locked doors of the Temple. His city editor, who had been befriended and frequently praised by Jones, vetoed the idea. So Kilduff took the story to New West. A few months later, Kilduff and magazine staffer Phil Tracy were ready with a piece quoting ten Temple defectors about the beatings and misuse of funds under Jones. As publication neared, New West editors learned even more about Jones's influence: they received protest letters from advertisers, politicians and even the American Civil Liberties Union. "Can you believe it?" says Kilduff. "He had the ACLU trying to kill a news story."

When his pressure tactics failed to squelch what he knew would be a devastating piece, Jim Jones prepared to move on again, this time to his leased tract of 27,000 acres in Guyana. As usual, he built his travel plans on paranoia. Black followers were warned that if they stayed behind they would be put in American concentration camps. Whites were told they were on a CIA "enemies" list. And always, there was the threat of blackmail and violent reprisal against defectors. Finally, with the New West piece due on the stands within weeks, Jones slipped

out of California and went to Guyana. "I'm not running away," he told a friend. "I'll be back." But he never intended to return. And when the Aug. 1, 1977, edition of New West appeared, it was clear why.

In the aftermath of that article, more defectors appeared. One, Gwen Johnson, told The Indianapolis Star of beatings of children as young as four months old. In California, others recalled that Jones had watched such punishments with a bemused smile. He was discredited and his temples became little more than supply depots for those who wanted to follow him to his Guyana settlement. And, incredibly, 800-odd souls were ready to do just that.

The ultimately tragic exodus began shortly after the article was published, as busloads of believers crossed the country to Miami and flew on to their promised land. They found a hothouse where the evils of the California temples grew like jungle weeds. At the same time, Jones's own health was unraveling. His lungs were racked with a fungus infection. A prostate condition rendered him unable to urinate, and he had to be catheterized. His blood pressure soared and his temperature ranged between 101 and 105, as aides tried desperately to hold it down by packing their leader in ice. Jones was sometimes rambling and incoherent; at other times he was sullen and almost comatose. The "Living God" was subsisting on rising dosages of drugs—and staring wild-eyed at the specter of death.

#### PARADISE LOST

It arrived in the form of Ryan and his media entourage. Jones sat helplessly through the visit. Then came the airstrike assassinations. Now Jones's most grotesque fears had come true, and the world would know of his secrets. He felt surrounded by real and imagined inquisitors—the media, the CIA, the defectors in his midst. His \$10 million fortune was useless to him now. So were his former friends in high places and his powers over his flock. Paradise was a hideous trap. There was only one exit.

Lynetta Jones had died a year earlier but perhaps in his last moments he so believed that he could speak to a spirit who wasn't secreted in a ceiling. Just before he put a bullet through his head, Jim Jones cried out to his mother. It could have been the final hopelessly shriek of the dream messiah who had long ago lost his way.

—PETE AXTELM with GERALD C. LUBENOW, MICHAEL REESE and LINDA WALTERS in San Francisco. SY VESTER MONROE in Indianapolis and bureau reports

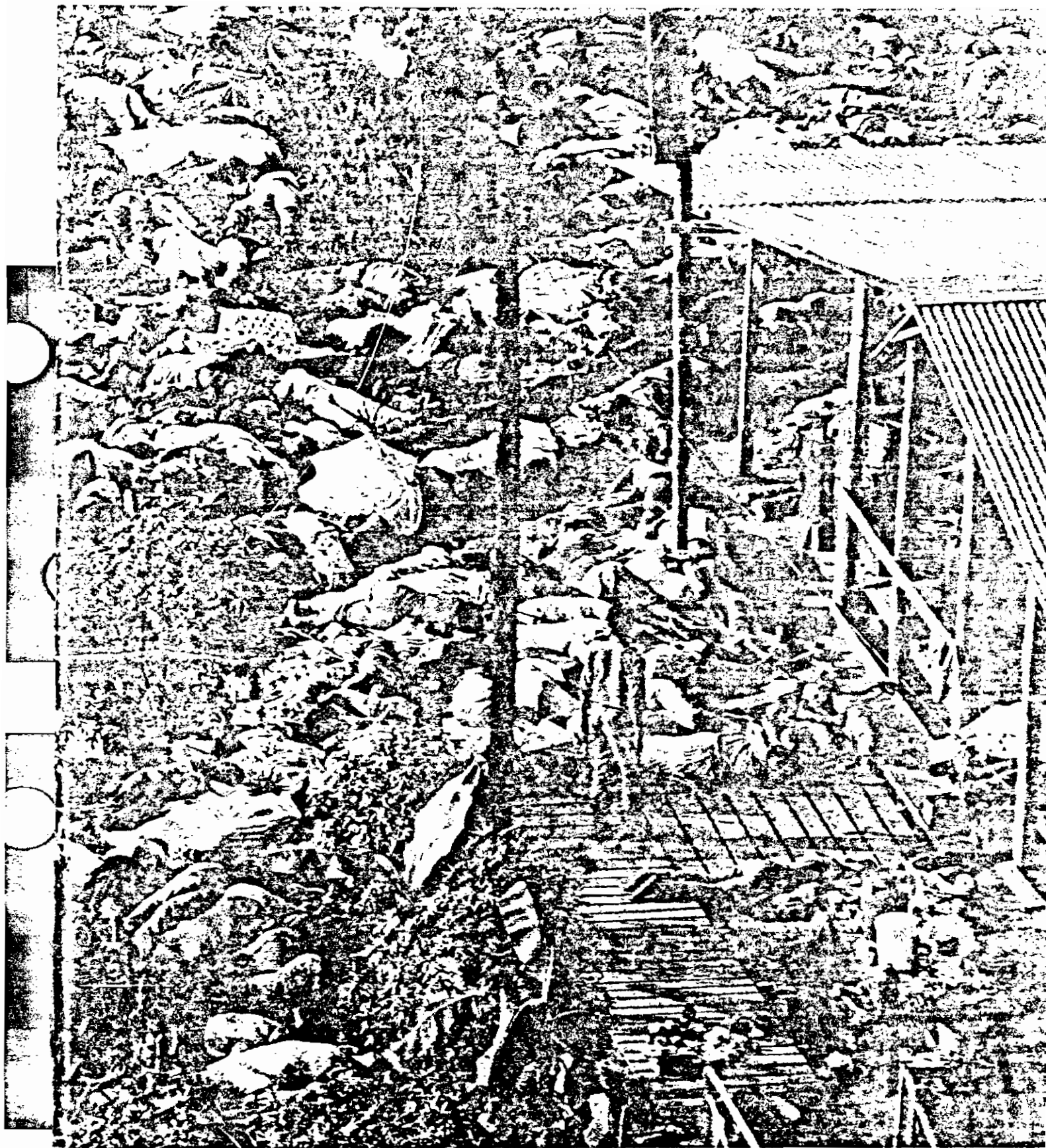


Newsweek

# THE CULT OF DEATH

**A**lert! Alert! Alert! Everyone to the pavilion!" The Rev. Jim Jones was on the loudspeaker, summoning the members of his Peoples Temple to their last communion. Dutifully,

they gathered round; some of them, without a doubt, knew what was in store. "Everyone has to die," said Jones. "If you love me as much as I love you, we must all die or be destroyed from the outside." Mothers grasped their children to their breasts. "What have they done?"



one screamed. Jones ordered his medical team to bring out "the potion," a battered tub of strawberry Flavour-aide, laced with tranquilizers and cyanide. "Bring the babies first," he commanded.

At the fringes of the huge crowd, armed

guards fingered guns and bows and arrows. Some families edged forward voluntarily. Others held their ground. The guards moved in, grabbing babies from recalcitrant mothers and holding them up to let "nurses" spray the poison down their throats with hypodermics. A





*Drinking the poisoned Flavour-aide: 'Bring the babies first'*

man shoved a gun into the ribs of Rauletter Paul, who was clutching her year-old son, Robert Jr. "You dumb bitch," he shouted. "You better do it or we're going to shoot your ass off." Tears streaming down her face, she shot the poison into the baby's mouth, and he immediately began to scream and go into convulsions.

Many walked willingly up to the poison vat and took away their cups of Flavour-aide. "We'll all fall tonight," said one, "but he'll raise us tomorrow." One old man resisted violently; he was thrown to the ground, his jaws were pulled open, and a cupful of poison was poured down his throat. "It is time to die with dignity," said Jones on the loudspeaker.

#### **'MOTHER! MOTHER!'**

After they had drunk their potions, members of the Peoples Temple were led away by the armed guards and told to lie in rows, face down. Family groups often held hands or embraced. Within minutes, they began to gasp and retch. Blood flowed from their mouths and noses. On his raised chair on the pavilion stage, Jones kept saying, "I tried. I tried. I tried." Then he cried "Mother! Mother!" Finally, there was a shot. Jones toppled over backward, a bullet hole in his head. And a terrible silence began to settle over the camp deep in the South American jungles of Guyana.

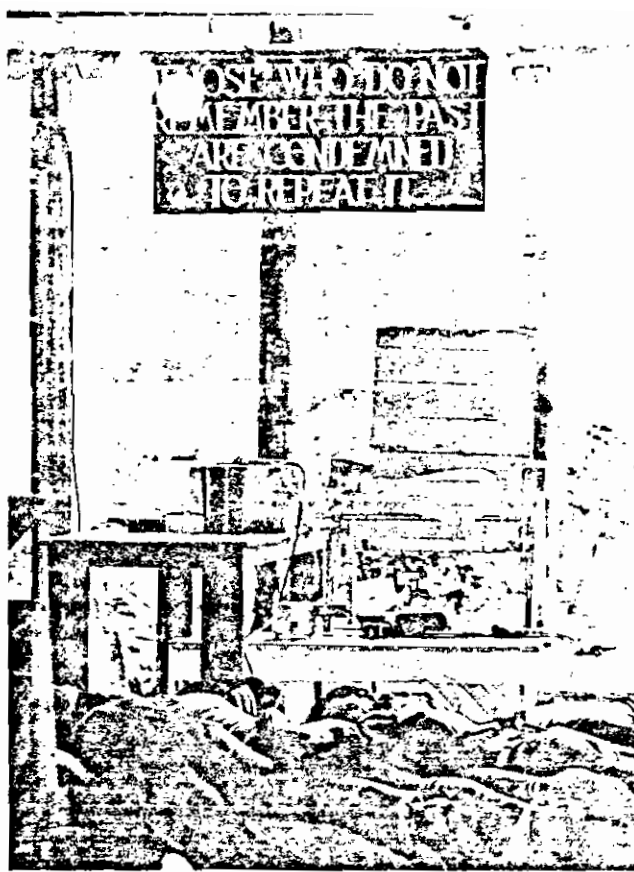
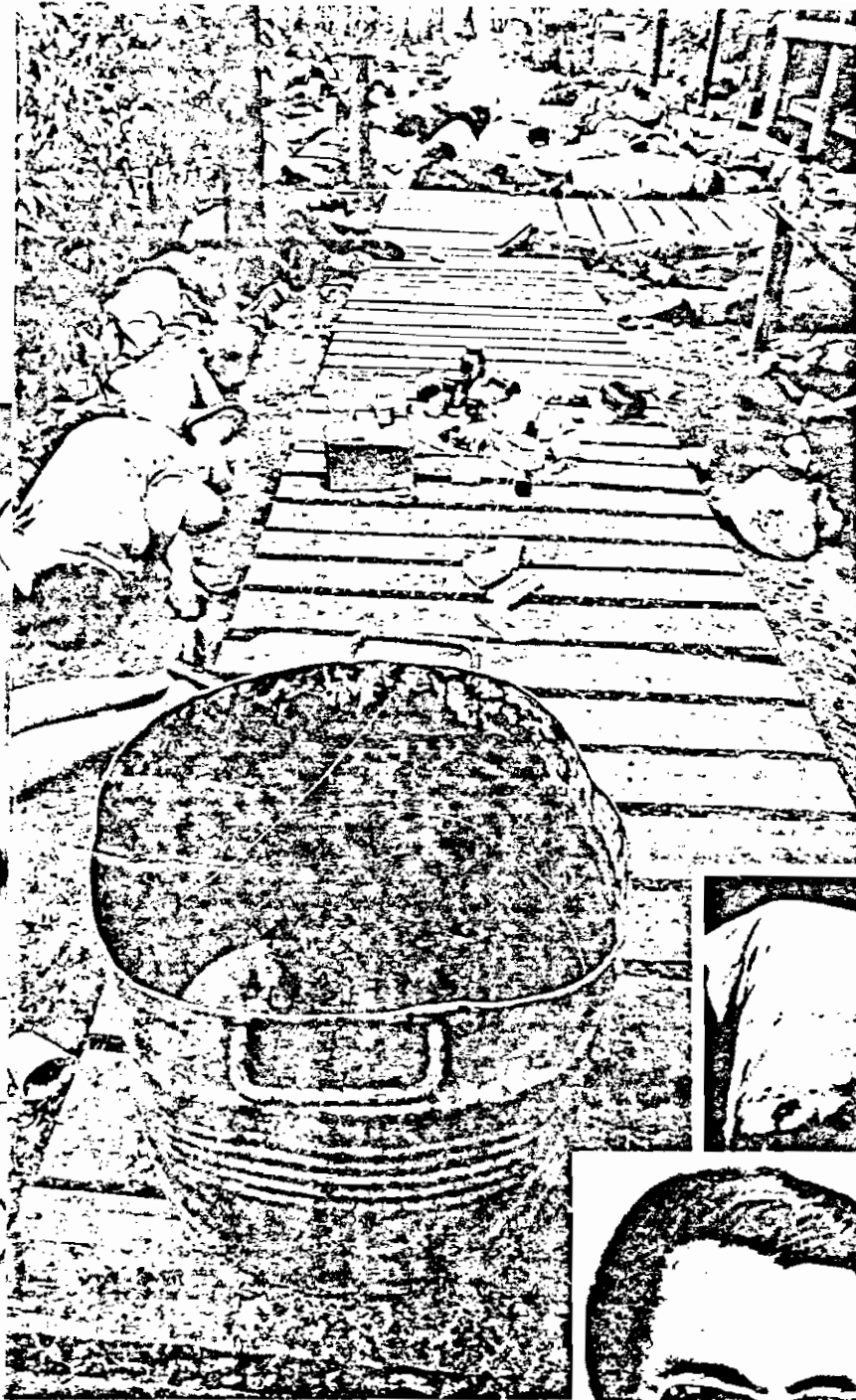
The apocalyptic end of Reverend Jones and his Peoples Temple last week was a tragedy that strained all comprehension. The carnage in Jonestown conjured up comparisons with the Zealots of Masada, who killed each other rather than surrender to Rome in A.D. 73, and the 1,000 Japanese civilians who hurled themselves from a cliff in Saipan as American troops took control of the island during World War II. But in this case it was not the passions of war that had

prompted the self-slaughter, but rather the paranoid fantasy of a single leader. Somehow, in Jones's twisted reason, a fact-finding mission by U.S. Congressman Leo Ryan became a mortal collision that left more than 900 people—Jones' followers, newsmen, Ryan and Jones himself—dead.

Explanations for the disaster could be drawn only from the murky pathology of madness and mass indoctrination. Jim Jones, 47, was a self-appointed messiah with a vision of socialist paradise on earth and a lust for dominion over his fellow man (page 54). He attracted hundreds of fanatic followers, whose fierce loyalty and slavish work on his behalf smacked of the psychological disintegration that accompanies brainwashing (page 72). His success, and its awful consequences, posed disturbing questions about the flourishing of cults that has given the U.S. everything from saffron-robed devotees of Lord Krishna to the weird regimen and ugly threats of Synanon (page 78). It was as if all the strains of do-it-yourself religion and personality-cult salvation that have built up in America had suddenly erupted with ghastly force. And to add a touch of the macabre to the tragedy, the scene was a faraway jungle outpost where corpses bloated under the tropical sun and the pile of bodies was so thick that the original count turned out to be too low by half.

The heart-of-darkness tragedy at Jonestown actually began in San Francisco eighteen months ago when Ryan received some bad news from an old friend named Sam Houston, an AP photographer. Houston's son Bob, 31, had been found dead, his body mangled, in the railroad yard where he worked. The day before, Houston told Ryan, Bob said he planned to quit the Peoples Temple. The police didn't know whether they were dealing with an accident or a murder.

JOSEPH W. JONES  
MEMBER THE PAST  
ARE CONFINED  
TO REPEAT



Greg Robinson © 1978, San Francisco Examiner

The vat of poison, Jones in life and death and his throne: A self-appointed messiah with a socialist vision

Shaken, Ryan vowed to keep an eye on the Peoples Temple and he hired a special staff investigator. Over the next several months, parents and friends of Jonestown commune members told him that Jones was keeping his followers prisoners in Guyana. A former Jones bodyguard said Jones practiced physical and psychological torture regularly. Tim and Grace Stoen, two dissident communards, claimed Jones was holding their 6-year-old son hostage in Jonestown. And last spring, Debbie Blakey, the colony's financial secretary, fled Guyana with the most chilling report of all: Jones was collecting \$65,000 a month in social-security checks due elderly communards—and running regular mass-suicide drills.

#### STAFF WARNINGS

Other sources, however, said Jonestown was a counter-culture paradise. Jones's attorney, Charles Garry, a San Francisco radical who had numbered Huey Newton and Angela Davis among his clients, called the colony "a jewel

that the whole world should see." Last summer, Ryan resolved to see it for himself, despite warnings from his staff. "He knew it was relatively dangerous," Ryan's daughter, Pat, 25, said last week.

On Nov. 1, Ryan sent Jones a telegram. "I am most interested in a visit to Jonestown and would appreciate whatever courtesies you can extend," he wired. On Nov. 6, a reply arrived from lawyer Mark Lane, best known for challenging the Warren Commission's report on the John F. Kennedy assassination. Jones had hired Lane to collect evidence proving that intelligence agents were infiltrating and harassing Jonestown. Lane wrote Ryan that if the congressman staged a "witch hunt" in Guyana, Jones might embarrass the U.S. by fleeing to "two anonymous countries" (apparently the Soviet Union and Cuba) that were willing to offer him refuge.

Ryan decided to go ahead with his trip, and he welcomed reporters who asked to go along. "He felt the press was his

best protection," said Joe Holsi, a Ryan aide. The Washington Post assigned its South America correspondent Charles Krause. The San Francisco Examiner sent reporter Tim Reiterman and photographer Greg Robinson and The San Francisco Chronicle sent reporter Ron Javers. NBC News assigned reporter Don Harris and cameraman Bob Brown—both news veterans of Vietnam. "We all assumed they would be pretty safe—since no one would kill a congressman," said West Coast producer Steve Friedman of NBC's "Today" show.

Not all the members of Ryan's party shared the same

comfortable assumption. In Washington, Ryan's legislative aide Jackie Speier, who was also making the trip, wrote out will addressed to her parents. Speier, 28, also made sure that Ryan's own will was in order. The day before the trip, she tucked the two wills into envelopes and left them in her desk. Then she packed her bags. In Los Angeles, Bob Brown told his wife, Connie, and adopted Vietnamese daughter, Kim, that he was having frightening premonitions. The day he set off, he had breakfast with a friend. "Goodbye," he said. "I won't see you again."

On Nov. 14, the entire group flew to Georgetown (po

# WHAT I SAW

By Chris J. Harper

**M**ost of them were lying face down on the lawns near the banana bushes outside the pavilion. Husbands and wives were arm in arm. One man clutched his dead dog to his chest. Children, who only hours before they died were playing on the nearby swings, cuddled next to their parents. Some of the victims wore their best clothes, probably because of Rep. Leo Ryan's visit. A few showed the awful suffering of their last few moments of life, the five minutes or so while the cyanide was taking its effect. Their faces were twisted into violent contortions, and matted blood was smeared over them after it had streamed from their noses and mouths. It was the most gruesome sight I have ever seen.

I had flown out of Guyana's capital of Georgetown, heading to Jim Jones's commune, in the same single-engine Cessna that members of Ryan's party had taken. The bullet holes in the front passenger door had not yet been repaired, and the back of one seat was still smeared with the blood of one of the victims. We landed at Port Kaituma, where the second plane caught in the shoot-out, a Guyana Airways green and yellow twin-engine Otter, had not been moved; its left tire was still flat, punctured by bullets.

We made the final stage of the trip by helicopter. From the air, Jonestown looked like a patchwork quilt: scattered blotches of brilliant reds and yellows and blues, slivers of green and silver, a border of brown. The chopper began its descent, and the scene changed. It now resembled something like the midway at a county fair, with colorfully dressed revelers apparently shoving their way forward to see the attractions in the main tent. Even up close, it seemed surrealistic, perhaps the set of a Hollywood movie after a fierce battle scene.

I spent nearly two hours in Jonestown. It was a steamy, muggy tropical day. The shimmering heat and the stench from about 900 decaying corpses almost overcame me. I devised a makeshift face mask out of a scrap of chamois, then began to walk toward the pavilion where most of the bodies lay. Many were not recognizable as human corpses; they had ballooned to nearly twice their size and resembled some sort of grotesque dolls.

## A POISONED FIELD

Amid all the death, I saw occasional, pathetic signs of life. But it was not human life. Two parrots gazed at the bodies from atop a fence. In the classroom of the commune's school, I came across a bowl of tropical fish. And in a nearby field, a scrawny golden-brown mongrel dog was sniffing, obviously searching for food. There was a sign in the field that read: "Danger. Insecticide. Poison." I have had a dog for eight years, and I ran up to this mutt and shooed him out of the field. There was no reason, I thought, that anything else should die at Jonestown. But I knew that once I left, the dog would be back in the poisoned field—and that it too would probably die.

The day that I was in Jonestown—last Tuesday—the American soldiers who would later remove the bodies for shipment back to the U.S. had not yet arrived. A towering, 6-foot 3-inch man with a bandolier strapped across his chest, Pancho Villa style, greeted me cordially as I jumped out of the helicopter. But he and the other 200 Guyanese soldiers sent to guard the camp



Sentinels: Amid the death, some signs of

kept away from the sights and smells of the corpses. They sat on the porches of the cottages farthest from the pavilion. One of them had picked up a crossbow and a pack of arrows—part of the arsenal maintained by Jonestown's security forces—and was idly shooting arrows into the distance. It was one way to pass the time. One soldier patiently walked with me through the field, explaining that these plants were banana trees and those were "eddoes."

"What are eddoes?" I asked. "Something like potatoes," he answered.

## A PERVERSIVE STENCH

The soldier was polite, helpful, eager to tell me what he knew. But he would not go near the bodies, and neither would a third soldier I tried to talk to. He concentrated on ignoring everything around him. He had wrapped

Harper



ulation: 164,000), the sleepy, tin-roofed capital of Guyana. For a time, it looked as if Ryan might get nowhere. On Wednesday, he began to dicker for permission to enter Jonestown, a 900-acre enclave carved out of thick jungles 150 miles northwest of Georgetown. His contact was Sharon Amos, one of the commune's public-relations people who presented her unwelcome guest with long scrolls bearing the signatures of hundreds of Jonestowners. They read coldly, "Many of us have been visited by friends and relatives. However, we have not invited, nor do we care to see, Congressman Ryan." Word came that Jones was ill and wouldn't talk. But Ryan decided he

would go to Jones whether Jones gave permission or not.

Then, Lane and Garry flew in to break up the impasse. The two lawyers, who openly spoke of the commune's commitment to integration and egalitarian values, radioed Jones. "You have two alternatives," Garry told Jones. "You can tell the Congress of the United States, the press and the relatives to go — themselves. If you do that, it's the end of the ball game. The other alternative is to let them in—and prove to the world that these people criticizing you are crazy."

When Garry and Lane promised to escort the party and make sure that things ran smoothly, Jones finally gave in. The



*Victims: Outside Jonestown's pavilion, members of a family cling to each other in death*

fragrant nut in a handkerchief, and stared sullenly ahead, breathing the aroma deeply as if it could eliminate the stench that pervaded the camp.

I walked back to the pavilion, and went inside. About 50 corpses lay facing the stage where Jim Jones had transfixed his congregation with his messianic mix of religion and hatred. It was as if the dead were still worshipping Jones. The cult leader's body lay where it had fallen. He was dressed in a red dashiki and light-colored pants. He had tumbled off the dais on which his "throne" sat and he lay sprawled on his back, the fatal gunshot wound plainly visible in his head. I saw the woefully inapt quotations from Santayana and the Bible: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "All that believed

were together, and had all things common." For the believers who flocked to the Jonestown commune, what they had in common was death.

#### A BAG OF DRUGS

Finally, I went into Jonestown's inner sanctum, the cottage where Jim Jones had lived. An array of boots, adults' and children's, was meticulously lined up on a rack, but the rest of the cottage was a shambles. The porch was littered with heaps of letters written by the communards, letters in which they spoke glowingly of Jones and of the Peoples Temple—and admitted their own shortcomings. There was a pitiable quality to them: the handwriting was infantile, the words misspelled as often as not, the phrasing banal. Amid the rubble, there was a large plastic bag. I poked into it. It was filled with

drugs: Thorazine, Darvon, Pentothal, Valium.

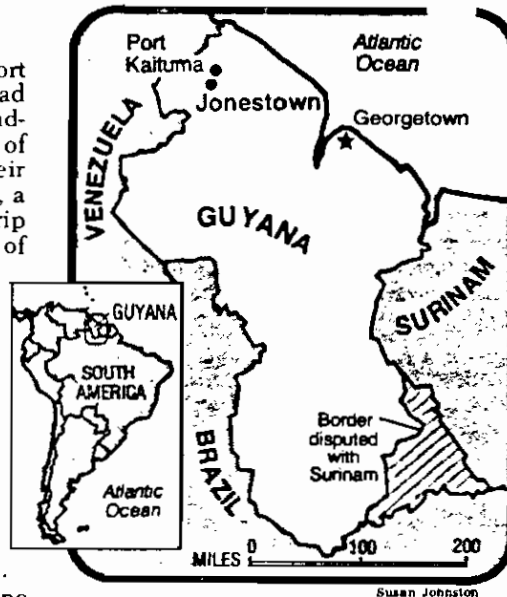
There were more corpses in the Jones cottage. Twelve commune members—including several of the camp's privileged elite—had carried their doses of poison in a bread pan and a small metal pail into the house. They drank it there and died there. Jones's mistress, Maria Katsaris, lay on a bed, her once attractive face discolored and stained with blood. A family—a man, a woman, a baby—clung to each other on a second bed, and four more victims lay on the floor. A pail of poison was next to the corpses, and a small black and white kitten was crawling among the bodies, whining. And on walls of the bedroom were a smattering of crayon drawings—simple stick figures—done by several of the commune's children. I turned and walked away.



## SPECIAL REPORT

two lawyers made a dash for the port and caught up with Ryan. His party had ballooned to nineteen members including nine newsmen and four relatives of commune members. At 3 p.m., their Twin Otter took off for Port Kaituma, a small fishing village with a landing strip nestled in thick jungles 6 miles north of Jonestown. When they landed one hour later, they were greeted by an angry group of Jonestowners, including one man with a gun. After some more bargaining, Ryan's group finally boarded a dump truck for the hour drive to Jonestown on a twisting dirt road bordered with dense jungle brush.

The scene at Jonestown was surprisingly pleasant. They found children on swings in a small playground and cheery communards baking bread and doing laundry. Commune members trotted alongside the guests, smiling and asking polite questions. Jones's wife, Marceline, led the welcoming delegation. "You must be hungry," she said. "The food is waiting at the pavilion." She led the party to a building with a corrugated-tin roof and open walls, where Jones, perspiring and looking ill, was waiting. He sat down with Ryan and the others to a dinner of smoked pork, eddoes (a root vegetable), coffee and tarts. The commune's small band broke into the



Susan Johnston

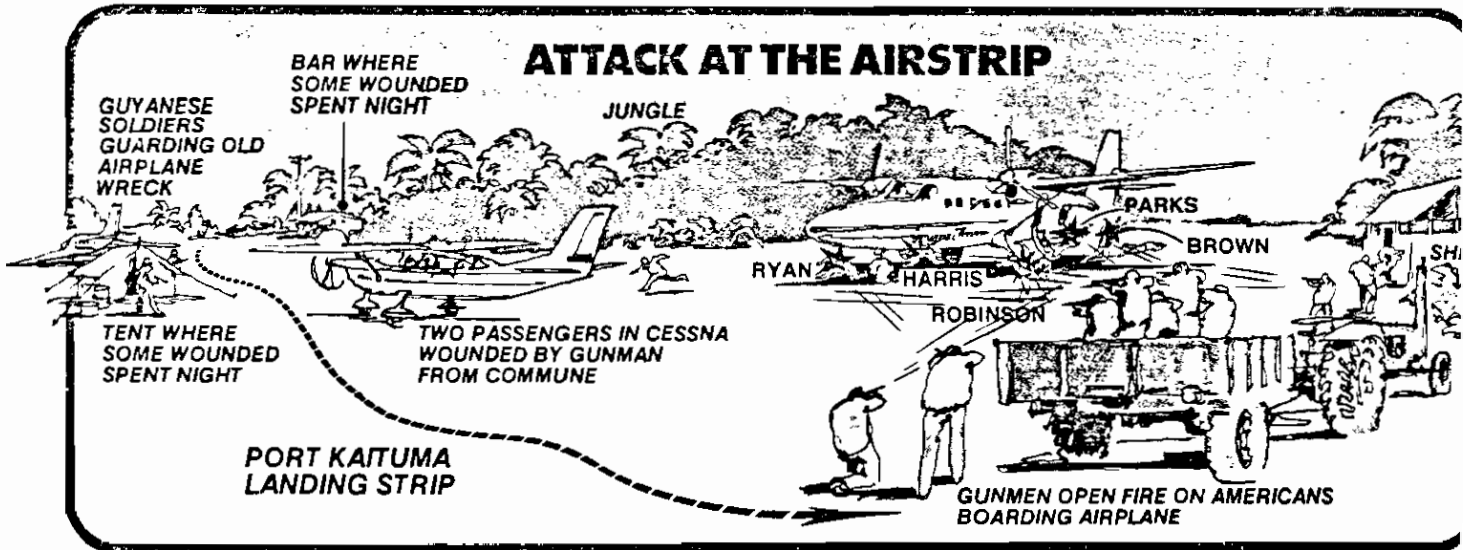
Guyanese national anthem—and a chorus of "America the Beautiful."

Jones then threw a two-hour soul review for his guests. There was an eight-man band—made up of electric guitar, drums and saxophones. Old women sang old-fashioned blues. Younger communards wailed modern soul and rock songs. Ryan interviewed 40 commune members as the show went on. Finally, Ryan stood up, took a mike and said, "I can tell you right now that by the few conversations I've had with some of the folks here already this evening that... there are some people who believe this is the best thing that ever happened in their whole lives." The crowd cheered for nearly twenty minutes.

## BAD VIBES

If the good vibes were thunderous, they soon began to appear a bit suspicious to Ryan and the newsmen. At one point, the congressman noticed that all of the commune's elderly white members were mechanically clapping and swaying to the beat of the throbbing soul music. "Look at that man's face, just look at his face," Ryan said to the Post's Krause, pointing out Tom Kice Sr., a middle-aged white in a gray crew cut who was bobbing about with glazed eyes. But when reporters edged out into the crowd to ask a few questions, more

To Ohlson—Newsweek

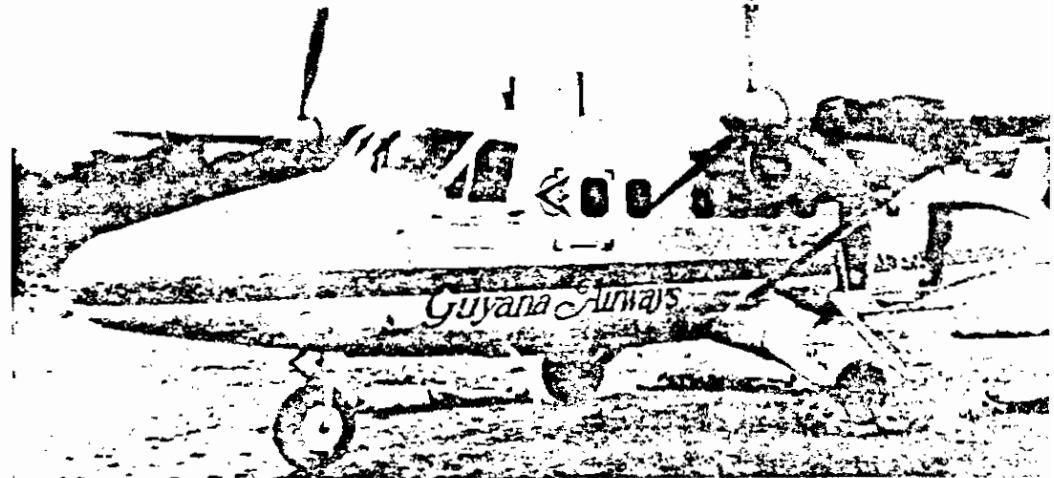


Tim Retherman © 1978, San Francisco Examiner



Jim Jones © 1978, San Francisco Examiner

Ryan after knife attack, the dead at Port Kaituma



of the communards gingerly moved away.

Krause had been sitting next to Jor. He recalled that Grace Stoen had told him that Jones was vain and power hungry despite all his protestations of humility—and that he filled out his sideburns with eye liner. Krause looked closely. "It was true," he reported to the Post later. Jones suddenly exploded in rage at one of the newsmen's questions: "Threat of extinction! I wish I wasn't born at times. I understand love and hate. They are very close." And when newsmen pressed him on the reports of physical punishments in the camp, he shouted, "I do not believe in violence. . . I hate power. I hate money. . . All I want is peace. I'm not worried about my image. If we could just stop it, stop this fighting. But if we don't, I don't know what's going to happen to 1,200 lives here."

#### OVERNIGHTING AT THE BAR

At 10 p.m., the entertainment ended. One of Jones's lieutenants told Jones that the reporters had secured lodgings in Port Kaituma and would be driven there for the night. The reporters had made no such arrangement; some argued that they wanted to stay overnight to get a better fix on living conditions in the commune. "Get them out of here. I will not have them staying here overnight," Jones whispered to his wife. The newsmen and the relatives were driven to the Weekend Bar, a tiny nightspot in Port Kaituma. They persuaded the owner to let them sleep on the living-room floor of his house nearby. A local cop told the newsmen that the Jonestowners had at least one gun, an automatic rifle, registered with the Guyanese authorities.

Ryan, Speier, Lane, Garry and two others were allowed to spend the night in Jonestown. Lane went to bed early. Garry stayed up into the night, discussing the day's events with Jones, who was in good spirits. His 103-degree fever had vanished and he seemed in control. A red-letter day, Garry told him. Ryan had been impressed—things were going well.

Jones also seemed cheerful the next morning. Ryan and the other overnight guests were given a hearty breakfast of pancakes and bacon. The dump truck went into Port Kaituma to bring back the newsmen. Then the atmosphere began to sour. Krause discovered four barnlike buildings that turned out to be dormitories. When he attempted to get into one of them—Jane Pittman Place—he was turned away. The newsmen protested. After Garry and Lane prevailed on the commune's leaders to let the reporters in, they discovered about five dozen elderly communards jammed into a small room with



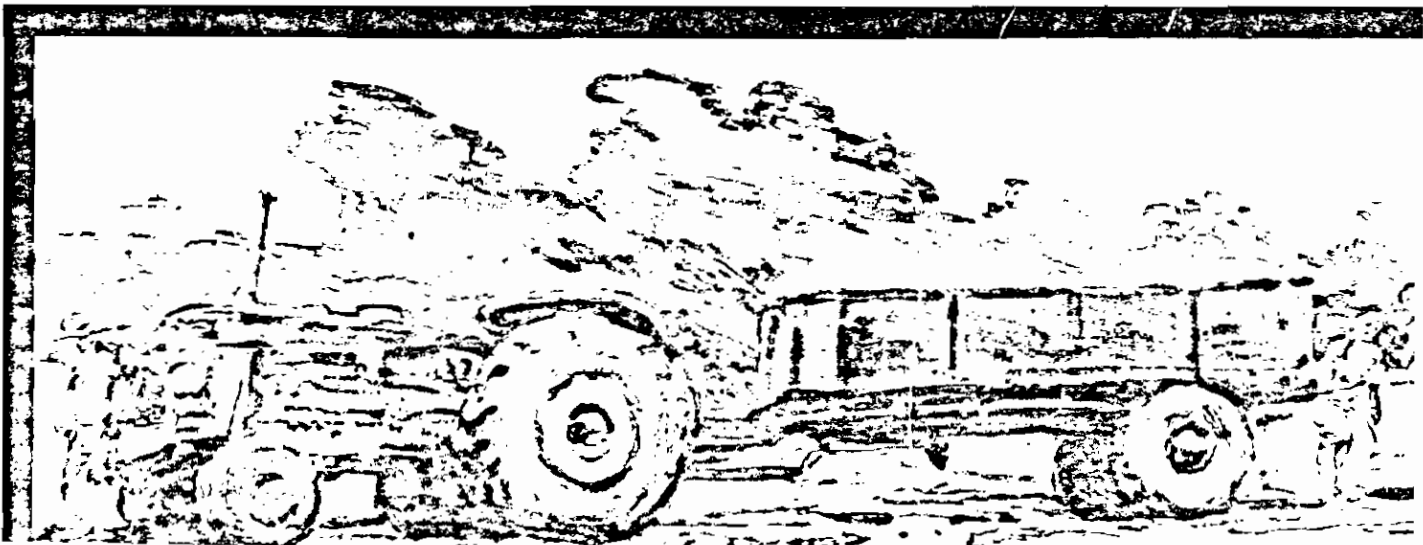
*Sly pulling a knife on Ryan: 'Does this change everything?'*

long lines of bunk beds. "It was like a slave ship," said Lane.

Things took a turn for the worse when Jones agreed to sit for an interview with Harris. For 45 minutes, he sat stonily under the eye of Bob Brown's mini-camera while Harris peppered him with hard questions about weapons, drugs and corporal punishment. Finally Harris asked about the gun the newsmen had heard about the night before. "A boldfaced lie," said Jones. Then Harris showed him a crumpled note from a communard who had asked Harris for help in leaving Jonestown. Jones's eyes narrowed slightly and his voice tightened. "People play games, friend," he said icily. "They lie. What can I do with liars? Are you people going to leave us? I just beg you, please leave us. . . Anybody that wants to can get out of here. . . They come and go all the time."

The possibility of real defections seemed to have rattled Jones badly. After the interview, Ryan told him, "Jim, there's a family of six here that wants to leave." Jones grew furious. "I feel betrayed," he shouted. "It never stops." "He

*Gunmen jump from the tractor-trailer at the airport: A point-blank fusillade at Ryan, Harris and Robinson*



just freaked out," said Garry. "It was as if all hell broke loose." When Jones began to rant about liars and traitors, Garry stepped in quickly to calm him. "Let them go," he told Jones. "Who gives a shit if six leave or 60? It won't change what you've done here." Jones mumbled that he had been stabbed in the back. Garry grew more and more worried. "I just wanted to get out of there," he recalled.

At 3 p.m. Saturday, Ryan was summoned to the pavilion. An American Indian named Al Simon wanted to leave with his three children; Simon's wife refused to let the children go. Garry and Lane persuaded the parents to let a court decide the matter. Ryan then assured Jones that he would not call a Congressional investigation when he returned home. He had just thanked Lane and Garry for making the trip possible. With no warning, a Jones lieutenant named Don Sly grabbed him around the throat and put a 6-inch fishing knife to his chest. "Congressman Ryan, you are a mother—er," Sly yelled. Garry and Lane grappled with Sly; Ryan fell free; Sly's hand was cut; blood splattered on Ryan's shirt. Jones stood watching. "Does this change everything?" he asked. "It doesn't change everything," said Ryan. "But it changes things."

#### 'THIS IS HELL'

With Ryan finally aboard, the commune dump truck set off for Port Kaituma at 3:15. Near the airstrip, the entire family of Gerry Parks caught up with the truck and begged to be taken along. Parks, his wife, Patty, his brother, Dale, their mother and two children had arrived in Jonestown last spring. Parks had buttonholed the congressman earlier and whispered, "We gotta get outta here, this is hell." But his wife had refused to leave—until she saw the commune's security forces hauling out a stash of automatic weapons. "They started getting out the big stuff and she finally knew it was coming down on us," said Parks.

Another, more sinister latecomer also joined Ryan's party: Larry Layton, 32, a thin, blond, white man who had been one of Jones's close followers. "He's not really going," objected Dale Parks. "This is a plot—something is going to happen." The plea was dismissed, but it was prophetic. After the dump truck left the commune, Jones summoned Lane. He told him that other communards were also bound for the airstrip. "This is terrible, terrible, terrible," he said. "There are things you don't know. Those men who left a little while ago to go into the city are not going there. They love me and they may do something that will reflect badly on me. They're going to shoot at the people and their plane. The way Larry hugged me, a cold hug, told me."

At about 4:30 p.m., the Ryan entourage arrived at the Port Kaituma dirt airstrip. At about the same time, a white Cessna six-seater touched down and ten minutes later, a nineteen-seat, twin-engine Otter landed. The planes did not have enough seats for all the members of Ryan's party. He had promised to take all the defectors out first and they crowded nervously forward. "The congressman said I could go on the first plane," grumped Layton as the Otter began to load. He discreetly made for the Cessna when Ryan personally started frisking the passengers boarding the Otter.

The two planes began to warm up their engines. Aboard the Cessna, Layton suddenly whipped out a pistol and fired three shots, wounding two of the other commune defectors aboard the plane. Then his gun jammed. Dale Parks and Vernon



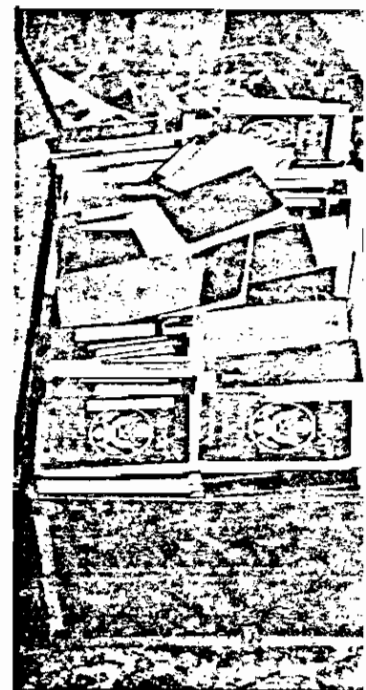
Suspects: Cult members Mike Prokes and Tim Carter while in custody

Gosney wrestled the gun from his hands. Layton jumped from the plane and fled.

At the same moment, Harold Cordell, another of the commune defectors, looked out of the window of the Otter and saw a Jonestown tractor pulling a trailer onto the runway. Men armed with automatic pistols, semi-automatic rifles and shotguns suddenly stood up in the trailer. Gerry Parks also saw the trailer. "Now we're going to get it," Parks thought. His wife, Patty, stood in the Otter's doorway. Shots snapped out, her head shattered and blood and brain tissue splashed into Cordell's lap. Tom and Tina Bogue, children of dissident Jonestowners, sprinted to the Otter's door. Both were wounded in a new hail of gunfire but they managed to slam the door shut. "If those children hadn't shut that door," said their mother, Edith, "those gunmen might have gotten on the plane—and we'd all be dead now."

Ryan and the newsmen on the ground outside the Otter were not so fortunate. Waving aside Guyanese civilians on the airstrip, the assassins in the tractor-trailer bore down on the two planes, firing as they came. Reiterman took a slug in his left arm; another fractured his wrist and blew off his watch. Javers was wounded in the shoulder. Krause was wounded slightly in the hip. All three sprinted for cover and survived. But the gunmen cut down cameraman Brown at the tail of the Otter. Photographer Greg Robinson fell near the port engine, his body riddled by bullets. Harris and Ryan dived behind the plane's starboard wheel. The tractor-trailer pulled around the right side of the plane—and the gunmen killed both men.

Steven Sung, 44, an NBC soundman connected to Brown



Jonestown passports: No exit

by a cable, fell 2 feet from the cameraman. He held his arm over his head and feigned death. "The next thing I heard, they were walking toward us," he said. "Someone shot Bob Brown in the leg. . . He screamed 'ouch' or 'shit' . . . and next thing I know, the guy came close and blow his brain off. . . the next thing I know I have tremendous pressure, explosion right next to my head and my arm feel like falling apart." The gunmen walked up to Ryan, Harris and Robinson and fired point-blank at their heads.

As the shooting erupted, a squad of Guyanese soldiers armed with rifles stood guarding a crippled Guyanese plane at the end of the airstrip. "We need guns," shouted NBC field producer Bob Flick, who rushed up seeking help. The guards

turned away. Oddly enough, the gunmen also withdrew, leaving behind eight wounded. The terrified survivors dragged themselves from the planes. Some fled into the jungle at the edge of the airstrip. Embassy official Richard Dwyer, wounded in the thigh, took charge of the others. Night fell. The survivors huddled miserably, still fearing that the assassins would return to finish the job. A Guyanese nurse refused to come to the field to treat the victims and the local medical dispensary declined to send bandages and medication. Some residents even demanded tips when the survivors asked them to bring water to the airfield. Finally, the most seriously wounded were placed in an army tent at the end of the airstrip, and the others holed up in a nearby saloon called the Rum House.

Back at the commune, Reverend Jones had a very different plan in mind. At about 5 p.m., the camp loudspeaker summoned everyone in Jonestown to the pavilion. Garry and Lane walked over, stopping to talk to Jones. He seemed calm and controlled. "Some of those people who left had no intention of leaving," he said. "They went to kill somebody . . . and they've taken every gun in the place."

### 'WE ALL DIE'

Jones told the two stunned lawyers to wait at a guest cottage. "Feeling is running very high against you two," he said. "I can't say what might happen at the meeting." At the guest house, two young communards named Pancho and Jim Johnson stood by the door, rifles at the ready. "We all going to die," Pancho said. "It's a great moment—we all die." The two guards explained that Jones was ordering a revolutionary suicide to protest racism and Fascism. "Isn't there any alternative?" asked Lane. When the two said there was none, Lane popped up hopefully: "And Charles and I will write about what you do?" The notion seemed to please the guards. They turned to leave. "How do we get out of here?" asked Lane. Pancho waved some directions, and Garry and Lane ran into the jungle.

In retrospect, Jones's plan seemed clear: Layton was to kill the pilot of the Otter as it was flying over the jungle, causing a crash that would wipe out Ryan, the newsmen and the defectors. Anyone left behind at the airstrip would be finished off by the gunmen in the tractor-trailer.

Afraid that the plan might fail, Jones prepared his followers for death. First he sounded the alarm for a White Night, the sect's suicide plan. With a shock, Stanley Clayton, 25, a cook, realized that this was no drill. Ordinarily, Jones allowed the cooks to skip White Nights because they had to prepare food for the commune when a drill was over. This time, a grim

Guyanese soldier examines social-security checks given to Jones, American troops take the dead to Georgetown

Ken Hawkins—Syema



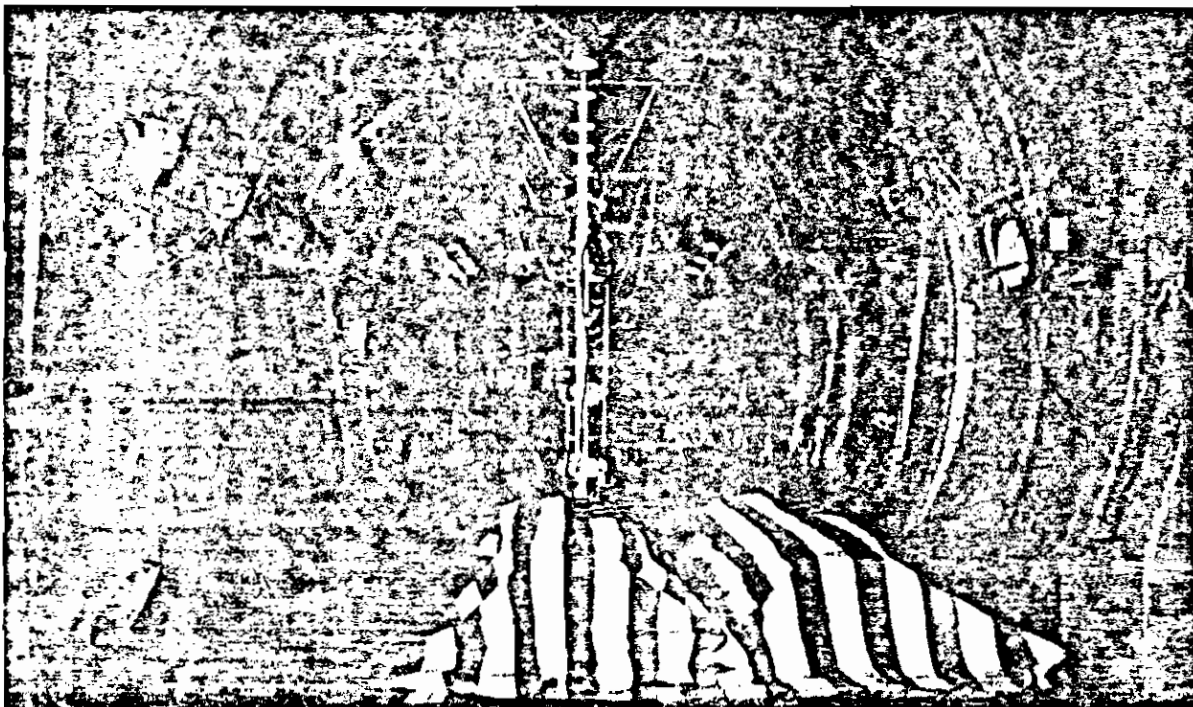


bodyguard came to the camp kitchen and ordered the cooks to the pavilion.

Standing at his throne, a wooden chair on a raised dais inside the pavilion, Jones told the crowded assemblage that Ryan's plane would fall from the sky. Time passed. Nothing happened. Finally the camp's dump truck returned from the airstrip. Two of Jones's lieutenants rushed up and whispered to him. He grabbed a microphone. "The congressman is dead ... and the journalists," he said. "The GDF [Guyanese Defense Forces] will be here in 45 minutes ... We must die with dignity."

#### A JUG OF CYANIDE

In a tent next to the pavilion, Larry Schact, a medical-school graduate who acted as camp doctor, prepared a vat of strawberry Flavour-aide. He dumped a quantity of painkillers and tranquilizers into the pinkish-purple brew. Finally, Jones ordered Schact and Joyce Touchette, one of the leaders of the commune, to bring forth "the potion." Half-gallon jugs of cyanide was then poured into it. The tub was placed at the edge of the pavilion. Jones ordered the mothers of Jonestown



John McDermott

Coming home: The bodies of newsmen Brown and Robinson arrive in the U.S.

to bring their children forward, and the killing began. For a while, Jones sat calmly on his "throne" and watched the carnage unfold. More and more members began to balk. The resistance angered Jones. He finally stepped down from the throne. With guards at his side, he waded among his followers, whipping them on to finish the ghastly rite. "Hurry, hurry, hurry," he shouted. "The man was crazy," said Clayton. "He was out of his mind."

In the swirling confusion, a few of Jones's followers managed to escape. Clayton, a street-wise kid from San Francisco, told guards he had been assigned to count the living; he made his way to the camp's library tent, hid, then fled into the jungle when a guard at the tent door turned aside. Odell Rhodes, 36, leaned against a fence, waiting for his turn at the poison tub and thinking "about a chance to get out of there." When a nurse asked him to go to the camp's nursing station for a stethoscope, he eagerly volunteered; he hid under the building until the enforced suicide ceremony was nearly over. Then he managed to sneak off into the jungle. He made it to Port Kaituma—and sounded the first alarm on the Jonestown apocalypse.

Before Guyanese authorities could reach the camp, Jones

and his inner circle completed the suicide pact. A squad poisoned the commune's water supply in an attempt to kill cattle, chickens and pigs. Mr. Muggs, the camp's main monkey, was shot. Two brightly colored parrots, a tankfish in the commune's school aquarium and one yellow parrot survived, not much more. Jones's mistress, Maria Katsaris, and eleven disciples put their poison cups in a bread pan, a small pail and carried them down to Jones's house. Five in one bedroom, seven in another. Katsaris was shot. When the death trip was nearly complete, Jones finished it: he pulled the trigger.

Lane, 51, and Garry, 69, heard the shots as they plunged into the jungle beyond Jonestown. They struck out for the road to Port Kaituma. Emerging on a trail lined with banana plants, and catching sight of two strange men hauling loads on their shoulders, they ducked back into the bush and stayed there for 26 hours. Lane ripped strips from some extra-strength underwear to mark a trail, and the two lawyers eventually reached Port Kaituma, considerably on the outs with another. "It was utter madness to go in there," Garry said in anguish last week. "Mark Lane knew about everything—guns, the drugs, the suicide pact—and he told anyone."

It took Guyanese authorities more than 12 hours to reach the stranded survivors of the party, in part because Port Kaituma airstrip had no lights for night landings. At about 6 a.m. the first Guyanese Army troops arrived. The survivors were flown to Georgetown that afternoon. When the evacuation planes landed, the dazed survivors could still see the bodies of Ryan, Harris, Robinson, Brown and Parks where they fell. The Air Force dispatched a C-141 medical plane to Georgetown, and the severely wounded were flown back to Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, where they were being treated last week.

The sight that met the Guyanese troops as they entered Jonestown was as horrifying as anything out of a Hitlerian death camp. Bodies lay everywhere. The troops also found a cache crammed with 803 U.S. passports and scores of social-security checks that the older members had turned over to Jones. More than \$1 million in cash also turned up.

#### ANXIOUS RELATIVES

For a time, how many people had died in Jonestown was very much a mystery. After making a preliminary count of the victims, Guyanese officials set the figure at 373, then at 409. The discrepancy between that number and the total cache of passports sparked rumors that hundreds of communards had fled Jonestown for the United States. Anxious relatives in Georgetown and the United States cautiously hoped that Jones might not have taken his flock with him.

Their hopes were dashed. The U.S. Government patched a team of graves-registration and body-identification experts to Jonestown to help the Guyanese measure the toll and to return the bodies of the Jonestown victims to their families. At a news conference, Air Force Capt. John Moore, spokesman for the body-removal task force, said the

## SPECIAL REPORT

count of the Guyanese had been "seriously in error." He set a revised figure of 780 "with more to come." The problem, he explained, was that the bodies had fallen in stacks. Adults lay on top of children, big people on small people, making it easy to miss many of the victims. As the body detail worked its way inward from the perimeter of the dying ground to the center, the stacks grew deeper—and the count rose to more than 900.

Air Force pilots made a last sweep over the jungle beyond the commune looking for survivors. Choppers flew low, announcing over loudspeakers that it was safe to come out of hiding. "There were absolutely no sightings," said one U.S. official. "They must be dead, they must be dead," wept Claire Janaro, who sat sobbing in the Georgetown Hotel as the search went on. She had hoped that her two children, Maury and Daren, had somehow escaped death.

Not all of the communards died in Jones's holocaust. In Washington, the State Department and FBI warned police in San Francisco and Los Angeles to look out for more suicides in the Temple's surviving enclaves. None occurred last week. In Port Kaituma, police arrested Layton and charged him with Ryan's murder. They also took into custody—and later released—three of Jones's lieutenants, Mike Prokes, Tim Carter and Mike Carter, who turned up in Port Kaituma after the deaths. And they arrested Charles Beikman, charging him with the murder of Sharon Amos and her three children.

### 'AN INSANE ELEMENT'

In Georgetown, the cult's office was sealed off, and 46 followers, including the basketball team, were put under house arrest. Steven Jones, 19, leader of the Georgetown Temple followers, disavowed his father. "There was an insane element in the leadership," he said. Despite the disclaimer, some Jonestown survivors said they feared the younger Jones as much as his father.

A C-141 military air transport brought the bodies of Ryan and the newsmen back to the United States. The congressman's body was in a metal casket. The newsmen were in plain, wooden coffins. Harris was buried in Vidalia, Ga., where he had started out as a local radio broadcaster and where local people still knew him by his original name: Darwin Humphrey. Ryan was buried on a gloomy, rain-washed afternoon in South San Francisco. Dozens of congressmen, and California's Gov. Jerry Brown attended the ceremonies in Golden Gate National Cemetery. In the will that aide Jackie Speier had attended to before the trip, Ryan had asked to be buried in that place so his "ghost will be looking out over the bay he loved so much."

Had Ryan and the newsmen really understood what they were getting into when they set off for Jonestown? Some of Ryan's aides charged angrily last week that the State Department should have been more alert to the dangers of



Joe Brenneis—KRON-TV

Tim Jones, a son of the cult leader, views the carnage

the Peoples Temple. State Department officials said that they had warned Ryan of flying in a small plane over uncharted jungle into a dirt airstrip that was remote, far from local police protection and beyond easy reach of the two-man United States mission in Georgetown. They also maintained that they had warned Ryan that the Peoples Temple had become "increasingly hostile" to outsiders. "But at no time did any of us think that there was any physical danger to his person," said one unhappy department officer.

### 'JONES BECAME A DEVIL'

The future of the Peoples Temple was another intriguing question. Less than three dozen of Jones's followers were left in the Temple's buff, brick church in San Francisco last week. Eleven adherents turned up there alongside lawyers Lane and Garry for a post-mortem press conference. Jones became a devil," said Lane. "If you cannot be God, you don't just fall back to the rank and file ... If you win, you're Moses, if you lose, you're Charles Manson." The remaining communards denied reports that Jones had organized a team of trained assassins. They said they would try to keep up the

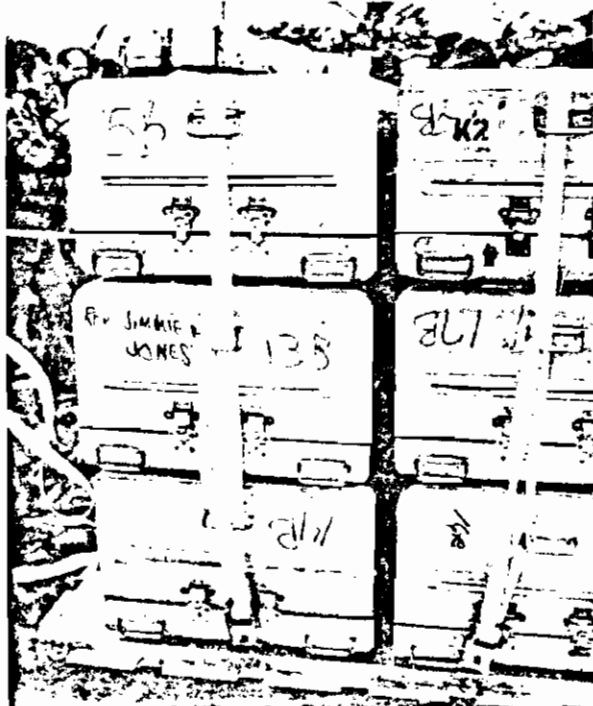
Temple's anti-racist, humanitarian good works. But from the beginning the Peoples Temple was very much a one-man show and without leader Jones, it seemed unlikely that it could survive.

As for Jones, there was some worry for a time that he wasn't really dead. In the Bay Area last week, worried defectors from the Peoples Temple kept bodyguards posted against the possibility that he still had hit men in place to carry out vengeance against those who had left him. But a metal coffin with the name "Rev Jimmie Jones" scrawled upon it arrived at Dover Air Force Base in Dover, Del., when the Air Force began ferrying the Jonestown victims back home last week. When they opened the coffin, the body inside was unrecognizable. A technician had to peel the skin from one hand to make a set of fingerprints. It was Jones.

—TOM MATHEWS with CHRIS J. HARPER, TONY FULLER and TIMOTHY NATER in Guyana, GERALD C. LUBENOW in San Francisco and bureau reports

The coffins of Jones and his flock: Communal end

Bob Sherman—Camera 5





# Cultists Planning Suicide?

From Press Dispatches

WASHINGTON — The head of the Justice Department's criminal division said Thursday the government is looking into reports of possible suicide pacts among survivors of the People's Temple.

But Phillip Heymann said there may be little the federal government can do to prevent anyone from committing suicide.

"It's not a federal crime to commit suicide," he said. "We'll try to figure out a decent thing to do" if the reports turn out to be valid.

Heymann expressed great reluctance to discuss an investigation by the Secret Service into an alleged "hit list" of officials and other individuals who may be the target of assassination plans by members of the People's Temple.

"It's wildly inflammatory to talk about it," Heymann said. He said, however, that the government could have power to prosecute if there is solid evidence of a conspiracy to kill certain public officials who fall within the government's jurisdiction.

The government's primary responsibility is looking into the killing of Rep. Leo J. Ryan, D-Calif., who died with four other persons in an attack at an airstrip in Guyana.

Heymann said the government's other primary concern is offering assistance to help Guyanese officials probe the deaths of more than 900 members of the religious cult who died in a suicide-murder ritual.

Heymann also said the Justice Department civil division was looking into the possibility of recovering from the People's Temple the cost of transporting the dead cult members back from Guyana.

Meanwhile, Guyanese police said Thursday that most of the Peoples Temple cult members who have been cleared by an investigation of the deaths at the Jonestown commune will be released soon.

Cecil A. Roberts, deputy crime chief, indicated some of the remaining 72 American survivors in Guyana could be released late this weekend. He said the eight survivors who already have returned to the United States were allowed to go because of their age. The youngest was 61.

Seven arrived in New York late Wednesday and took flights home to California.

At Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, federal officials, reversing an earlier decision, plan to perform autopsies on the Rev. Jim Jones, two of his close aides and four randomly selected bodies from the mass deaths in Guyana.

One of the aides is Maria Katsaris, Jones's mistress, who allegedly gave a suitcase containing a large amount of money to three members of the People's Temple who escaped the death scene.

The other aide is Dr. Lawrence Schacht, a physician member of the cult who allegedly mixed the potion of soft drink, cyanide and drugs that Jones's followers drank.

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Daily News (New York) \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Atlanta Constitution 7A \_\_\_\_\_  
The Los Angeles Times \_\_\_\_\_

Date 12/11/78

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Jonestown: the last minutes

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Pg. A  
S.F. Examiner

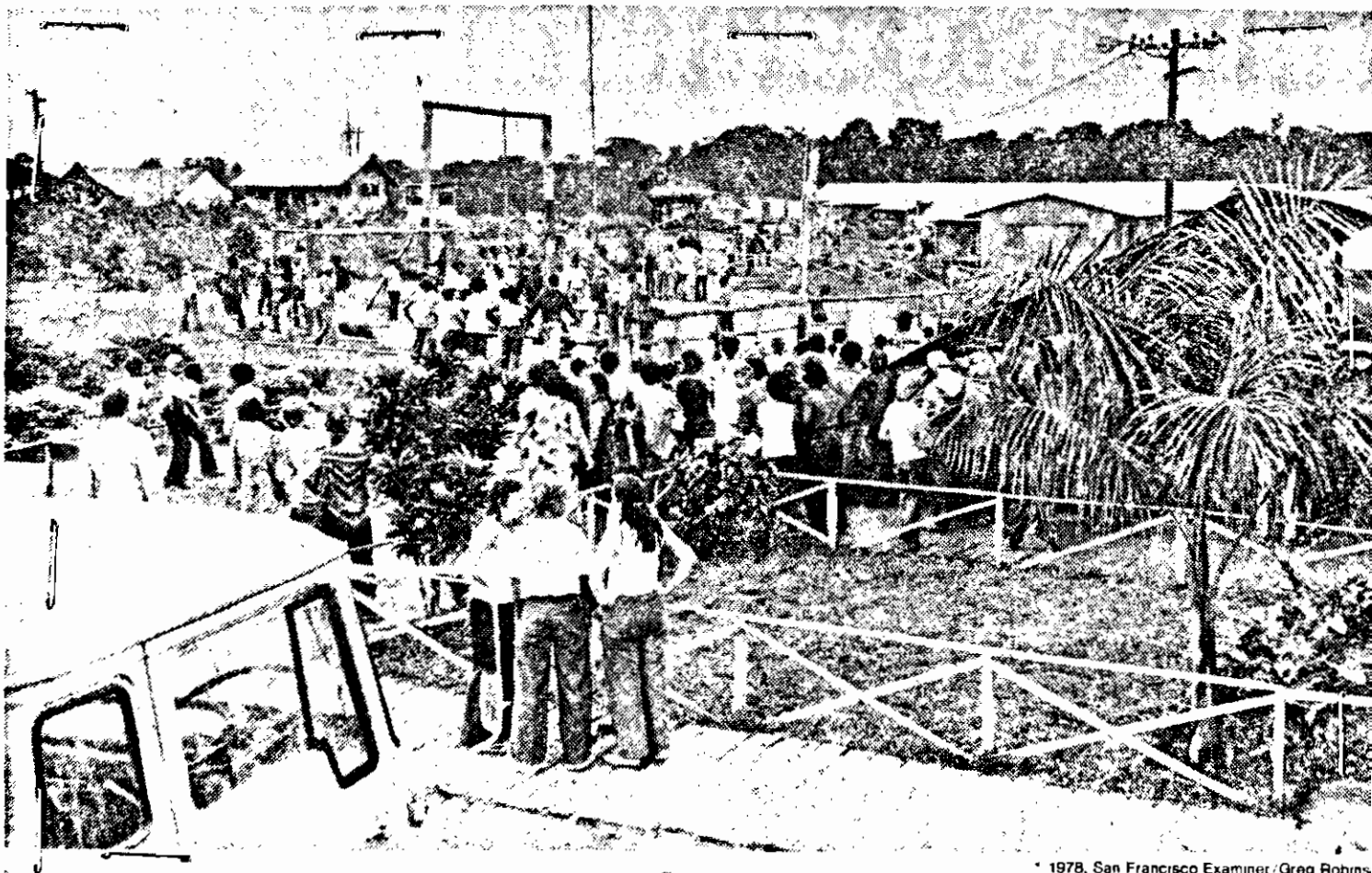
San Francisco, Ca.

Date: 11-20-78  
Edition: Final

Title: RYMURS

Character:  
or SF 89-250

Classification 89  
Submitting Office: SF



1978, San Francisco Examiner / Greg Robins

**A knife attack on Rep. Ryan grabbed the compound's attention as the tense visitors prepared to leave**



1978, San Francisco Examiner / Greg Robinson

During the visit, the Rev. Jim Jones was cordial, allowing NBC  
newsmen Robert Brown some close-ups (above),



but things turned ugly when temple members left with weapons

1978, San Francisco Examiner. Gre



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# JIM JONES IS REPORT DEAD

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

1 S.F. Examiner

San Francisco, Ca.

at: 11-20-78  
tion: Final

de: RYMURS

Character:  
or SF 89-250  
Classification: 89  
Submitting Office: SF



# Suicide- murders: 383 die

82 children,  
his wife were  
among victims

By Jim Willse  
Examiner City Editor

GEORGETOWN, Guyana — Peoples Temple leader Jim Jones and 382 of his followers died in a mass suicide-murder at the Jonestown mission, the Guyana government said today.

The bodies of Jones, his wife, and one of their children were tentatively identified today, the Guyana Ministry of Information said.

Former members of the temple were on the site of the 46-year-old pastor's jungle compound to make identifications. They reported finding the bodies of 82 children, 138 men and 163 women.

The causes of death of Jones and his immediate family were not disclosed.

Guyanese troops and national police to the remote compound. An estimated 600 members of the religious group from San Francisco were reported unaccounted for initially.

Today the State Department however said those numbers were calculated on an outdated census of the mission residents. An estimated 100 persons are now reported either

to be at police stations or hiding in the bush.

Shirley Field-Ridley, Guyanese minister of information, also revealed today that some victims were found with gunshot wounds that "were not consistent with suicide." She said some of the victims did not die violently and were presumed to have been poisoned.

The victims were discovered by Guyanese police forces, who were airlifted to the mission after U.S. Rep. Leo Ryan and four others were murdered at a nearby airstrip Saturday.

Steve Katsaris of Ukiah, Calif., a school principal and father of a temple member, described the cult as "a pack of crazies." He predicted that by today, "they will all be dead."

State Department officials said a plane carrying the bodies of Ryan and the other victims of the airport massacre was expected to arrive in to the United States tomorrow at dawn, and that autopsies had been completed as required by Guyanese law.

- Guyanese police have arrested one suspect, Larry Layton, formerly of Ukiah, in the airstrip shootings.

- Temple lawyers Mark Lane and Charles Garry returned here early today from Jonestown and told of the final moments inside the compound as the massacre and mass suicide were initiated by Jones.

- Survivors of the massacre were airlifted to hospitals in Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., and a group of "concerned relatives" also was flown out of the country.

- About 15 defectors from the jungle mission made their way safely here, where they were under protective custody.

In a press conference this morning, Field-Ridley said additional searchers were sent to Jonestown to continue the hunt for the missing mission residents.

some may have gone into the forest. That raises a whole new area of problems such as exposure. We have to find what happened to the 600."

Field-Ridley said more than 100 searchers were in the vicinity of the mission. The cleared area had been combed, she said, and the search has been expanded to the surrounding timberland.

She said one temple member gave authorities a statement indicating that mission residents had lined up before a tub containing a poison brew and had been prepared to drink the substance.

Fields-Ridley said the Guy-

## Calls about Guyana

The U.S. State Department has designated a special phone number for inquiries from relatives and friends about Americans in Guyana. The number is (202) 632-6610.

A Japanese government is establishing a special office to list the identities of the suicide victims. She said she hoped some names would be available later today.

Consular officials from American embassies in nearby countries also were en route to Georgetown, a State Department official said today.

Guyanese Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Ptolemy Reid flew by helicopter to the site today to oversee the search and identification efforts.

Katsaris had to abandon efforts to get his daughter, Maria, out of the mission when his son, Anthony, was injured in the Saturday shooting.

He said temple members often held bizarre suicide rehearsals and signed undated suicide notes before they left California for this South American nation.

In Washington, State Depart-

ment spokesman Tom Reston said, "There are alarming indications that members of the Peoples Temple in Guyana are engaging in mass suicide."

"Another Peoples Temple member, who says he escaped from the temple and walked 20 miles ... reported that some 200 members of the temple were taking their own lives."

About 15 defectors, some of whom walked the 37 miles from Jonestown to Matthews Ridge, were under police protection at Georgetown.

Sherwin Harris, whose daughter Liane apparently was killed by Harris' ex-wife, described the group as "absolutely raving lunatics. They are fanatics."

The jungle shootout occurred as members of Ryan's delegation, accompanied by journalists, tried to help at least 16 defectors board two aircraft headed back to Georgetown.

The group was part of a House International Affairs Committee investigation into charges that temple members were being held in the commune against their will.

According to reporters who had been at Jonestown, a temple member had given NBC correspondent Don Harris a message saying, "Please help me get out of Jonestown."

The following account is based on various sources.

About an hour before the group was to leave the mission for Port Kaituma, the group of defectors had grown to 20.

Since they could not all be seated on the available aircraft, Ryan planned to remain at the mission with some defectors and accompany them to the airstrip later.

But the plans changed dramatically when a knife-wielding assailant lunged at the congressman and

tried to stab him, reporters said.

The assailant was pulled away from Ryan by temple lawyers Lane and Garry, and the group hastily scrambled aboard a dump truck and made their way to the airstrip.

As they started to board the planes — a small, single-engine Cessna and a 24-seat Guyana Airways craft — the group noticed a red tractor and trailer seen earlier at the temple.

"It looks like trouble," Examiner reporter Tim Reiterman said to Examiner photographer Greg Robinson.

As passengers were being frisked, Reiterman said, "with heart-stopping suddenness, the first shot was fired."

"The cue was followed closely by several other gunmen on the tractor and a loud series of pops echoed across the field," he said.

Some ran for the nearby brush, but others lay wounded near the plane.

The assailants walked calmly to the wounded and shot them point-blank in the head with shotguns, reporters said.

"I saw one of the attackers stick a shotgun right into (NBC cameraman Bob) Brown's face — inches away if that," wrote San Francisco Chronicle reporter Ron Javers. "Bob's brain was blown out of his head."

Guyanese soldiers armed with M-16 rifles who were guarding a disabled government plane nearby did not intervene, reporters said.

They helped find shelter for the wounded, however, and the survivors spent a tense night, wondering if their attackers would return.

During the long hours of darkness, defectors confirmed ugly rumors about the temple and Jones.

In his own interviews with Jones, Reiterman said, the church leader was bloated, sickly, and so weak he could hardly stand by

"Jones has struck us as a madman," Javers said. "We watched him as he kept taking pills until he seemed dazed by them. He listed a whole catalogue of diseases he said were afflicting him, starting with cancer."

In addition to the 53-year-old Ryan, a San Mateo Democrat, the murder victims included Examiner photographer Robinson, 27; NBC News reporter Don Harris, 42; cameraman Brown, 36, and Patricia Parks, 42, a mission resident originally from Ukiah.

Their bodies were taken to a Georgetown funeral home. Under Guyanese law, autopsies must be performed before the bodies are released.

Nine persons wounded in the attack, and one relative who suffered a stroke at the Pegasus Hotel

in Georgetown, were flown on an Air Force C-141 transport plane to San Juan, P.R., and Washington, D.C., yesterday for medical treatment.

Those who deplaned in Puerto Rico were taken to Roosevelt Roads Naval Base. They included Anthony Katsaris, suffering from a bullet wound to the chest; Beverly Oliver, who was shot in both feet; her husband, Howard Oliver, who suffered a stroke at the hotel; Vernon Gosney, 25, who underwent surgery for a bullet-punctured spleen, and U.S. Embassy official Richard Dwyer.



ATTORNEY MARK LANE  
Fled to Georgetown



LAWYER CHARLES GARRY  
He told about 'paradise'

Gosney was a defector from the jungle mission.

Mrs. Oliver, who failed in her efforts to get her two sons, Bruce, 20, and William, 18, out of the mission, said she thought the pair knew of the impending massacre, but refused to warn her outright.

"Cool it, Mom. we know what's happening," she said they told her.

"They were trying to protect me," she said.

Other survivors were flown to Andrews Air Force Base in Washington and then were taken to

Malcolm Grove Hospital.

They included Reiterman, suffering from superficial gunshot wounds to the left forearm and wrist, in satisfactory condition; Ryan aide Jackie Speier, extensive gunshot wounds to the right thigh and elbow, satisfactory condition; NBC sound man Steve Sung, who had surgery last night for removal of a bullet in the shoulder and forearm, satisfactory condition; Javers, in stable condition with X-rays being taken to determine if surgery is needed for a gunshot wound to the left shoulder; and Carol Boyd, uninjured but being treated for shock and emotional strain.



Today's special report on the Guyana story was produced by the following members of The Examiner's editorial staff. It is dedicated to Greg Robinson.

Jim Willse, Eric Meskauskas, Jim Houck, Greg Robinson, Tim Reiterman, Fran Dauth, Nancy Dooley, Corrie Anders, Lynn Ludlow, Dexter Waugh, Maura Dolan, Pete King, Carol Pogash, Jeff Jarvis, Lon Daniels, Larry Maatz, Bill Boldenweck, Jim Finckel, Bill Burkhardt, John Arthur, Steve Cook, Fred Kirsnowsky, Mildred Hamilton, Al Cline, Andy Curtin, Paul Smith-

off, John Jacobs, Don West, Matt Southard, Judith Carlson, Bob McLeod, Katy Raddatz, John Gorman, Gordon Stone, Paul Glines, Lee Romero, Sid Tate, Peter Bhatia, David Cole, Charles Cooper, David Flores, Roger Oglesby, Courtenay Peddle, Bobbie Hess, Paul Berning, Jane Carroll, Timothy Innes, George Thompson, Dewitt Scott, Bob McEwen, Tony Stelmoff, Smiley Farkas, Carol Ness, Jack Mackey, Ken Miller, Jack Lynch, Jim Vaszko and Ernie Bever.



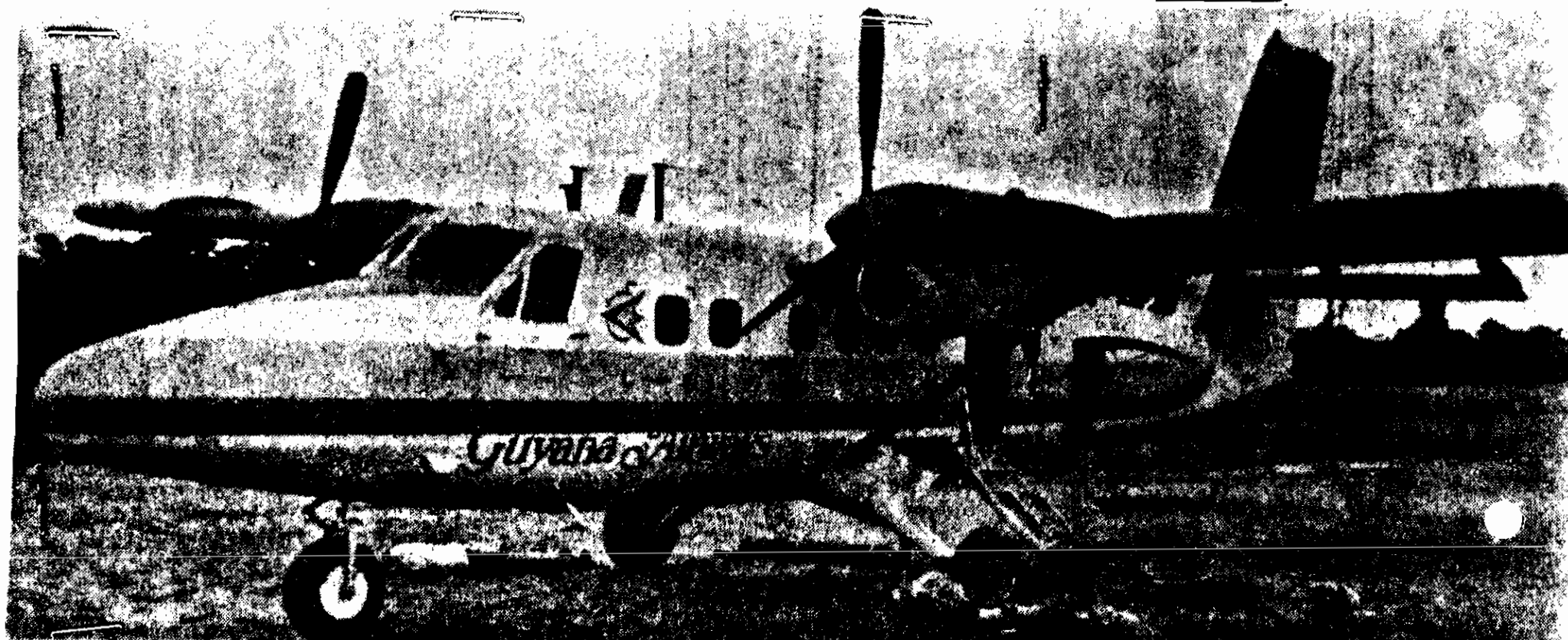
1978, San Francisco Examiner/Greg Robinson

**'YOU HAVE MY VOTE,' THE REV. JIM JONES, RIGHT, TOLD REP. LEO RYAN AT PEOPLES TEMPLE**  
The talk was friendly during their first meeting, after the congressman spoke at agricultural mission



Examiner / Greg Robinson 1978, San Francisco Examiner

**THE REV. JIM JONES OF THE PEOPLES TEMPLE**  
Late reports from Guyana list him among many dead



Examiner/Tim Reiterman, 1978, San Francisco Examiner

**Dead lie on Port Kaituma runway: From left, Rep. Leo Ryan, Don Harris, Greg Robinson, Patricia Parks and (rear) Robert Brown**





Examiner/Greg Robinson, © 1978, San Francisco Examiner

**BLOOD FROM PREVIOUS ATTACK STAINED RYAN'S CLOTHES**  
Knife wielder tried to stab congressman at mission, but was disarmed

(Mount Clipping in)

# Step by Step to the Massacre in Guyana

1953. An unordained minister named Jim Jones opens a small interdominational church in Indianapolis, Ind. The 22-year-old minister sells imported monkeys for \$29 each to raise money for a new church building.

1961. Jones becomes an outspoken advocate of civil rights in a city once the home of the national office of the Ku Klux Klan. He was named director of the Indianapolis Human Rights Commission.

Early 1960s. Jones spends two years in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, as a missionary. Stops off in Guyana for a short visit.

1963. Jones returns to Indianapolis. His church is now called The Peoples Temple Full Gospel Church, affiliated with the Disciples of Christ. He claims to serve more than 1000 free meals per week.

1964. Jones is ordained as a Disciples of Christ minister.

1965. Jones moves to Redwood Valley, a small wine country town near Ukiah, about 100 miles north of San Francisco. Takes about 100 Indiana followers, both black and white families. Claims Redwood Valley will be a safe place to ride out a coming nuclear holocaust.

Indianapolis newspapers run stories describing Jones' faith healing. He claims the city is "racist."

Late 1960s. Jones knits together an inner city congregation in the rural setting of Redwood Valley. Acquires 11 buses, a new parsonage, a new brown church with baptismal swimming pool.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

4 S.F. Chronicle  
San Francisco, Ca.

Date: 11-21-78  
Edition: Home

Title:  
RYMURS

Character:  
or SF 89-250  
Classification: 89  
Submitting Office: SF



1971. Jones' church purchases the Albert Pike Memorial Temple, a building at 1859 Geary boulevard owned by a branch of the Masons. He also bought a second church in Los Angeles.

1973. A church vanguard party of less than 20 visits Georgetown, Guyana. Jones has an image of a refuge and model community in the tropics, free of big-city problems.

Early 1974. A lease with a limit of 27,000 acres is negotiated with the Guyana government, which has placed the temple in an area contested by Venezuela in a border dispute.

November, 1975. San Francisco city elections give Jones a chance to show his political muscle.

1976. Jones named to San Francisco Housing Authority by Mayor George Moscone. Three Jones aides given patronage jobs there in clerk and supervisory positions. Jones' personal lawyer, Tim Stoen, hired by District Attorney Joseph Freitas.

August and September, 1977. News stories hostile to Jones, first appear in New West magazine, then in local newspapers and television stations. Ex-members charge that Jones beats followers behind closed doors, fakes healings to win converts and has accumulated over \$5 million in property and cash donations.

August, 1977. Jones dictates his resignation from Housing Authority by shortwave radio from Guyana. Never returns to U.S.

May, 1978. Freelance writer Kathy Hunter leaves Guyana after unsuccessful attempt to visit Jones.

Claims temple member harassed her, and followed her around Georgetown.

June 14, 1978. Chronicle interview with Deborah Layton, 25, who a month earlier slipped out of

Jonestown settlement, describes mass suicide drills, armed guards in uniform, and continued public beatings before 1100 Jones followers.

Her mother, Lisa, calls the charges by radio from Jonestown "too ridiculous to refute."

Nov. 7, 1978. Congressman Leo Ryan announces that he will visit Jonestown, Guyana.

Nov. 13, 1978. Ryan leaves San Francisco at the head of a 20-member group, including aides, relatives of temple members and the press.

Nov. 14, 1978. Chronicle report-

er Ron Javers held overnight at the Georgetown airport. Ryan and the others check into hotels.

Nov. 15-16, 1978. Negotiations over the visit to Jonestown.

Nov. 17, 1978. Ryan and his entourage visit Jonestown, are fettered at a "cultural festival" of singing and dancing, and return to the village of Port Kaituma where they spend the night.

Nov. 18, 1978. A second day at the temple mission. Despite previous festive visit, Ryan finds signs of trouble. Passed notes from members who ask to return. A man lunges at the congressman with knife. Attorney Mark Lane grapples the attacker, who is wounded.

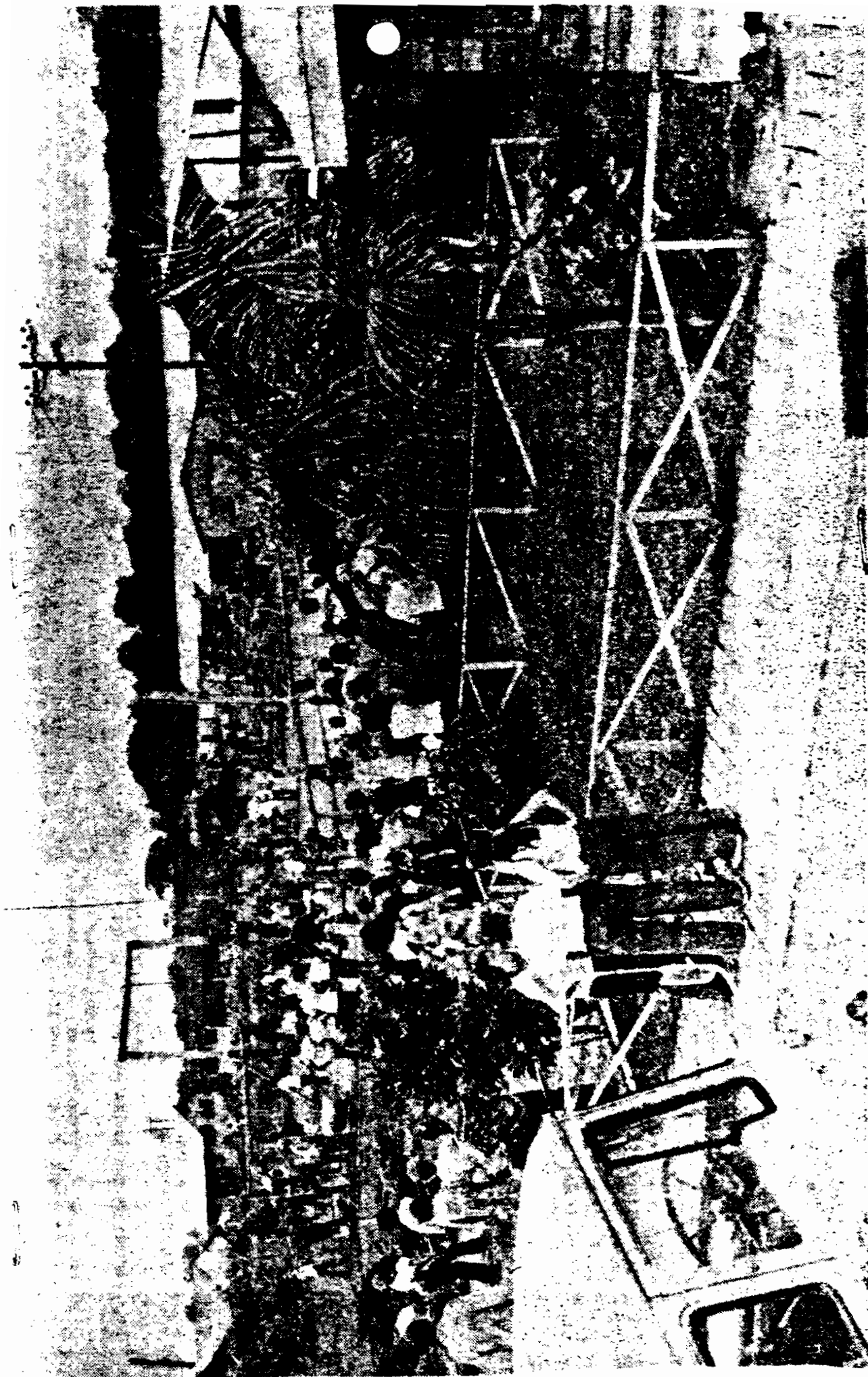
Group waits to board for return flight when tractor and trailer pull up and open fire.

Ryan, NBC newsman Don Harris, NBC cameraman Robert Brown, Examiner photographer Greg Robinson and Patty Parks, a temple member attempting to leave, are all killed.

At Georgetown's temple headquarters, Sharon Amos slashes her throat after killing her three children.

Nov. 19, 1978. 300 to 400 bodies of temple members are found, presumably suicides, by advancing Guyana troops.

Nov. 20, 1978. Jones is identified as one of the suicide victims.



Members of People's Temple in Jonestown watched a play being performed in this photo taken by *AP* wirephoto service before his death

AP Wirephoto service photographer Greg Babin



Members of Leo Ryan's group waited Saturday for their planes at the airstrip at Port Kaituma; this was the last photo  
by Greg Robinson

UPI Telephoto. Copyright by San Francisco Examiner photographer G.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Hundreds found dead in apparent mass suicide

**GEORGETOWN, Guyana** (AP) — Between 300 and 400 bodies have been found by troops who raided the Guyana jungle camp of a California sect whose members killed five Americans, including Rep. Leo J. Ryan of California and wounded 10 others, Guyana Information Minister Shirley Field Ridley said today.

The dead were believed to be victims of a mass suicide by poison, Miss Ridley told The Associated Press.

The information minister said no one was found alive in the People's Temple settlement at Jonestown, in northwest Guyana, where about 1,100 Americans had been reported living in the jungle. Most of them were Californians who followed the Rev. Jim Jones, founder of the People's Temple, to Guyana last year. There was no indication what happened to other members of the community.

In Washington, the State Department said the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown had received a report from the local police that "it appears as if as many as 400 members of the Jonestown People's Temple community may be dead."

## Rehearsed

A California psychologist who accompanied Ryan to Guyana to try to get his daughter out of Jonestown said members of the group rehearsed mass suicide and signed undated suicide notes before they left California.

"They will all be dead tomorrow," said Stephen Katzaris, whose son Anthony, 23, was critically wounded in the Saturday night attack in which Ryan, a California Democrat, was killed.

Police found the bodies of a woman member of the sect and her three children Saturday night at a People's Temple commune in a Georgetown suburb. A police spokesman said the woman apparently killed her children and committed suicide.



**LEO RYAN**

Ryan, accompanied by aides, reporters, and relatives of some sect members, came to this former British colony on the northeastern shoulder of South America last week to investigate reports of large-scale abuses of members of the religious group.

The congressman, 53, was killed by a shotgun blast as he attempted to take several disenchanted members of the sect back to Georgetown by plane.

A knife-wielding assailant had attempted to stab Ryan earlier while the congressman was visiting Jonestown. Two members of Ryan's group disarmed the attacker, and Ryan was not injured.

The dead included three newsmen and one of the settlement's defectors. Ten persons were wounded, three seriously, and the husband of one of the wounded had a stroke. The U.S. Embassy said they were all Americans.

Survivors of the attack said a band of black and white members of the People's Temple opened fire with automatic weapons and shotguns as Ryan and his party were boarding planes at the Port Kaituma airstrip, eight miles south of Jonestown and 150 miles northwest of Georgetown.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 1

THE NEWS  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Date: 11-20-78

Edition: LATE STREET FINAL

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 89-

Submitting Office: SAN ANTONIO

☐ Being Investigated

In San Francisco, a People's Temple spokesman who identified himself as Archie James denied members of the sect did the airport killings.

### Saddened

The dead were Ryan, reporter Don Harris, 42, and cameraman Robert Brown, 36, both of NBC News and both Los Angeles residents; Gregory Robinson, 27, a photographer for the San Francisco Examiner, and Patricia Parks or Parker, 18, who was trying to escape from Jonestown. Her home address was not known.

A White House statement said President Carter was saddened by Ryan's death. "It was his drive to get information at first hand that led to his tragic death," the statement said.

Lawyers Mark Lane and Charles Garry came to Guyana with Ryan to act as counsel for Jones. Lane, who had been reported missing for hours, was not harmed and was in Georgetown, according to his staff members in Memphis, Tenn.



DON HARRIS

There was no word on the whereabouts of Garry, who survivors said remained behind at Jonestown to try to negotiate the release of another settler.

One survivor, NBC field producer Robert Flick, said the killers fired 50 to 75 shots at Ryan's group as the planes were being loaded.

"People were being wounded and falling to the ground. As they fell, people with shotguns would walk over and at point-blank range shoot the victim in the head," Flick said in an account broadcast by NBC. "That was how Ryan and Harris died."

According to Flick there were eight to 12 gunmen, both black and white.

The government flew troops to Port Kaituma Sunday, and Flick said they arrested nine suspects. A Guyanese government spokesman in New York, Jack Gelinis, said one of those arrested was an American named Larry John Leyton. His home address was not known.

San Francisco Chronicle reporter Ron Javers, recounting the attack, in which he was wounded in the arm, said cameraman Brown "kept filming even as the attackers advanced on him with their guns."

"I saw Brown go down. Then I saw one of the attackers stick a shotgun right into Brown's face, inches away, if that ... Bob's brain was blown out of his head."

Although wounded, Javers dodged gunfire and ran into the marshy swamp beside the air field. He and other survivors later returned to the plane.

"Leo Ryan was on his back ... lying in the mud ... his face had been shot off," Javers said.



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Suicide act rehearsed

Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON —

Ultimately, when they could do no more for their leader, the followers of the Rev. Jim Jones did just what he had programmed them to do — they died for his brand of socialism.

Throughout the 15-year history of the People's Temple, Jones constantly used fear of violent death or persecution as a tool to mold his band of ex-cons, drug addicts, misfits, and lost souls into a cohesive, almost military congregation.

"Suicide was ingrained in his philosophy," one former cult member said Monday. Everyone who joined People's Temple not only entered into a suicide pact, but frequently rehearsed the morbid act with Jones.

## Beatings

A master manipulator, Jones frequently used public beatings and pep talks to impress upon his followers the fact that the United States was on the verge of a fascist takeover and anti-black race war.

When he took some 1,200 of his followers to the jungle of Guyana in South America, he told them they were entering "the promised land," according to a relative of one who went.

A close relative of 71-year-old Marshall Farris from San Francisco said Farris "was under some

kind of hypnosis. He just picked up and left his wife of 40 years — and never talked to her again."

The relative tells of stories of rehearsed suicides and faith-healings designed to make Jones at least appear to have total control over his community.

## Trouble

Jones told his disciples that trouble was almost imminent, and that they should be prepared to die "for socialism" rather than submit to insurgents.

According to former cult member Tim Stoen, Jones frequently put his congregation through tests. "He would pass around a brown liquid," Stoen said in a West Coast TV interview telecast Monday, "and tell everyone to drink it. After they drank it, he would tell them they would die in about an hour. Meanwhile, he would ask them to stand up one by one and tell the group why they were proud and honored to die for socialism."

Then, after an hour went by, Stoen added, Jones would tell his followers that they would not die, and that he had just conducted a test of their loyalty.

"There was constant talk of death," another former resident of Jonestown in Guyana, Deborah Layton Blakey, said Monday. "In Jonestown the concept of mass suicide for socialism arose, because our lives were so wretched anyway, and because we were so afraid to contradict Rev. Jones, the concept was not challenged."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 14A

SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Date: 11-21-78

Edition: HOME

Author:

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 89-

Submitting Office: SAN ANTONIO

☐ Being Investigated

# 200 Victims Identified

By Leonard Downie Jr.

Washington Post Foreign Service

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, Nov. 22—A U.S. military airlift brought out the first bodies of dead Americans from Jonestown to Timehri Airport here Tuesday night for shipment back to the United States early Thursday.

The first 40 badly decomposed bodies, which had lain under the tropical sun for four days since the forced mass suicide of more than 400 members of the Peoples Temple, were put into plastic body bags and flown here in huge military helicopters like those used to airlift the American dead and wounded in Vietnam.

They are among nearly 200 bodies that have been identified at Jonestown during the last three days by a team of U.S. and Guyanese officials with the help of a dozen people who had left Jonestown shortly before the deranged leader of the Peoples Temple, Jim Jones, ordered them all to take poison. Jones himself died of gunshot wounds.

Cardboard name tags were tied with string on the wrists of the bloated, rotting bodies that had been identified, including those of Jones, his wife, his mistress and at least two children he was believed to have fathered.

See GUYANA, A6, Col. 1

pg 1

## GUYANA, From A1

While the military team worked on the bodies in Jonestown, Guyana defense force officers continued to search the surrounding forest for 300 to 400 other Jonestown residents who disappeared when the more than 400 others were forced to commit suicide.

At least 32 have found their way out of the rain forest and are now in Georgetown making statements to police and receiving medical attention. The police here have supplied the press and public a list of these survivors. Another 46 of the cultists who were at their Georgetown headquarters at the time of the killings remain under police guard.

The whereabouts of the others from Jonestown remains a mystery, and questions of whether they fled or were pursued out of Jonestown, or whether most of them are now dead or alive, remain unanswered.

One Jonestown survivor, 32-year-old Larry Layton, was arraigned in court here this afternoon and charged with murder in connection with the killing of Rep. Leo J. Ryan (D-Calif.) and four others in a congressional fact-finding mission that was ambushed by gunmen after leaving Jonestown on Saturday, shortly before the mass suicide.

As about 1,000 Guyanese waited in the steamy heat outside for a glimpse of him, Layton was brought before a magistrate in a crowded courtroom where the hot, humid air was barely stirred by a slowly whirling ceiling fan. The magistrate informed Layton that he was charged with five counts of murder, three more counts of attempted murder and one count of discharging a loaded firearm.

The penalty for first-degree murder in Guyana is death.

When asked if he wanted a lawyer, Layton said, "I would like to." These were the only words that Layton, an American whose place of origin in the United States is not known here, uttered during the hearing.

The magistrate ordered Layton held without bail in the central jail here. If he does not hire a lawyer, one will be appointed for him by the court.

After the hearing, Layton was led past 60 or 70 reporters and court employees in the courtroom and through a crowd outside by a phalanx of police. He refused to answer questions shouted at him by reporters.

Layton has been identified by several survivors of the airstrip ambush as a trusted follower of Jones who pretended to be among the defectors that Ryan was taking with him from Jonestown.

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The Los Angeles Times \_\_\_\_\_

Date NOV - 23 1978

Layton went inside the s. of the two charter planes and an firing at the others on board, wounding several. A Jonestown defector aboard the plane, Gail Parks, wrestled the gun from Layton, who then ran out of the plane, according to the witnesses.

Other gunmen from Jonestown, some of whom have been identified by the other defectors, then rode up in a tractor-pulled trailer, spraying everyone with bullets and killing Ryan, three American newsmen and another Jonestown defector and wounding several others. Police are checking among the dead in Jonestown and searching in the rain forest for these other gunmen.

After the shooting ended at the airstrip, according to witnesses, Layton turned up among them, again posing as one of the defectors. He was spotted, however, by those who saw him shooting in the small plane and was grabbed and held for Guyanese police.

Police also have under arrest two of Jones' top lieutenants, Mike Prokes and Tim Carter. They are being held, without formal charges, as "prime suspects" in connection with the violence at the airstrip and in Jonestown after being arrested in Port Kaituma not far from the airstrip, where police found them carrying guns and more than \$1,000 in cash.

Among those in the cult's Georgetown headquarters is Jones' son Steve, of the Jonestown basketball team, which had played the Guyanese national team Friday night before the violence in Jonestown.

At a heavily guarded press conference here Tuesday morning, the young Jones denied accusations by former Peoples Temple members and survivors from Jonestown that members of the basketball team were trained sharpshooters who frequently practiced with guns in the forest around Jonestown.

Guyanese authorities have given no indication whether any of the 46 in the house are suspects in any crimes, are considered undesirable in Guyana or are being held for their own protection.

After three days of indecision, and some disagreement between the governments of Guyana and the United States, the U.S. military moved quickly today to set up the airlift of bodies out of Jonestown for shipment back to the United States. The military task force, under the command of Army Col. William I. Gordon, the director of operations for the U.S. Southern Command in the Canal Zone, has established a command post, barracks and medical center at

Matthews Ridge, 20 miles from Jonestown, which is 120 miles west of here.

After technicians tag and pack the bodies in body bags in Jonestown, an ugly task at this point, the helicopters ferry the corpses to Timehri.

At the airport is a "holding area" where the bodies are being taken until they are put on military cargo planes for the journey to a military base in the eastern United States.

"There is very little we can do to preserve the bodies," acknowledged the U.S. military spokesman on the scene here, Air Force Capt. John Moscatelli. "We are placing them in body bags" which he said are then sealed. "But it's still not going to be a pleasant operation."

A military spokesman said there is no longer much effort to identify the remaining 200 unidentified bodies

because they no longer are in shape to be identified on sight even by people who had known the deceased. Dental records and other means will have to be used by experts in the United States to try to complete the task, he added.

Moscatelli also said it was not part of the military task force's mission here to help Guyanese authorities search for the hundreds of Americans missing in the dense rain forests surrounding Jonestown.

"Our major mission right now," Moscatelli said, "is to assist the Guyanese government and the U.S. Embassy here in removing the bodies from Jonestown."

The military task force is accompanied by security personnel, he said, who carry side arms to protect U.S. personnel and property.

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## ***Survivor Says Many Were Murdered***

# **Guyana Death Toll Doubles**

Laboratory \_\_\_\_\_  
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### **SOME CULTISTS FORCED TO DRINK POISON**

United Press International

A survivor of the Peoples Temple commune in Jonestown, Guyana, says hundreds of the cult's members were killed and did not commit suicide.

Stanley Clayton, 25, said hundreds of persons balked at the "final drink" and the cult leader, the Rev. Jim Jones, left his chair in the central pavilion accompanied by guards to personally pull people toward the poison pots.

Clayton said the entire group was surrounded by dozens of guards

armed with pistols, rifles and cross-bows. His account was given today in a copyrighted article in the Chicago Tribune.

While some took the poison voluntarily, Clayton said, hundreds had to be forced. Sometimes the poison was administered intravenously by the nurses and the commune's doctor.

Throughout the ordeal, Clayton said, Jones urged followers to hurry up, referring to the poison potion as "the last and only drink."

**AS HIS FOLLOWERS** died at his  
 See **SURVIVORS, A-6**

The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
 Washington Star-News A-1  
 Daily News (New York) \_\_\_\_\_  
 The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Atlanta Constitution \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Los Angeles Times \_\_\_\_\_

Date NOV 25 1978

# SURVIVORS

Continued From A-1

feet, Clayton quoted Jones as saying: "I'll see you in the next life. I'm finally going to my rest. We'll finally be at peace."

Clayton said Jones first called his followers together and told them Rep. Leo Ryan, D-Calif., and members of his party had been killed. He then said, "Who is against taking their own life?"

Clayton said one woman identified as Christine Miller told Jones, "I have a right to do with my life what I want and you have no right to take my life away from me."

Clayton quoted Jones as saying, "I can't leave any member of my family behind."

Clayton, who belonged to the sect for seven years, said he managed to escape by making the guards think he was looking for survivors and then ducked into the jungle when they weren't looking.

Several hours later, he said, he heard shots coming from the camp

and guessed the guards were killing those who survived the poison.

**ANOTHER SURVIVOR, Odell Rhodes, a 36-year-old native of Detroit,**

gave reporters this account:

"They (the medical team) took equipment into a tent, used as a library and school, large syringes minus the needles, plastic containers, with the poison.

"They would draw an amount out in the syringes and administer it by simply squirting it in people's mouths. Then they would give them a small drink of punch to wash it down."

"The first adult to die was a young mother with a small baby maybe 1½ years old in her arms.

"Many of the children volunteered to take the poison . . . I can't say why most of the people were found face down."

"They were falling all different ways. Parents were talking to their children . . . and Jones was urging the parents to tell their children that it was not painful. The children were crying.

"Jones said, 'We have to die with dignity,' because of what the United States was doing to the community.

"Jones was sitting in a chair and he was very calm."

**"I NEVER BELIEVED** wholly in anything and I couldn't buy it . . . I didn't believe that killing myself was my way of solving anything. . . .

"Suddenly the loudspeaker called: 'All people with weapons, come up to the assembly area.' When they left I worked my way from building to building to the back of the compound and then down through a field into the brush.

"I didn't think the guards would commit suicide . . . they were a clique . . . they didn't mix much with other people.

Asked why Jones did this, Rhodes said: "He thought that if the Parks (a family of defectors) were allowed to leave and got away with it, others would come from the United States and take away their family members.

"Jones couldn't see his organization break up . . . he had a tremendous ego."



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# Guyana troops probe cult village

Georgetown, Guyana (UPI) — The government of Guyana began its own investigation into the Jonestown mass suicide yesterday, ordering troops into the jungle commune to look for documents and any other clues to the deaths of more than 900 members of a California religious cult.

There was growing evidence that cult leader Jim Jones had ordered the ritual suicide in a fit of despondency over fears that a United States congressman's investigation could mean the end of the cult before Jones could make arrangements to transfer it to Cuba or the Soviet Union.

Jones, who had turned increasingly Marxist in recent months, spoke frequently in his sermons of taking his believers to one of the Communist countries, and one of his legacies was a suitcase containing \$500,000 in cash and instructions to take it to the Soviet Embassy to further his plans.

But the mass suicide began before the money could be delivered by three

More answers to the mystery of Jones' last hours of decision were pieced together from statements from the few survivors including Tim Carter, who carried the suitcase of money that contained a letter to the Soviet Embassy in Georgetown.

Another possible clue came from a note apparently written by Jones in a fit of despondency following the airport killing of Ryan and his reported fear that Ryan's investigation of reports that temple members were being held in near-slavery would mean the end of the cult.

The FBI in Washington was studying what it called a two-paragraph note of despair found on Jones' body. Its contents were not disclosed and handwriting experts were checking to see whether Jones actually wrote the note.

In Washington, the State Department declined yesterday to comment on any aspects of the investigations surrounding the Jonestown massacre.

members of the cult—Tim Carter, 28, of Boise, Idaho; his brother Mike, 20, and Michael Prokes, 32, of Modesto, Calif. They stashed the suitcase in a chicken coop and were picked up by Guyanese authorities. Guyana later confiscated the money.

## Seedy hotel rooms

Thirty-two survivors of the suicide sat around their seedy hotel rooms or napped while awaiting transportation to the United States. Another 46 at the cult's headquarters in Georgetown remained under heavy guard. One of the 46 has been charged with murder in the deaths of Rep. Leo J. Ryan (D-Calif.) and four other Americans; another was charged with the murder of a mother and her three children at the headquarters.

The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
 Washington Star-News \_\_\_\_\_  
 Daily News (New York) 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Atlanta Constitution \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Los Angeles Times \_\_\_\_\_

Date NOV 28 1978

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Poison spoon-fed to babies' Report from the scene of death

Associated Press

Georgetown, Guyana—Guyanese soldiers searched through a steaming jungle yesterday for hundreds of American religious zealots who fled their remote compound after the suicide-murder deaths of at least 409 fellow cultists.

Some were shot, but most apparently lined up and took doses of cyanide poison mixed in a tub with flavored water. A witness said poison was spoon-fed to babies.

Several hundred bodies were sprawled around a communal meeting hall, packed so closely together that many had fallen across others who had died minutes earlier. Some had embraced as they died.

By dark, police and soldiers had found only 12 survivors from among the estimated 500 to 900 who had fled into the bush.

All of the settlers were believed to be Americans, most from California.

Those who were killed or took their own lives perished at about

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

1 The Tribune

Oakland, Ca.

Date: 11-21-78  
Edition: Handicaps

Title: RYMURS

Character:  
or SF 89-250  
Classification: 89  
Submitting Office: SF

the same time Saturday that enraged members of the sect attacked an investigative group led by Rep. Leo J. Ryan of San Mateo at a dirt airstrip. They killed Ryan, three U.S. newsmen and a woman from the settlement.

By midafternoon, soldiers reported counting the bodies of 163 women, 138 men and 82 children. A police spokesman said later the toll was 409 as the terrible task continued at the settlement in this small South American country tucked beside Venezuela. He said bodies still were being found.

Reportedly uncovered at the same time was \$1 million in currency and checks.

Also found in the fields, huts and dormitories were 17 shotguns, 14 rifles, seven pistols, a flare gun and large amounts of ammunition, government officials said.

Among the dead were Jim Jones, founder of the People's Temple settlement called Jonestown, his wife and one of their sons.

Jones, the offspring of an interracial marriage, and his followers, both blacks and whites, established the inland settlement last year. It was carved from the jungle in an isolated region 150 miles northwest of Georgetown and 50 miles east of the Venezuelan border.

White House press secretary Jody Powell said President Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, expressed their "shock and grief" and Carter "certainly is taking a personal interest" in the tragedy.

Charles Kraus, a reporter for the Washington Post who was with the Ryan party Saturday but escaped death, was in a pool of journalists permitted to return to Jonestown with government forces yesterday.

He said Jones had been shot in the head and was one of the few to die from a bullet wound. Jones' body, clothed in black pants and a colored casual shirt, was on a stage of the meeting hall, Kraus said.

Scorps of bodies were packed in the hall, a round pavilion about 120 feet in diameter with a roof but no walls, he said. Other

bodies were virtually in piles outside the hall and in small groups farther away.

Government investigators told reporters Jones apparently had shot himself. They said most of the dead drank the fruit-flavored water spiked with cyanide, but it appeared some had poison injected in their veins while infants were fed the deadly doses.

Jones' wife and son, one of the couple's seven children, died of poison, the investigators said.

In Washington it was announced that 150 U.S. servicemen are being assembled at various bases to be flown to Guyana and evacuate the bodies.

John A. Bushnell, head of the special State Department task force on the Jonestown tragedy, said the servicemen will fly to Georgetown and then go to Jonestown by helicopters and transfer the bodies back to Georgetown. He reported a group of 29 U.S. military specialists also would be flown in to help identify the dead.

Christopher A. Nascimento, a Guyanese cabinet minister visiting New York City, said one reason establishment of the settlement was approved was reference letters submitted by Jones. He said the People's Temple supplied about 60 letters, including ones signed by first lady Rosalynn Carter, Vice President Walter F. Mondale and several congressmen, that complimented Jones and his followers for their activities in California.

Odell Rhodes, a 36-year-old teacher and one of the camp survivors, told the pool reporters elaborate preparations were made for the mass suicides and killings triggered by Ryan's visit.

Rhodes said he remained through the first part of the suicide ceremony, but when a Dr. Lawrence Schacht said he wanted a stethoscope, Rhodes volunteered to get it and hid in the jungle.

He told the reporters Schacht prepared the cyanide potion and the doctor and two nurses ladled it out, starting with the infants by spooning or squirting it into their mouths.

Adults lined up and received the poison drink in paper cups, sipping it there or taking it back to their places to join friends and relatives in a death toast, Rhodes said.

Armed guards were stationed around the group, he said, and one woman who first refused to take the poison drank it after others shouted, "No, no, if Father says to do it you should do it!"

Jones was called father by his followers.

Rhodes said the original plan was for all the people in Ryan's main aircraft to be killed by a gunman who would pose as a defector and get on the plane, then kill the pilot, causing the plane to crash.

He said the man got on the secondary aircraft by mistake at the tiny airstrip in the village of Port Kaituma, eight miles south of Jonestown, then started shooting, and other armed men on a truck-trailer also opened fire.

When the killers returned to Jonestown and it was known some members of Ryan's group had escaped, the suicide ritual was ordered, Rhodes said.

He said People's Temple members in Guyana and the United States had been planning a simultaneous suicide ceremony for

months, to be carried out if the code "white knight" was broadcast.

Rhodes said the code apparently was not broadcast, and Jones summoned his followers to the death meeting by telling them over the loudspeaker, "The time has come for us to meet in another place."

According to Rhodes, Jones used the loudspeaker after Ryan's party had left, to announce he

had ordered the deaths of the congressmen and all other members of his party.

Another survivor, Grover Davis, 79, told the pool reporters he realized what was going to happen as the settlers were being directed to the meeting hall and he ran into the bush and hid.

A woman who gave her name as Hyacinth Prash and said she was in her 70s was ill and remained in her cabin where she apparently was overlooked.

Blood had seeped from the noses of many of the dead, and there was a frothy substance on their lips.

Doctors said it probably would have taken about five minutes for the poison to bring death.

Government officials and witnesses said about 1,000 acres of the 4,000 acres leased by the People's Temple had been cleared, and the settlers were cultivating bananas, orange and grapefruit trees, okra, potatoes, corn and cassava, a tropical fruit.

In San Francisco, Dr. Carlton Goodlet said he had examined Jones in August and found he was seriously ill. Goodlet, Jones' regular doctor, said, "I insisted he go into the hospital."

He would not discuss Jones' ailment, but Donald Freed, a writer who also had visited Jones in Guyana in August, said Jones told him he was terminally ill, possibly with cancer, and that he was "distressed" about the illness.

American lawyer Mark Lane, who escaped from the jungle camp just before the mass deaths, told reporters of terrifying hours he and another attorney, Charles Garry, spent in the camp and the rainy jungle late Saturday and Sunday.

Lane, a prominent champion of controversial cases and a legal counsel to the sect, said he and Garry were barred from a mass meeting at the camp but heard residents discussing communal suicide over a loudspeaker. Lane said one spoke of "the beauty of death as part of our struggle."

The cultists reportedly had long considered mass suicide if they felt their sect threatened. Jones and the sect had been under investigation in California before he founded the Guyana camp.

California police and the FBI had been alerted to the possibility

of cult members in San Francisco also committing suicide, but police said there were "no signs of anybody administering poison to themselves or to others."

The People's Temple in San Francisco was quiet yesterday, with a lone guard standing at the steel fence. Angry residents of the predominantly black neighborhood told reporters nobody had paid attention to them when they asked that the sect be investigated.

Lane said the Jonestown meeting began at about 5 p.m. Only 40 minutes earlier, a half-dozen sect members had attacked Ryan's group at the airstrip where they were trying to fly out some disenchanting sect members.

Lane, being guarded with Garry in a building some distance from the meeting, said he had heard medical personnel were preparing poison in a large vat somewhere in the camp.

He said that from their vantage point they also saw a dozen men take "many" automatic rifles from a shed.

One of their two guards told them, "We are all going to die now," Lane said.

"They were smiling. They looked genuinely happy," he said.

He and Garry persuaded the guards to release them. Lane said, by telling them he would "write the story" of Jonestown for the outside world. Before letting them go, the two guards hugged both lawyers.

Lane said he and his companion fled into the jungle. As they did they heard Jones chanting over the loudspeaker, "Mother! Mother! Mother!" and suddenly gunfire erupted. Lane

said he heard many bursts of automatic fire and screams from the camp.

Guyanese Information Minister Shirley Field-Ridley told reporters that most of the bodies found Sunday by a company of troops who raided the camp showed no signs of violence, though some had gunshot wounds.

"I really can't find the words ... we're all in a state of shock," she said, visibly shaken.

Field-Ridley said reports that nine suspects had been arrested in connection with the Ryan attack were not true. She said only one man had been taken into custody and identified him as Larry Layton, about 32. She said he was from America but she did not know where.

Reporter Tim Reiterman of the San Francisco Examiner, a member of the Ryan group and a survivor, said in a copyright story yesterday in the Examiner that Layton was one of several supposed defectors Ryan was trying to escort away from the commune.

Reiterman and other survivors

said they split up to take off in two small planes at the Port Kaituma airstrip, but were fired upon by about a half-dozen or more Temple members who rode up in a truck and a trailer towed by a tractor. When the blaze of gunfire finally ended, Reiterman wrote, he was told by those in the other plane that Layton had pulled out a pistol and fired at them.

Those killed in the ambush were the 53-year-old Ryan; reporter Don Harris, 42, and cameraman Robert Brown, 36, both of NBC News and both Los Angeles residents; photographer Gregory Robinson, 27, of the S.F. Examiner, and a woman camp member who was trying to leave. She was identified by Guyanese officials as Patricia Parks, 18, though some U.S. officials said her name was Parker. Her hometown was not known.

Ten other persons were wound-

ed — newsmen including Reiterman, a Ryan aide, a U.S. diplomat and camp members and their relatives — and were airlifted out to hospitals in Puerto Rico and Washington. Three were reported in serious condition.

The survivors, many of whom escaped by running into the nearby bush, spent a fearful night at the town of Port Kaituma before being evacuated by Guyanese authorities. The authorities then arrested Layton, who apparently was the only impostor among the would-be refugees.

Ryan had gone to Guyana to investigate allegations from former members and others that Jones and the People's Temple were guilty of widespread abuse of members.

The 46-year-old Jones founded the sect in the 1950s in Indianapolis with the avowed purpose of breaking down class distinctions.

After moving to California, Jones became a political figure, crusading for liberal causes, and eventually was appointed chairman of the S.F. Housing Authority. But reports of his unorthodox, authoritarian control over the sect — with allegations of brutal treatment of wayward members — led to his resignation from that post.

He called the charges "outrageous lies," and in August 1977 came with about 1,200 followers to Guyana. The goal of their farming commune was to become self-sufficient.





The death vat sits on a People's Temple sidewalk in Jonestown yesterday with bodies of followers around. The vat contained an ade drink laced with cyanide.

Associated Press



Hundreds of victims of mass suicide lie strewn in People's Temple encampment in Guyana



Empty throne of People's Temple leader Jim Jones faces bodies of suicides

Associated Press