LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Life at the Peoples Temple Project at Jonestown, Guyana

Editor — The latest salvos against the Peoples Temple that your paper grabbed on to is the allegation made by Deborah Layton (The Chronicle, June '15). Her mother, Lisa, and her brother, Larry, both denounced her and stated the reasons why. No reference was made to their charges in your paper.

On May 28 at a press conference when your reporter was present, Rev. John Moore and his wife, who had just returned from Jonestown, Guyana, said as follows:

"I'm John Moore. I'm pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Reno, Nevada. We have two daughters who are members of the Temple, obviously my wife and I are not members of the Temple. One, the older girl's a teacher, and the younger one is a nurse. The two words that come to my mind, immediately as I was there and as I tried to reflect upon my experiences were 'impressive' and 'amazing.' It almost boggles my mind to see that great clearing and to understand so how much could have been done in the relatively short period of time. I think about a thousand acres, 800 acres have been cleared, and it's in the midst of a jungle, and that's part of what's impressive, and all except a part of the land that's not been finally cleared, has been planted with various crops. I had a feeling of freedom. Neither in Georgetown, where there were about 25 or 30 people living, coming and going, all the time, with total freedom, nor at the project itself, did we — did I have — I'll let my wife speak for herself. Did I have any feeling that anybody was being restrained or coerced or intimidated in any way. What did impress me was that people who were living in Georgetown, in the house there, were at ease, waiting for the time when they could return to Jonestown, and the project itself. One of the great things, I think, is the opportunity for some of the younger people, particularly, to be learning skills when that opportunity is not present here.

"They have probably 35 preschoolers. I don't know how many they have in school; they have newborn babies, several babies have been born there. They have a daycare nursery for parents who work, and there are those who are..."