



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

P. O. Box 875

~~WASHINGTON, D.C. 20044~~

Washington, D. C. 20044

Address Reply to the
Division Indicated

January 22, 1979

and Refer to Initials and Number

BAB:JGBruen:hb

145-0-964

Tel: (202) 724-7453

CERTIFIED MAIL

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. G. Donald Beck
Peoples Temple of the
Disciples of Christ
1859 Geary Boulevard
San Francisco, California 94115

Re: Peoples Temple

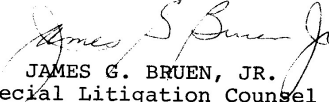
Dear Mr. Beck:

The United States of America has incurred substantial costs and damages to date of \$4,298,000 due to the recent tragic loss of life in Jonestown, Guyana. We believe that Peoples Temple of the Disciples of Christ, the Peoples Temple of the Disciples of Christ Church in Guyana, the Peoples Temple Christian Church Company Limited, and the Asociacion Religiosa Pro San Pedro, S. A. are liable to the United States for these costs and damages. The publicity concerning the deaths and the filing of lawsuits arising out of the deaths indicates to us that the Federal Priority Statutes, 31 U.S.C. §§191 and 192, are applicable. Under those statutes, a debt to the United States must receive priority payment and, a person who pays a debt on behalf of an entity indebted to the United States from the entity's assets becomes personally liable to the extent of the payments for the debts due to the United States.

While we wanted to advise you about the claim of the United States and potential personal liability, we also have filed, or will shortly file, suit against each of the corporate entities to recover our damages and, we trust that the priority applicable to debts due the United States will be honored.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,


JAMES G. BRUEN, JR.
Special Litigation Counsel
Civil Division

cc: Charles R. Garry, Esquire
Garry, Dreyfus, McTernan,
Brotsky, Herndon & Pesonen, Inc.
1256 Market Street at Civic Center
San Francisco, California 94102