



PEOPLES TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL and MEDICAL PROJECT
P. O. Box 893, Georgetown, Guyana (South America)

13 November, 1978

#1 STATEMENT: REGARDING VISIT OF VISIT OF LEO RYAN AND
MEMBERS OF "CONCERNED RELATIVES"

"Concerned Relatives,"* an organization specifically formed to spearhead activities against Peoples Temple, has stepped up its malicious, year-round campaign of lies and harassment of the peoples of the Temple. The group has now enlisted the support of a California Congressman, Leo Ryan (who styles himself as a "liberal", but who voted for military aid to the Pinochet regime). Mr. Ryan is coming to Guyana with the expressed intention of "visiting our agricultural community of Jonestown," ostensibly to "investigate" the complaints and charges made by the "Concerned Relatives" group, three members of which will accompany him. Also part of the entourage will be certain members of the news media, who have also taken part in the vendetta against Jim Jones.

The visit is actually a contrived "media event." It is being staged for the purpose of manufacturing adverse publicity for the Jonestown community, hopefully by provoking some sort of incident.

This sham investigation is only the latest in a long series of ploys orchestrated by the anti-Temple faction, some of whom have threatened to hire mercenaries to illegally enter Guyana and invade Jonestown.

In September, civil rights attorney Mark Lane and author Donald Freed visited Jonestown to investigate the charges of "Concerned Relatives" about Jim Jones and Peoples Temple. Lane and Freed are founders of the *Concerned Relatives is now actually known as the "Human Freedom Center"

Citizens Commission of Inquiry, a nation-wide organization in the United States that has been instrumental in re-opening investigations of the Kennedy and King assassinations. They found all charges of the "Concerned Relatives" against Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple to be completely false and reported their findings fully to the news media at press conferences held in both Georgetown and San Francisco. They also concluded that the "Concerned Relatives" are part of a national conspiracy ultimately aimed at destroying Peoples Temple. The Citizens Commission of Inquiry, as Mark Lane reported in Georgetown, is currently preparing a lawsuit that will name several government agencies and individuals involved, and ask for damages into the several millions of dollars.

The residents of Jonestown are fully aware of the activities and the intentions of the so-called "Concerned Relatives" group. They had agreed to meet with Congressman Ryan in Jonestown, but only on the conditions that 1) Mr. Ryan and his staff would be accompanied by other Congresspersons more representative of third world concerns (Mr. Ryan's constituency is all white and well-to-do); 2) that Mark Lane of the CCI would also come along; 3) that no media and members of "Concerned Relatives" would participate. These conditions were refused by Congressman Ryan. Mr. Ryan had originally planned to be accompanied by notoriously ultra-conservative Congressman Edward Derwinski of Illinois. Consequently, the residents of Jonestown have signed a statement refusing to see Congressman Ryan and those accompanying him.

The residents of Jonestown are also putting Congressman Ryan and his group on official notice that they will be requesting Guyana police protection in the event that attempts are made to enter the Jonestown community against their will. Such attempts have been made in the past, and are again anticipated.

Further, Peoples Temple charges that Congressman Ryan and the persons traveling with him (including media representatives) are planning to misportray Jonestown. Jonestown is by no stretch of the imagination a "closed society." On the contrary, the community wishes to make it clear that its collective refusal to entertain the false front group of "Concerned Relatives" (and whoever they may use to attempt to dignify their lies) is warranted by the intentions behind their "visit," and their history of substantial and malicious anti-Temple activity. Jonestown has always been an open community. Literally hundreds of people, including Guyanese officials, U.S. government officials, people from many nations, relatives and friends of residents, representatives of the press (U.S. and international), film companies, and many more, have visited Jonestown. Some have remained for extended periods of time. All have recognized and enthusiastically praised the achievements of the now more than 1100 "pioneers" of all races who have built a society of equality and sharing that has been variously termed a "model of cooperation", a "first-rate example of community life", and even "a society of the future."

However, there are those who for personal or political reasons seek to slander this community. Peoples Temple rejects any charges that any residents in Jonestown are being, or have been in any way abused, held in their community against their will, or are in Guyana illegally. We are not at all surprised or discouraged by these and other lies or co-ordinated efforts that are being made to undermine this community. It is not surprising, either, that such efforts would be "dignified" with the name of a U.S. politician (at some expense to taxpayers). We note that Congressman Ryan is as busy covering up investigations as Mark Lane and Donald Freed are in pursuing them. Mr. Ryan, for example, voted against the reopening

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of the investigation into the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, which the Citizens Commission of Inquiry has shown was a conspiracy by the F.B.I.

Moreover the efforts of ordinary people to take control over their own lives emerge, they will encounter ruthless opposition. Peoples Temple, however, is confident that such efforts will be recognized for what they are and will not succeed.