

August 21, 1977

"For I was an hungered
and ye gave me meat:
I was thirsty
and ye gave me drink;
I was a stranger
and ye took me in;
Naked, and ye clothed me;
I was sick and ye visited me;
I was in prison,
and ye came unto me.

"Then shall the righteous
Answer him, saying,

When saw we thee an hungered
And fed thee?"

Or thirsty,
And gave thee drink?

When saw we thee a stranger
And took thee in?

Or naked, and clothed thee
Or when saw we thee sick?

Or in prison,
And came unto thee?

"Verily I say unto you,
Inasmuch as ye have done it
unto one of the least of these...
...Ye have done it unto me"

Matthew 25: 35-40

NEO-McCARTHYITE CAMPAIGN PERSISTS AGAINST PEOPLES TEMPLE

The same pattern of smear attacks against Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple continues. The unsubstantiated charges, exaggerations, misrepresentations, half-truths and outright lies have projected a portrayal of the church that bears no resemblance to reality.

We know that behind the specific charges that have been made there is a WELL-COORDINATED CONSPIRACY, SEVERAL YEARS IN THE MAKING, to destroy an organization that is developing alternatives to massive institutional failure. We are not alone, by any means, in being so victimized. We have seen over the years how the media can be used to silence the proponents of serious social change, and can work to create a climate of public opinion that will pressure governmental agencies to carry out persecution in the form of investigations, indictments, etc., against individuals and organizations portrayed as a "menace" to society. We have even heard one reporter involved in the campaign against us brag that he and his colleagues had the power to "make monsters" out of individuals and groups, if they wished.

Much has been written of late about our Guyana project. Now a bustling, co-operative community of several hundred, the project has developed recreational, educational, medical and other community facilities. We have a plant nursery, and are engaged in a host of agricultural, livestock, and small-scale technology projects. We are working in full co-operation with the Guyanese government to develop and bring vital services and health care to the interior of the newly-developing nation. Characterizations of the community in the press as some sort of "slave colony" are abominable, outrageous lies. Residents enjoy excellent health, an abundance and wide variety of wholesome, natural foods, and professional medical care. There is absolutely no truth to stories of "hard labor" or deprivation. Guyanese officials

and agricultural experts are constant visitors, and the project has been acclaimed by the government as a model co-operative, the most successful of its kind in the nation. Finally, the Temple is not moving its "home base" away from San Francisco, and we are determined to maintain a strong ministry here in this city.

Other reports have attempted to show that Peoples Temple has been made "wealthy" by individuals who have freely decided to give over houses and lands to our church. Those who give to the church have done so in accordance with our religious belief in a community where members hold all things common, (Acts 2:44-46). The offerings received into the church are used for the benefit of the total membership, the "household of the faith". This is not an unusual arrangement within some churches. All members of the Peoples Temple "household" strive to live according to the same standards.

The disciples of Christ set an example for a higher form of social organization by living communally, and sharing all of their worldly possessions. The church is the center of our lives, a community of love and sharing that not only sustains and nourishes its members, but reaches out in support of good work being done in a variety of areas. By giving to and participating in the church-community, we are witnessing to this very basic idea, set forth by Jesus to His disciples. Like any family (and our church is a large, "extended family"), we have tried to husband our resources, and have kept funds aside in order to build and develop our work, to provide a decent future for children who have very little to look forward to in the urban ghettos of America. Our work has been directed towards building an equalitarian community without class or racial distinctions and discrimination, as Jesus taught all people should live. Our labor to build God's kingdom ON EARTH requires wise stewardship.

In a world where we see greed and materialism driving the human race toward self-annihilation, we have decided to witness for the truth of Jesus Christ's mission on earth by aspiring to live according to His teachings of total equality, sharing, compassion, and love for one another.

We see this as a solution to the crises created by a social order predicated upon selfishness. Such a social order fosters inequality, poverty, and war, and is therefore neither capable nor serious about correcting such conditions.

So we are not surprised by the attacks upon our church. Christ taught a revolutionary faith, and those who live their lives according to His enlightened social teachings, as we are told in Scripture and as we know from long experience, suffer persecution.

We hope that our friends in the movement for thoroughgoing justice, for a compassionate, caring society, for a decent life guaranteed for everyone, for an end to racism, will not be swayed by the viciousness of the reactionary attacks on us and others engaged in this struggle. We are another in a growing number of "test cases" for neo-McCarthyite forces in America. If such forces can discredit Jim Jones, and decimate Peoples Temple, they will be emboldened to come after others and will gain confidence that they can intimidate, buy off, or otherwise dissuade those working for serious social change and economic, racial and social equality.

We have been extremely gratified by the many, many people who have been supportive. We shall continue to resist these attacks, and stand in solidarity with many others who are undergoing similar experiences. **WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED.**