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PEOPLES TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL  
AND MEDICAL PROJECT

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# *JONESTOWN* *A Model of Cooperation*



# JONESTOWN

## *A Model of Cooperation*



In October, 1974, a small group of settlers from the United States-based Peoples Temple Church came to Guyana to begin development of the Peoples Temple Agricultural Project. They found themselves in a land of spectacular beauty, towering, graceful trees, and beautiful, friendly people of many races. Here they set about building a community that would be named Jonestown by Guyanese officials, after the founder of the Temple and the initiator of the project, Bishop Jim Jones.

The purpose of the Agricultural Project was to provide a community where new methods of food production and crops could be tried and made available to others in the developing country of Guyana, and eventually to offer medical and educational services to residents of the sparsely populated Northwest Region where the project is located.

Bishop Jones, who struggled for 30 years in the United States for equal rights for the black and poor, founded the Peoples Temple on the model of Apostolic Christianity: an interracial, sharing community dedicated to work unceasingly against the evils of racism, hunger and injustice. First in the Midwest, then



A bird's eye view of the project shows the pasture shortly after seeding. Adjacent buildings are the piggery, chicken houses, and cassava mill.



Neil was brought to the compound by his mother. The young Guyanese child was critically stricken with gastroenteritis, but emergency medical and dietary treatment have fully restored his health....

One of the first projects of the medical staff was to hold clinics in neighboring settlements to teach measures that are effective in preventing this deadly disease from taking its toll.



The Mission's residents span all ages, and include members of many races and nationalities.

Assured that every need will be met, seniors relax in the warmth and security of life at Jonestown.

Physical therapy and health checks are given daily. Our oldest resident recently made the long trip from the States at 108. "Pop" Jackson, shown at right with Mrs. Jackson, is 103.



on the West Coast of the United States, the Temple provided a wide range of services for the elderly and destitute. The Peoples Temple in San Francisco and its thousands of members there and across the country are thrilled by the progress of Jonestown and are raising funds to assure the continuing expansion of this highly successful project.

The Third-world nation of Guyana has offered not only a beautiful natural environment for the Agricultural Project, but an opportunity for Temple members to put into practice cherished principles of racial and economic equality, human service and cooperative living. In enthusiastic response to the Guyanese government's drive to feed, clothe, and house its people, many members began training years ago in the United States, in skills that would become an integral part of the growing Jonestown community: medicine, construction, and agriculture.

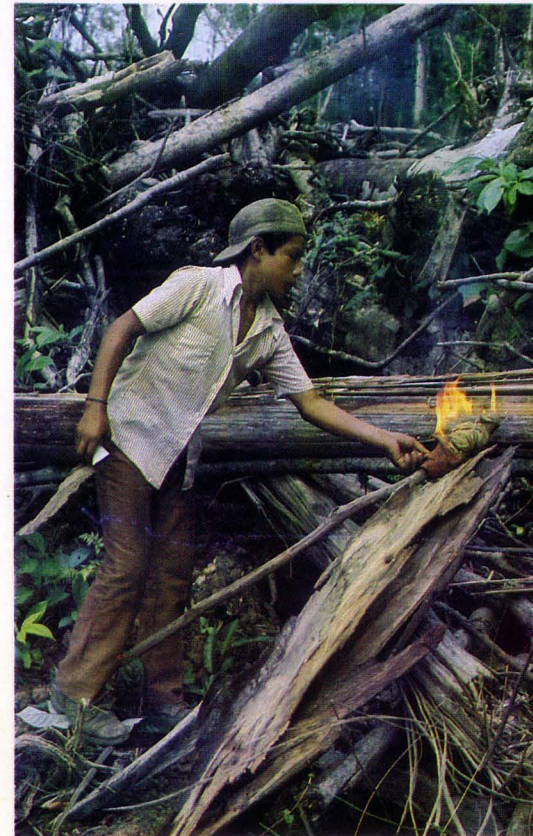
Today the population of Jonestown approaches 1,500. Hundreds of acres teem with crops, some native, some newly introduced. Seedlings and young fruit trees are started in a nursery; scientific methods and testing, and advice from local Amerindians and Guyanese government agricultural experts is proving to be a very good combination, as season follows productive season. Lush pastures support the growing herds of swine and dairy cattle. Thousands of chickens thrive in sanitary housing and modern incubators. Several horses are enjoyed by all the children, and are used for light hauling as well.



Industry is everywhere, from the construction crews to the cassava mill, where tasty cassareep is produced. Cottage industries are flourishing: handcrafted toys; cabinets and furniture of excellent quality; a shoemaker's shop; beautiful baskets, colorful rugs, and garments of every size which, besides being original and attractive, are very well made. Each article reflects the loving work of skilled hands in the peaceful and productive environment that only cooperative social organization can achieve.

The jungle has receded and now frames a compound of gently rolling pastures, croplands and orchards. We are experimenting to find new crops that will be adaptable to the climate and growing conditions of Guyana, and to discover new uses for crops that are native to the area. We have had some very encouraging successes. One of these was our discovery of uses for the cutlass bean, a native plant once considered poisonous. We successfully cultivated it and have turned it into delicious snacks, high-protein patties, and other dishes. It is also used as nutritious livestock feed. It is particularly valuable because it will grow any time, anywhere, and in any weather, requiring only one weeding and very little fertilizer. We are trying to develop a type of soybean that will grow well here, from a strain that we have tested for eight generations. The pinto bean enjoyed instant success and popularity, as did kohlrabi, which we were told would only grow in cooler areas!

(Below) A skillful operator fells trees with our bulldozer. The fallen timber and brush is piled into windrows and burned (lower right); ashes help neutralize the forest soil for planting.

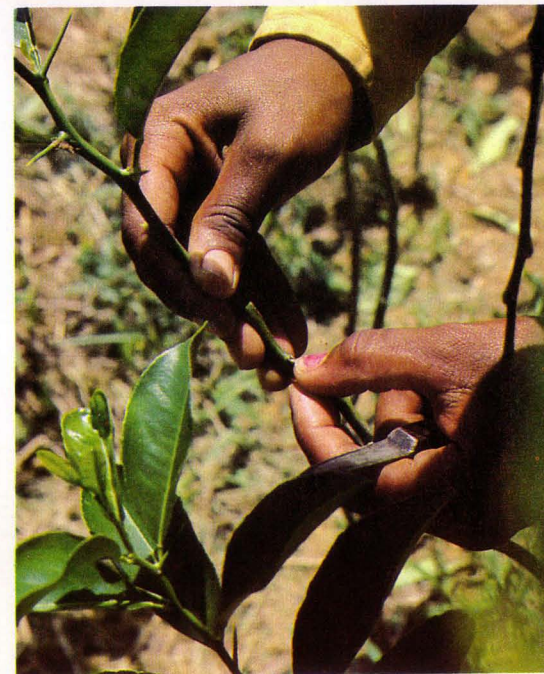
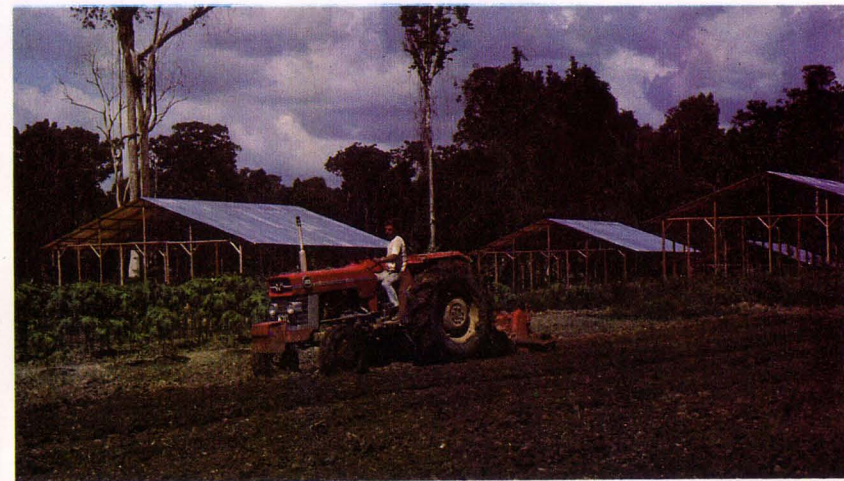


(Above) One of nine pieces of heavy equipment (tractors, trucks, etc.) is used to transport fuel oil from the river port to the settlement. Purchased by donations from the Peoples Temple members in the U.S., it is evidence of what can be done, when "everyday people" pull together.



## SOME OF THE CROPS WE ARE GROWING:

|                |             |              |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Eddoes         | Corn        | Calabash     |
| Sweet potatoes | Watermelons | Sugar Apple  |
| Bell yams      | Tomatoes    | Soursop      |
| Cassava        | Papaya      | Five Fingers |
| Cucumbers      | Asparagus   | Gooseberry   |
| Cabbage        | Egg-plant   | Cashew       |
| Bora Beans     | Black Bean  | Cherry       |
| Pineapples     | Pinto Bean  | Almond       |
| Bananas        | Soyabean    | Pineapple    |
| Coffee         | Sugar Cane  | Pomegranate  |
| Cutlass beans  | Breadfruit  | Avocado      |

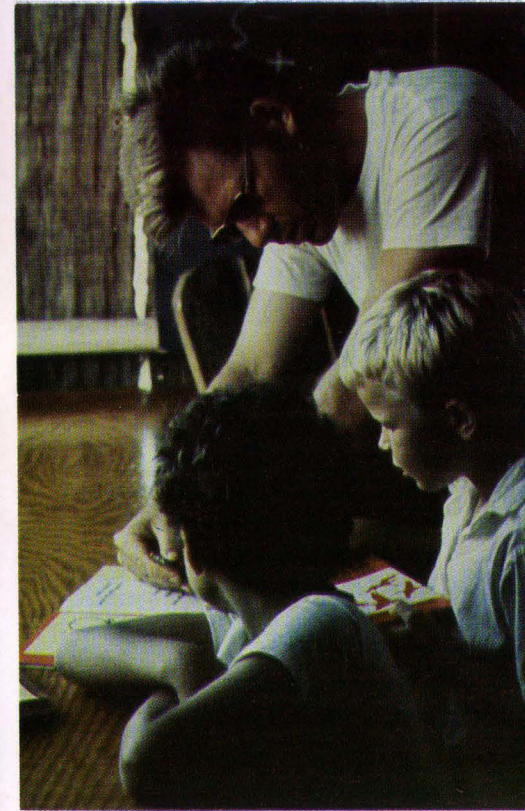


(Top, right) Tractor-drawn "rotovator" readies a field for planting. Several acres of citrus orchards have been propagated by the technique of "micro-grafting" (shown above), which joins young branches of high-quality fruit trees to a sturdy, disease resistant rootstock.





The laughter of children rings through the air from the playground, where tunnels and lattices, swings and balance beams provide creative and healthy recreation. In the schoolhouse, a full curriculum of study is guaranteed to every young person, both elementary and high school age. Indeed, learning is ongoing at Jonestown, and evening classes which offer languages, crafts, and other skills are filled with students of all ages, including senior citizens.



"Our children are our greatest treasure", proclaims a poster on the nursery wall. The limitless potential of youth is celebrated daily and expressed in the devotion of all the adults to the welfare, health, and security of the children.

Tom Grubbs (*left*), a specialist who taught physically handicapped children in the U.S., designed the playground equipment. It is not only fun to play on, but builds motor skills and coordination needed by all children. Tom is one of over a dozen teachers with advanced degrees. Many of the youngsters who were simply not motivated to learn before coming here, have delved into subjects of interest to them, and are becoming excellent and attentive students in the Jonestown School. Education for residents of all ages is a high priority.





The first baby was born in Jonestown in December, 1977. Her mother was attended by Jonestown Medical Doctor Larry Schacht, our pediatric specialist, and a team of registered nurses. Like all expectant mothers in Jonestown, her health was watched closely, and her diet especially fortified, to assure that her child would have every possible chance for health.



In the radio room at Jonestown, North, South, East, and West meet almost 24 hours a day, as a crew of skilled operators stand by to make friendly contacts with other operators, tell of the success of the Agricultural and Medical Mission, or lend assistance in case of emergency.



The medical clinic is open around the clock; trained personnel include: a medical doctor, a pharmacist, a dietician, a pediatric specialist, several nurse practitioners, a number of RNs and LVNs, EKG, X-ray and lab technicians, plus many medical assistants, full-time health care workers, and trainees. There are facilities for lab work, EKG monitoring, and surgery. The amateur radio has been a lifeline in many situations; calls for medical assistance have brought all kinds of specialists to their radio sets, responding with vital information and assistance. Recently we performed an emergency operation successfully, after an airways consultation with an obstetrician in the U.S. who stated afterward that the same operation in an American hospital would have involved five or six highly trained people using the latest equipment.



Electricity, furnished from a central generator, is supplied to all the houses in Jonestown. Underway are projects for waste recycling, methane power generation, and the use of wind power for supplemental energy.

The Temple also has a boat, the Marceline, which carries supplies and passengers from the Mission to Georgetown and back, and also is used for fishing.

The machine shop serves a dual purpose: the project's many machinists and mechanics are able to perform repairs and fashion makeshift parts, and the shop is also a classroom, where welding and metalworking skills, as well as shop safety, are taught as part of the educational curriculum.



Bishop Jones shows the People's Forum to several Guyanese visitors to the project. The Forum is the Temple's free newspaper, published in the U.S.

The success of the Peoples Temple cooperative and experiences like the above—emergency medical treatment and the saving of lives—have created a network of goodwill that, together with word-of-mouth reports, have brought a steady stream of visitors to the project. We have been pleased to escort through Jonestown guests from various ministries of the Guyanese government, as well as dignitaries, officials and travelers from all over the world. We have been pleased to find an almost universal appreciation for the beauty of interracial, cooperative living and a recognition of the unique and important role that Guyana and her government have taken in the leadership of the developing nations of the world.

This is Jonestown. Yet even as the story is told, new changes and developments make it another chapter in the history of this very unique community which one visitor called: "A model that should be emulated all over the world..." Its horizons are the endless horizons of the emerging Third-world people of Guyana, who are building a new life in this independent, socialistic country whose goal of "feeding, clothing and housing its people" is so closely allied with the human service ideal that the Bishop Jim Jones has enacted for many years, and which he and his church have been able to realize more fully here in Guyana, than was ever before possible.