

Date of transcription 11/21/78

[redacted] Room [redacted] Caribe Hilton Hotel, San Juan, Puerto Rico, was advised of the identities of the interviewing Agents by a display of credentials. He was advised he was being interviewed concerning a possible Federal violation in connection with the death United States Congressman LEO J. RYAN. Thereafter he provided the following information: (u)

[redacted] He has been employed for [redacted] as a [redacted]. He has been employed in the media industry for approximately twenty years. (u)

He was contacted by [redacted] Network News, Burbank, California. He was asked to do a story on "Peoples Temple". After discussing this with [redacted], he decided he would accept this assignment. (u)

The news article was to be conducted with the assistance of DON HARRIS, who is a correspondent. DON HARRIS had conducted investigative stories of a similar nature in the past and had talked with Congressman LEO RYAN concerning the Peoples Temple. The Network News had numerous communications from concerned relatives of members of the Peoples Temple. A minimal amount of preparation was made for the news story. He was assigned BOB BROWN as cameraman for this story. [redacted] was assigned as part of the crew to handle engineering matters. [redacted] is classified as a soundman. (u)

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Also hired as a consultant for the story was [redacted] is a free-lance news man who operates in Los Angeles, California. He has business telephone [redacted] and residence phone [redacted]. (u)

Preparatory photographic shootings were made at the Peoples Temple at San Francisco and a limited number of interviews were made at the Temple to prepare the background for this story. (u)

The filming crew was boarded on the United Airlines (u)

Interviewed on 11/20/78 at San Juan, Puerto Rico File # SJ 89-123  
11/21/78

by [redacted] and RHO/skg Date dictated 11/21/78

flight from San Francisco, California on November 13, 1978, to New York, New York. Also on this flight was Congressman LEO RYAN and two aides. These aides were JACKY SPIERS, who handled logistic matters for the Congressman. Another aide, JIM (last name unknown). (u)

Also on the same flight and a member of the news media contingent for this story was TIM REITTERMAN. Mr. REITTERMAN is a writer for the San Francisco Examiner. Mr. REITTERMAN had written stories concerning the Peoples Temple previous to this story. GREG ROBINSON was taken as a photographer for TIM REITTERMAN. (u)

Other news media members were RON JAVERS, who is a writer for the San Francisco Chronicle. RON JAVERS was chosen to represent the San Francisco Chronicle because the Chronicle had written several detrimental stories concerning the Peoples Temple and the Chronicle believed it would be best to send a different writer. (u)

Also on this flight were approximately twenty-two family members of people who were at the Peoples Temple community settlement, Jonestown, Guyana. These family members were representatives of the group called "Concerned Relatives of Peoples Temple" (CRPT). (u)

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After arriving in New York on November 13, 1978, [redacted] went to his corporate offices. He had meetings with [redacted] Network News, NBC, Incorporated. During these meetings he finalized his decision to conduct this story and made final preparations for the story and departure to Georgetown, Guyana. (u)

On November 14, 1978, [redacted] departed from New York, New York on Pan American flight at three p.m. bound for Georgetown, Guyana. The flight proceeded to Trinidad where it refueled. While in Trinidad a foreign correspondent assigned to Latin America for the Washington Post joined the media. Also on this flight were the above-mentioned individuals who departed San Francisco, California en route to Georgetown. (u)

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The flight arrived at approximately midnight on November 14, 1978, at Georgetown. [redacted] was the first member of the media to pass through customs. All of the appropriate visas for journalists had been obtained by NBC for he and his crew. There was very little trouble for he and his crew to enter Guyana. The entry for other members of the media and Concerned Relatives of Peoples Temple was not as easy. When RON JAVERS attempted to pass through customs, the authorities seized his passport and wallet. They refused to admit him to Guyana. He was detained as the Guyanese authorities found \$230 in Guyanese currency in his suitcase. This currency has a value of about \$100 U.S. It was explained that there is a law that no one may remove more than \$15 Guyanese currency from the country and no one may bring in Guyanese currency. The authorities held Mr. JAVERS for approximately fourteen hours. [redacted] remained with [redacted] during this time and both were released the following day. (u)

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On November 15, 1978 [redacted] joined the other news media and Concerned Parents at the Pegasus Hotel, Georgetown, Guyana. (u)

The following three or four days were necessitated to obtain the proper permits from local authorities to make the trip to Jonestown, Guyana. (u)

During these meetings, discussions, and so forth, CHARLES GARRY and MARK LANE interceded on behalf of the Peoples Temple. Both these men are known to [redacted] as Attorneys from the United States who represent the Peoples Temple. [redacted] described these two Attorneys as "radical attorneys". These Attorneys have defered radical defendants in the past, including JAMES EARL REY. (u)

After these meetings were held, it was decided that four members of the Concerned Relatives of Peoples Temple would be permitted to have access to the Peoples Temple. These people were JIM COBB. [redacted] described JIM COBB as a young negro male who is a dental student. Mr. COBB was a former member of the Peoples Temple. STEVEN KARSARIS was also admitted. An unnamed black lady was the third member of the committee to be admitted. The fourth member of the committee was a thirty year old woman who is a sister of one of the residents of Peoples Temple. (u)

Also included in this party were the members of the media, the Congressman RYAN and aide JACKY SPIERS. A member of the United States Embassy at Georgetown, Guyana, also was included in this group. The man's name was RICHARD DWYER. The last member of this group was a local representative of the Guyanan Government who accompanied the media and family members. (u)

The decision as to who would be permitted to the settlement was made by the authorities at the Peoples Temple. CHARLES GARRY relayed a message that GORDON LINDSEY would not be welcome and it was agreed that LINDSEY would not accompany the media to the Peoples Temple. An agreement was made among the news people to provide GORDON LINDSEY with the information and photographs he may need. (u)

At approximately three p.m. on November 17, 1978, the group boarded a Guyanese airline and flew from Georgetown, Guyana to Jonestown, Guyana. The plane arrived in Jonestown at approximately four-thirty p.m. The plane was met by two Port Kituma police. The group was provided transportation in a truck owned and operated by the Peoples Temple. (u)

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[redacted] advised they were transported by this truck approximately ten to fifteen miles through narrow roads in jungle terrain. The road had clearings of no more than twenty yards on either side of the highway and traveled through very rough roads with much bush on either side of the roads. (u)

Upon arriving at the Peoples Temple, they were taken to a large "pavilion" style building. This was a building with roof and open on four sides. [redacted] spoke with Reverend JONES and was advised what parameters were to be set up for interviews with the people and officials of Peoples Temple. Interviews of these people were conducted with spotlights and cameras. This was necessary as it was darkening and becoming night. The people that were all interviewed appeared to be happy. There were many reunions of loved ones. [redacted] advised he questioned each person as to whether or not they wanted their pictures taken and if the response was negative, no photographs were taken. After these interviews and initial meetings were held, the (u)

Peoples Temple provided a band and quasi party (u)

When this show terminated, [redacted] requested permission to spend the evening at the Temple. Reverend JONES refused to allow any sleeping accommodations and advised they must leave the compound. [redacted] advised that the journalists would be glad to sleep on the floor and that no sleeping facilities would be necessary. Reverend JONES denied this and advised the people must leave (u)

Congressman RYAN and his aide stayed at the compound during the night. Also at the compound were the Attorneys CHARLES GARRY and MARK LANE. (u)

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During the show which was put on for the visitors, a man named VERN GOSLEY passed a note in block print to DON HARRIS, NBC News. The note stated that VERN GOSLEY was in fear of his life and that he needed help in leaving Guyana. No mention of this note was made to Congressman RYAN. Upon return to Puerto Rico, this note was passed from [redacted] of News, NBC, New York, New York. (u)

At approximately eleven p.m., Reverend JONES requested the people return to their truck and return to Jones' own. Arrangements were made for the news people and relatives to return the following morning at daybreak. (u)

Although the truck was to return at daybreak for the media, it did not arrive until approximately eleven a.m. Saturday morning. The journalists took this to mean that Reverend JONES was attempting to shorten their work time as the departure from the Georgetown area had been set for approximately two-thirty p.m. that date. The news media was transported back to the Peoples Temple with the Concerned Relatives. (u)

Further interviews were conducted with taping sessions. Several people were interviewed and family members spoke with the visiting Concerned Parents. Interviews were filmed with Reverend JONES and Attorneys CHARLES GARRY and MARK LANE. Reverend JONES appeared hostile during these interviews and included much rhetoric concerning the abuse of the news media concerning his Peoples Temple. At (u) P. 5

approximately two p.m. Reverend JONES announced "Why not leave", "Get out of here". DON HARRIS explained to Reverend JONES that they had obtained information and interviews during their time at the Peoples Temple. He advised Reverend JONES that he could assure him that the reporting of these interviews would be fair. JONES replied "I hope I live to see you be fair". (u)

During the stay at the compound, [redacted] observed no weapons were observed and it was advised that there were only hunting weapons. As preparations were made for return to Jonestown, there were approximately ten to twelve defectors who accompanied the news media and Congressman. Just prior to departure after the majority of the people had boarded the truck, Congressman RYAN returned to the Pavilion. The Pavilion was approximately five hundred yards from the truck. [redacted] advised that a scuffle ensued at the Pavilion which he could not see. He could hear noises coming from this area but could not see what was happening. Moments later Congressman RYAN returned to the truck and had blood stains on his shirt. (u)

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Congressman RYAN got on the truck and everyone departed. There were approximately thirty people on the truck of which ten to twelve were defectors. (u)

The last person to board the truck was a young American male described as five feet six inches tall, one hundred thirty-five pounds, late twenties, slight build, dirty blonde, curly hair, deep-set piercing blue eyes, wearing a white shirt, white pants and rain parka. Later this man was identified as LARRY LAYTON. (u)

While on the ride back to Georgetown, Congressman RYAN explained that when he returned to the Pavilion and was talking to Reverend JIM JONES, an unidentified white American male grabbed him from behind. This man put a knife point to his throat. Congressman RYAN explained that he was able to grab the man's arm and slide slightly away. Someone at the gathering then grabbed the assailant and forced him to the ground. Congressman RYAN advised when he turned he saw the man laying on the ground stabbed with the knife that had been placed against his throat. (u)

Congressman RYAN advised him that both Attorneys, MARK LANE and CHARLES GARRY, were present during this assault. He noted that they had assisted in saving his life. (u)

While en route to Jonestown, LARRY LAYTON did not speak to anyone. Upon arriving at the airport which was at approximately three p.m., everyone disembarked from the truck and took all of the equipment from the truck. The planes were not at the airstrip as had been previously arranged. (u)

Congressman RYAN provided approximately ten minute interview to [redacted] in the adjacent metal shed. This shed was next to the airstrip. (u)

At approximately three-thirty, two airplanes landed. One was a twin-engine Otter. The second was a single-engine plane. As there were approximately thirty people to depart and only twenty-five seats, it was necessary to decide who would stay and who would leave. [redacted] advised that he had decided that he and his crew would stay and allow the others to depart. During this whole wait, LARRY LAYTON had been leaning against the shed with the parka over his clothes. When it came time to load the passengers on the first plane, namely, single-engine plane, LARRY LAYTON announced that he was to be one of the five people. He stated that Congressman RYAN had promised that he would be included in this group. Congressman RYAN'S aide questioned the Congressman concerning this and advised that this, in fact, was his wish. The plane was loaded with four people, TONY KARSARIS, VERN GOSLEY, a lady who was a member of the Concerned Relatives and LARRY LAYTON. The single-engine plane began to taxi to the end of the airstrip. (u)

JIM COBB then noted to [redacted] that a tractor pulling a metal-sided trailer and the truck in which they had been brought, came on the scene across the runway. Then, just as quickly, this tractor-trailer appeared within one hundred yards of the twin-engine Otter. [redacted] advised he recognized the driver of the truck as the same man that had driven the party from the Peoples Temple to Jonestown. Also, he identified one of the men standing in the truck as a blonde man. He advised there were approximately one-half dozen men (u)

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standing in the truck and trailer. He could not see these people with the exception of shoulders and heads (u)

Another truck then drove right to the airplane. This truck had the Guyana police. One of the officers got out of the truck and stood near the airplane with a shotgun. The man stood to the side with this shotgun. [redacted] observed that the people began to applaud when the police appeared. There was degree of anticipation that something bad was going to happen. He believed this was the reason for the peoples reaction. (u)

[redacted] was standing on the ground in front of the twin-engine Otter talking to the pilot. The pilot was advising him that it would be impossible to return that day for he and his film crew. The return flight would have to be delayed until the next day because of darkness. While they were discussing this return, he heard two shots from behind him. He turned around and saw that the left front tire of the twin-engine Otter had been shot out. At that moment the little single-engine plane was at a ninety-degree angle to the runway, approximately one hundred fifty yards towards the end of the runway. Seconds after the first two shots, there was a barrage of gunfire. [redacted] ran approximately fifteen yards to an adjacent metal building and lay on the ground for safety. He witnessed the people coming from the Peoples Temple truck walking across the airfield firing handguns and rifles at the news media members. (u) He witnessed these people walking close to the wounded and at point blank range firing into the bodies of the wounded. He remained in that location for a moment and then got to his feet. He remembered the Guyanese aircraft that had been parked at the end of the runway when they arrived the day before. The aircraft had a damaged nose wheel and had been guarded by Guyanese soldiers. He ran along the runway towards this airplane. He asked the Guyanese soldier to offer protection to the news people who were being fired upon by these assailants. The Guyanese soldier refused to give him any assistance. He then asked the Guyanese soldier to give him a gun so that he may protect himself. The soldier denied this request also. (u)

During the shooting he witnessed the gunman waving the Guyanese citizens out of the way in an effort to (u)



protect them. (u)

When he was near the wrecked airplane, he was approximately fifteen to twenty yards from the single-engine plane. He heard shots from inside of the plane. The captain jumped out of the airplane and said "Everybody out". No one else exited the airplane. (u)

He then crossed the runway and ran back through the brush for protection to the twin-engine Otter. When he reached the Otter, he found several members of his crew and Congressman RYAN dead. The assailants had departed in the above-described truck and were gone. Congressman RYAN was laying beside the right front landing gear. He had apparently been wounded and was shot in the head. BOB BROWN was laying under the tail of the plane. He had been shot in the head and his head blown partially away. DON HARRIS was laying centership and had powder burns on his clothing, meaning that he had been shot at very close range. The still photographer, GREG ROBINSON, was laying behind the wheel of the tire that had been shot out. (u)

He looked for JIM COBB, as he felt COBB was one of the other people capable of self-protection due to his physical stature. He could not find COBB and to his knowledge COBB is still somewhere in the jungle. (u)

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The people that were critically wounded, were taken to a place approximately fifty yards into the jungle. He and [redacted] made a litter and carried the wounded to this location. He spoke with the three pilots. The pilots advised that he had been broadcasting during the attack. The pilot stated that he had advised by radio that the people were dead and that the Congressman had been killed. The pilot advised that there should be help at the airstrip within one hour and fifteen to one hour and forty-five minutes. The pilot reiterated that the news had been sent out and that helicopters would be coming soon. The three pilots then boarded the single-engine airplane and left. (u)

[redacted] advised at that point they had three options. Option number one was to hide where they were in the jungle, option number two was to go to the Guyanese Army tent at the end of the runway, and option number three was to go to town. [redacted] decided that it would be best for the

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wounded to remain at the airstrip. (u)

The following morning, after approximately fourteen hours, it was daylight. Thereafter, approximately one hundred and thirty Guyanese troops arrived. [redacted] spoke with the Commanding Officer and suggested that he deploy these men on the airfield so that a plane could land safely. The officer did this. [redacted] concern was that the assailants may still be in the jungle and the possibility existed that if a plane landed it would also be assaulted. (u)

Soon after deploying the troops a twin-engine Otter appeared and again the problem of not enough room was encountered. The seats were removed from the airplane and the wounded were loaded first. Eventually, all of the people were removed by the plane to Georgetown. At Georgetown [redacted] advised he was met by the United States Air Force paratroopers. Their luggage was searched and the people searched. (u)

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[redacted] had told the United States officials of the arrest of LARRY LAYTON at Port Kaituma. While at the airport in Port Kaituma, a fellow-member of the media said "Christ". "There he is". This was in reference to LARRY LAYTON being at Port Kaituma. (u)

[redacted] told the local police there that he was given the automatic revolver that LAYTON had used to shoot the fellow passengers in the single-engine plane. The gun was then given to RICHARD DWYER. Based upon this information, the local police arrested LAYTON. (u)

LARRY LAYTON was taken into custody and to the police station. During that evening the police returned to advise him that they needed help in guarding the prisoner. He advised them that he could not provide anyone to guard the prisoner. (u)

He then made arrangements for a flight on a Lear jet which was chartered by NBC and returned to Puerto Rico.

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[redacted] advised that he would be willing to provide a signed statement concerning this information. A signed statement was prepared in his presence by dictating to a stenographer. He witnessed the dictation of this statement and was advised it would be typed and brought for his signing on November 21, 1978, at eleven a.m. He acknowledged the information in this signed statement to be true and correct before interviewing Agents. (u)

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He advised that due to the late hour and the length of interview, he wished to terminate interview at this point if possible. It was noted that there were two reporters from Newsweek Magazine who had waited approximately four hours for a conversation with [redacted] (u)

On November 21, 1978, [redacted] read this FD302 and advised that it is true and correct to the best of his knowledge, and signified so by initialing each page- (u)