

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : Philip B. Heymann  
Assistant Attorney General  
Criminal Division

DATE: December 15, 1978

FROM : Benjamin R. Civiletti  
Deputy Attorney General

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BRC:jb

SUBJECT: New York Times Article - December 14, 1978

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FBI/DOJ

Leo Ryan

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

I don't know the underlying facts so I won't comment on the merits, but the appearances and the halt in the grand jury proceedings isn't good. I know you have devoted a lot of personal attention to this very complicated matter and I know that Mike Abbell is coordinating it full time. If you need to issue any special directions to affected United States Attorneys or of any issues which need resolution by me concerning actions or conduct, please don't hesitate to bring them to my attention.

Although we must do everything within legitimate law enforcement reason to thoroughly investigate pursuant to our jurisdiction, we must be particularly careful to exercise sound judgment in the manner and method by which the investigation is conducted. I know you are in personal communication with Billy Hunter, and I hope Mike is on top of United States Attorneys' activities as well as investigatory activities.

cc: Director, FBI

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# U.S. Judge Postpones Inquiry by Grand Jury Into Murder of Ryan

Special to The New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 13—A Federal judge here today postponed a grand jury investigation into the assassination of Representative Leo J. Ryan until Federal Bureau of Investigation reports are made available to People's Temple survivors who have been called to testify.

Fifteen survivors, who returned last week from Guyana, were in court today as their lawyers argued for the delay,

contending their clients were interrogated for up to 12 hours in New York by F.B.I. agents, were called "liars" by hostile agents and were told they could not have lawyers present.

Each of the 15 lawyers told Federal District Judge Robert Peckham that his client was still suffering from the shock of the deaths of close friends and relatives who died in the mass suicides and murders in Jonestown.

"We see them as survivors of a terrible, terrible tragedy, but that's not the way they have been treated by the Government," said one lawyer, Susan Jordan, referring to charges by the clients that they had been denied counsel by the F.B.I. during questioning.

Peter Keane described to the court the interrogation of his client, Timothy Jones. It lasted 10 to 12 hours, he said.

"The F.B.I. had shifts of two agents, which changed every two to three hours. He requested an attorney and was told he could not have one," Mr. Keane said.

United States Attorney William Hunter, who asked that the grand jury proceed today, said that if there was a conflict between what the witnesses told the grand jury and what they told the F.B.I. "there would be no prosecution for giving false statements.

"I can't concur with the description of how the interrogation was conducted," he added.

Judge Peckham ordered that the F.B.I. reports of the interrogations be turned over to the survivors and that the grand jury meet in two weeks to resume the investigation.

After the hearing, Marc Topel, a law-

yer who acted as spokesman for the clients and their lawyers, said that "none of the people I've met had anything to do with the assassination of Ryan, gun or currency violations. All of our clients have said they will fully cooperate with the grand jury."

Federal law enforcement sources said today that they had no suspects in the assassination of Representative Ryan. They added that they doubted they would find a conspiracy involving the Representative's death.

Larry Layton, a People's Temple member who accompanied the Ryan group to the airstrip the day the group was ambushed, is being held by the Guyanese police in the deaths of Mr. Ryan and four others.

DO NOT FORGET THE NEEDS!

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Article

N.Y. Times

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