

**A
SYMPATHETIC
HISTORY
OF JONESTOWN**

The Moore Family Involvement
in Peoples Temple



Kimo Prokes on Sebastian McMurry's shoulders,
Jonestown, May 1978

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Rebecca Moore

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Come and sing a simple song of freedom.
Sing it like you've never sung before.
Speak it one to one,
Ain't it everybody's sun?
Wait til in the morning when we rise.

--Song by Peoples Temple members

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PREFACE

For us the bodies had names, the faces were familiar. Their story didn't end November 18, 1978, nor did it start with the visit of a Congressman to a South American country. A madman didn't make their story, although he shaped it. They were good people. They wanted to do good, to do right. They believed in justice, not only in Jim Jones. Carolyn and Annie were my sisters; Kimo was my nephew. They all died in Jonestown.

Carolyn joined Peoples Temple in 1963. She was a high school teacher in Potter Valley, and then in Ukiah, near Redwood Valley. In 1975, she had a baby fathered by Jim Jones. Peoples Temple members called the boy Kimo: Jim in Hawaiian. Mike Prokes, another Temple member, gave Kimo his surname by marrying Carolyn.

Carolyn became a leader in Peoples Temple, moving with the church to San Francisco, and then to Jonestown, Guyana. November 18, 1978, Carolyn and Kimo died in Jim's cabin in Jonestown. Jim died of a bullet wound. Mike Prokes shot himself to death in March 1979.

Annie joined Peoples Temple in 1972. When she graduated from nursing school, Temple member Tim Stoen spoke at the commencement ceremony. She worked in Ukiah General Hospital, then moved with the Temple to San Francisco, where she worked at San Francisco General in the burn ward. She moved to Jonestown in 1977, and treated Guyanese and AmerIndian patients at the Peoples Temple clinic. Eventually she became Jim Jones' personal nurse. Annie shot herself November 18, 1978 in Jim's cabin. Some have alleged she also shot Jim. Her diary, reprinted in the newspapers, described the last days of Jonestown.

Carolyn married Larry Layton in 1967, a year before they joined the Temple. By 1969, they were divorced, and Larry married Karen Tow, another Peoples Temple member. Karen also died November 18, 1978.

Guyanese police arrested Larry and charged him

with the murder of Congressman Ryan and four others at the Port Kaituma airstrip six miles from Jonestown. Ryan's party included several people wanting to leave Jonestown, reporters, some Congressional staff members, a representative of the Guyana government, and the Deputy Chief of Mission for the U.S. Embassy in Guyana. Three of the reporters and one Jonestown defector were also killed in the airstrip attack. Many others were wounded.

The Guyana government eventually reduced the charges against Larry to attempted murder, but still didn't have the evidence to persuade a jury to convict him. The U.S. extradited Larry to this country and tried him on charges of conspiracy and attempted murder. A judge in San Francisco declared a mistrial after the jury could not reach a verdict on the charges. After three years of imprisonment, Larry walked out of jail, free on bond. The government is still planning to retry his case.

We knew the Layton family well, and remained friends after Carolyn and Larry divorced. I particularly remember that Lisa Layton, Larry's mother, suggested that I read The Autobiography of Malcolm X. She felt it was a good book. I read it and agreed. Lisa died of cancer a month or two before the deaths in Jonestown.

Larry's sister, Debbie Layton Blakey, lived with our family during her junior year in high school. She joined Peoples Temple about three years later. She left Guyana in May 1978, just as Larry was arriving for the first time. She was one who encouraged Congressman Ryan to visit Jonestown. Debbie is alive.

Many others we knew or cared for are dead. Sharon Amos and her three children are dead, their throats slashed in the Georgetown dormitory of the Temple. Patricia Cartmell and her mother Patty are dead. Maria, Lew, Sebastian, Marceline -- they are all gone. They died by taking poison, voluntarily or by force, after Ryan and his group had been attacked.

In all, 919 people died. Congressman Ryan, three reporters, and a defector died at the Port Kaituma airstrip. Sharon Amos and her three children died in Georgetown. In Jonestown, 907 Americans drank, or were injected with, a mixture of tranquilizers, painkillers, and poison. Two others died of gunshot wounds: Jim Jones and Annie. Finally, a young Guyanese man also died in the group ritual.

People have asked what more could possibly be written about Peoples Temple or Jonestown. The fact is, as the federal government releases more and more docu-

ments; as distance from the horror of the event allows historians to analyze what happened dispassionately; as scholars begin to realize the significance of both Jonestown and of the Peoples Temple movement, more books, and better books, are sure to come. Each chapter in this book could be developed into a complete book -- there is that much information available.

But what can be new in any of this? First of all, many documents have been released since the publication of the two dozen or so other books on Peoples Temple. The FBI has thousands of pages of internal documents prepared by Peoples Temple members. These include a journal written by an older woman living in San Francisco, memos about contacts with representatives of Cuba and the Soviet Union, and tapes that detail day-to-day life in Jonestown.

In addition, other federal departments and agencies have released mountains of documents about their relationships with Peoples Temple. State Department cables, Customs Service reports and other official papers tell the story of how our government reacted to Peoples Temple, and to Jonestown. The search for assets by the Peoples Temple Receiver also resulted in new insights into Temple workings.

Our own two Freedom of Information Act lawsuits released information from the Central Intelligence Agency and the FBI. Descriptions of these cases have not appeared in print before.

Second, we have reconstructed what happened from personal knowledge, as well as from government and Temple papers. Family letters, our own diaries and visits, photographs, and personal interviews with people directly involved provide an understanding unavailable elsewhere. We hired our own private investigator, and he followed leads into uncharted territory.

Third, a sympathetic history hasn't yet been published. Odell Rhodes, a member who escaped the suicides at the last moment, provides the most understanding account of Peoples Temple in Awake in a Nightmare. Three other books thoughtfully analyze the Temple from religious or sociological perspectives: Jesus and Jim Jones, by Steve Rose; Making Sense of the Jonestown Tragedy by Judith Weightman; and Gone From the Promised Land: The Socialist Apocalypse of Jim Jones's Peoples Temple (unpublished manuscript), by John R. Hall.

A Sympathetic History of Jonestown differs from these works by focusing on what happened. It is, as the title implies, a history, with an emphasis on names, dates and places. However, this book differs

from other books in that it is a history of the believers, rather than of the non-believers, or the ex-believers. Although we never belonged, we have tried to tell the story of Peoples Temple members. It hasn't been heard before.

Fourth, daily life in Peoples Temple and in Jonestown has thus far remained inexplicable. What makes people remain in unendurable conditions? We have turned that thesis on its head by assuming that conditions were not merely endurable, but, for most people, the best thing that ever happened to them. Our picture of Peoples Temple is neither bleak nor cynical nor outraged. We can't forget that these were good people. That makes it imperative to understand why they did what they did: not just suicide and murder, but moving to Jonestown, choosing a communal life, joining the Temple.

Finally, this book chronicles what happened to us, the non-believers and non-joiners, before and after November 18, 1978. The problems and concerns of relatives of the victims received little attention. Our struggle to get autopsies performed on Annie and Carolyn to determine exactly how they died, went unreported. Our unsuccessful efforts to identify Kimo went unnoticed. How does a family cope with a tragedy that seems to have cosmic dimensions? How did we cope?

We began our own investigation when it became clear neither Guyana nor the United States was interested in how 900 people died. It started with a demand for autopsies. It continued through two trips to Guyana after the suicides. My parents, John and Barbara Moore, had visited Jonestown once already in May 1978. It culminated in two lawsuits.

"In one sense, it is over," I wrote in my journal shortly after returning from Guyana in 1979.

It doesn't matter who did it, who's responsible, why they're dead. But if that doesn't matter, what then does? What is my responsibility towards them? Isn't it really to discover the truth, and then print the truth...?

"This is the first time I've really understood an historical event," someone told us during our search. "Everyone has a different piece of the event. None is complete by itself. Yet no part can be discounted."

This is our piece of the event. By itself,

incomplete. There's a lot we don't know, much we don't understand. But it's an important piece of the event.

This piece is about my parents, John and Barbara, and myself and my husband Mac. And about Carolyn, Annie, and Kimo, who died. It's about John-John, Patricia and Patty, about Larry and Lisa, Gene and Mr. Muggs, and Bea and Sandy.

It's about the dead who now have no voice but their letters, their words and their lives. And it's about the living and what happened to them, to us.

CHAPTER ONE

ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS

NOVEMBER 19 - 29, 1978

Last night I dreamed I was shot in the back of the head. My eyes, nose, mouth filled with blood, choking me, as I watched it flow out. I felt myself dying.

--October 23, 1978
Author's final
journal entry
before November
19, 1978

It was a week of indescribable horror.

Nobody knew exactly what had happened. Each day, small bits of information trickled out. Assassination, suicides, survivors, mass death. Each day, we'd have to adjust, formulate a new theory as to what happened, where everybody was. Where were Carolyn and Annie?

Bewilderment, grief, denial, loss, confusion, frustration, anger boiled within each of us at different times. I was dazed much of the time. I kept a journal in which I meticulously recorded every phone call and every action; yet I dated it incorrectly. There were serious omissions. I didn't note the assassinations of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk a week after the suicides, even though their deaths initially seemed to confirm all the rumors circulating about Peoples Temple.

I did things that were irrational. I cleaned the apartment furiously the day after I learned of Congressman Ryan's death. I refused to fly immediately to my parents, John and Barbara Moore, in Reno, Nevada, postponing the trip with various excuses.

John and Barbara handled the tragedy differently from me and from each other. They too swung from sorrow to escape to pure irrationality. We survived partly by accepting all the changes occurring in each other hour by hour, and by knowing that it was the situation that was making us crazy.

It began on Sunday morning, November 19, when my husband, Fielding McGehee, nicknamed Mac, picked up The Washington Post from the doorstep. He read only the headline of the lead story before putting it on the kitchen table.

"A Congressman was shot by an American religious cult in South America," he told me, as we got ready to go jogging. I glanced at the story on our way out. It was Peoples Temple.

"They can't get away with this," I said as we ran. I felt sure the assassination of Leo Ryan was part of a plot designed to precipitate an attack on Peoples Temple.

The thing we needed was more information, something almost impossible to get that first week. We called Congressman Ryan's office later that morning, since we were living in Washington, D.C. We wondered if his staff knew any more than we did. They didn't.

I also tried to get John and Barbara on the phone, but they weren't at home or at Reno's First United Methodist Church, where John served as pastor.

I felt there wasn't much I could do, so I tried to act as though everything was going to be all right. I'd planned to do some work that afternoon and went down to the office. My friends there who knew my sisters belonged to Peoples Temple had heard the story about the attack on Ryan the night before, but hadn't wanted to call me. They figured I'd find out soon enough.

Mac called the Congressman's office again in the afternoon to ask that troops not go into Jonestown with guns blazing. We feared Ryan's death would make Guyanese officials overreact. His staff reported a rumor about mass suicides. I felt sick and dizzy when I heard that, and decided to go home.

Again, I felt it was a set-up. The suicide story would explain any killings in Jonestown. I didn't believe my sisters, Carolyn and Annie, would commit suicide.

When I finally talked to John and Barbara that day, they were calm. John's sister had tracked them down at a church retreat in the mountains. "What can you tell us?" his sister asked over the phone.

'About what?' I asked. 'Oh, God,' [she said,] 'I'm the one that must tell you... Congressman Ryan has been assassinated.' I don't know what else I said... I returned to the meeting and got Barbara and two friends to step outside. I said, 'Our children are involved in a tragedy and we must go home.' The thought that Carolyn, Annie and Kimo were already dead never entered my mind.

John called Peoples Temple headquarters in San Francisco and talked with Jean Brown. She said the radio went dead on Saturday. They knew nothing in San Francisco. She added, "We don't believe the rumor about a mass suicide." This was the first John heard of the suicides. For the next day or two, he fantasized that he heard Annie say, "Dad, I'm O.K. Don't worry." He assumed that meant she was alive.

John and Barbara were hopeful. All we could do was wait for more news. But by the evening of that first day, I had no hope myself. "Annie and Carolyn may be dead," was the first thing I wrote in my journal. I re-read Ann's last letter to me. She wrote of a conspiracy against Peoples Temple, adding, "What is interesting is that it is all coming out before we are all dead." I wondered if the truth would in fact come out. Nothing encouraged me to believe it would.

The State Department certainly offered little help. We began to call the Department several times a day. Most calls were fruitless. Frequently the Guyana Task Force number was busy. When we got through on Sunday, we gave someone the names of Carolyn, her son Kimo, and Annie, and said they were in Jonestown. It must have been confusing for people at State to sort through the names we gave them: Carolyn Layton, Jim-Jon (Kimo) Prokes, Annie Moore.

The media -- newspapers, radio, television, magazines -- knew less than we did about Peoples Temple, and gave no indication that they'd provide the truth. Nevertheless, we had to watch every news show, read every paper, collect every article. On Sunday, I saw the same TV story at five, six, ten, and eleven o'clock. I saw the same interview with NBC Field Producer Robert Flick a half dozen times. Flick had witnessed the Port Kaituma killings.

We bought each edition of The Washington Post, The Washington Star, and The New York Times. John and Barbara in turn collected The San Francisco Chronicle, The Reno Evening Gazette, and The Los Angeles Times. Later on, relatives sent us The Arizona Republic and local papers. We read articles about Jonestown from Associated Press, The New York Times News Service, the Gannett News Service, as well as by individual reporters who'd accompanied Ryan to Jonestown. The accumulation of the same bits of facts and hearsay didn't amount to much in terms of information, but it was all we could get.

"We won't know anything until tomorrow, if then," I noted Sunday night. "I am calm, my parents seem calm. We're just waiting for news now. I try not to imagine anything. Just wait."

On Monday, November 20, I was first up to get the paper. I brought it in and turned on the TV to catch the morning news as well. Three to four hundred persons were dead in Jonestown. That meant six or seven hundred survivors. Nevertheless, I assumed Carolyn and Annie were dead. John and Barbara publicly

expressed hope, and told The Reno Evening Gazette, "We are still hoping for a miracle." Privately, they believed it was all over. Four years later, Barbara wrote of a Temple member they knew who'd been found dead in the church's Georgetown headquarters:

The news of Sharon Amos and how she had slit her children's and her own throat came over the TV news one morning. Dad and I simply fell sobbing into each other's arms. We knew then that all were dead. We knew then that the people we had known and loved were gone. There was even the morbid understanding that they might be dead by their own hand.

I decided not to bother with school that day. I stayed home and cleaned the apartment. In the afternoon, Mac and I went to a movie. Neither of us remembers what it was.

We continued to call everyone we thought might help, or know something. In addition to phoning the State Department, we called California Senator Alan Cranston. Although someone in his office was taking names and working with the State Department, she had no news. We phoned the State Department three times, and someone promised to call us back three times. No one ever did. On the fourth call, we asked if the State Department would confirm the death of Jim Jones. That news had been in the papers. State wouldn't confirm.

If Jim were dead, I knew Carolyn, Annie and Kimo were dead, too, even if there were several hundred survivors. They were the "fanatics" the media screamed about. We read that a doctor and a nurse administered the poison to people. We all tried to imagine Annie taking poison, helping children drink it. It didn't fit, but it was horrifying to contemplate.

The thought of my sisters killing children made me physically sick. The thought of them helping other people, or forcing them, to take poison, was hateful. I couldn't believe that they could do such a thing. But if they had? I hoped they were dead as well.

Accompanying the fears that Carolyn and Annie had done the unthinkable was pain over the articles we had to read. No one had a kind word for the people of Jonestown.

"Jonestown is every evil thing that everybody thought -- and worse," Ron Javers wrote in the lead story under The San Francisco Chronicle's 90-point

banner headline: "I Was In The Ambush." On the article's continuation from the front page, Javers repeated his lead, observing that defectors "corroborated every evil story about the place that we had heard... They talked about stores of weapons in the so-called peaceful jungle mission."

Accusations made against Jim Jones earlier in the year appeared Monday morning in the Chronicle and Monday evening in the Star. Marshall Kilduff, author of the New West expose on Peoples Temple a year earlier, wrote in the November 20 Chronicle that defectors said Jim

ruled a realm patrolled by armed guards in khaki, ordered public beatings, and drilled followers in mass suicide rehearsals and make believe ambushes...

Like the Chronicle, the Star included bits of the New West story. "Meanwhile," the Star added, "Jones reportedly sent his children to private schools, kept a fleet of nine cars, and opened numerous bank accounts to spread the flow of contributions coming from his followers."

"Lies, slander, untruths," I wrote in my journal. "No one seems to speak for Peoples Temple. No one speaks for the people who died." Normal journalistic standards of balance and fairness vanished in a day. No reporter was impartial that first week, or for many weeks to come. Newspapers printed anything anyone wanted to say. Allegations and sources of information -- for example, ex-Temple members -- were neither questioned nor evaluated.

And it got worse. It already was worse. As early as Monday evening, the first hint of the "hit squad" hysteria appeared in the Star. The paper reported that Jim had trained a 30-man SWAT-type team. By ten o'clock that night, I added to what I'd jotted down earlier in the day:

The press is going berserk. Stories, accusations, get wilder, more vicious, more graphic, lurid. What began as [Leo Ryan's] investigation to see if people were being held against their will, became a search for torture and brutality.

On Tuesday, November 21, the death toll remained at 400. But no one knew where the survivors were.

They'd vanished into the tiger-infested jungle. A friend of mine wondered if a few people committed suicide so others could get away. John and Barbara believed Ann might have escaped.

"It's tragic for the families of all these people," Barbara told The Reno Evening Gazette, adding

and I guess we're among them. But I have a thread of hope. There was never a fracture of communication between us. They always knew they had somewhere to come home to, and perhaps that's something they could hang on to.

But I didn't think they'd escaped. "They're all dead," I wrote in my journal. "Even the 700 'escapees' are probably dead somewhere." I told Barbara that Jonestown's doctor, Larry Schacht, distributed the poison. I had to assume Annie helped him, since they'd been friends. But Barbara denied the implication.

Since we didn't know what had happened or what to do, we waited. We tried to keep busy. Mac and I continued to make phone calls. In the morning, I clipped all the papers we'd collected over the previous two days. While I pored over the articles, an acquaintance called about a race I was supposed to be in on Thanksgiving. I blurted out that my sisters were in Jonestown and I wasn't going to any races.

Although I didn't know how to tell my friends about my sisters, they seemed to know. They came over with lots of food and sympathy. They were embarrassed for me as well. The news media had made it shameful to be connected with Peoples Temple.

The headlines on Tuesday were worse, if possible, than the day before: "The Jungle Death Ritual"; "Peoples Temple Cult: Violent Outer Fringe"; "FBI Checking Reported Plot by Sect to Slay Government Leaders". Every paper looked like the National Enquirer. And we had to connect that madness -- the lurid photos that gave me chills to look at -- with our own relatives. Barbara described how she felt when she saw the papers.

I bought stamps and sundries at a small drug store at a nearby Reno mall. As I walked out, I saw the sensational pictures and headlines in a copy of the National Enquirer. I was transfixed. I picked it up and looked and read. And I

said to myself, 'What if I just stood here and screamed at the top of my lungs...?'

The helpless anger we felt after reading the news stories equaled our grief and concern. Our personal knowledge that there was more to Jonestown than death, was no comfort. It was unbearable to think that most people knew only that part of it.

But we had to read everything, immerse ourselves in the stories because there was no other news. The Washington Star suggested that day that the missing cultists were seniors who'd been killed much earlier, although Social Security Administration officials said they had no evidence of fraud. The Star also compared Jim Jones to mass murderer Charles Manson, noting the striking similarity that "Jones and Manson did their recruiting in California."

The papers pounced on the hit squad threat. Ex-members promoted the story, coining the term themselves. Jeannie Mills, a harsh critic and former member, told reporters: "At one time, my husband and myself would have been willing to kill for Jim Jones. We know others are willing to do the same." Other ex-members, those who'd left Jonestown with Ryan, told reporter Ron Javers that Jim and others were to have escaped and then kill their enemies one by one.

Attorney Mark Lane's allegation that he saw and heard automatic weapons in Jonestown was another fruitful source of imaginative copy. The lawyer said NBC newsman Don Harris had told him he "discovered" automatic weapons in the jungle settlement. Since Harris was slain on the Port Kaituma airstrip, it was hard to check Lane's story.

The Star published a photo of Guyanese police examining Peoples Temple's weapons. The picture showed a man holding a rifle at a table crowded with guns. The Nevada State Journal reported that 40 automatic weapons were found, along with thousands of rounds of ammunition. The San Francisco Chronicle noted: "The Guyanese armed forces found, to no one's surprise, a store of arms and ammunition in the deserted settlement." It would have made less interesting reading if the Chronicle had been more precise and admitted that the police found only ten pistols, thirteen small caliber rifles, and seven shotguns.

The rumor about the arsenal prompted San Francisco police to search the Temple's city headquarters for guns. They found no sign of weapons. The story also led the U.S. Customs Service to re-open its investigation into arms smuggling by Peoples Temple.

Reporters who remembered John and Barbara from their participation in a press conference supporting Peoples Temple earlier that year, began to call them. My parents were a new angle. They weren't ex-members and they weren't critical; they were articulate; they weren't hysterical.

On Tuesday, The Reno Evening Gazette printed photos of Ann, Carolyn and Kimo under the headline, "No Word on Renoites in Guyana." It was the first article we saw anywhere that humanized the victims of Jonestown. There they were, faces on the front page, smiling at the camera. Not bodies.

"Imagine anyone being that demonic," Barbara told the Reno paper, "leading that many people down! There's a lot of anger in me when I think about him -- Jim Jones!"

Barbara expressed what we were all feeling. How could Jim do that to everybody? It was incomprehensible. Demonic, Barbara said. I wondered if Carolyn knew, if she realized how evil he was. My anger spilled onto her. She must have known.

Disorientation and unconscious denial probably explain why I didn't immediately fly out to join my parents in our terrible period of waiting. I kept telling them that I would come out once we had definite word. If I bought an airplane ticket, I guess, that would have confirmed my belief they were dead. I acted instead as though everything were a temporary crisis.

On Tuesday, John and Barbara offered to pay our way out. I still said no. They called again and asked me to come. Barbara said to please come, for John's sake. He grumbled, so she added, "It's for my sake, too." We decided to fly out the next day.

At 11:45 that night, the State Department released the names of the first 183 persons tentatively identified. Carolyn and Ann weren't on the list.

Wednesday, November 22, resembled the previous days. We waited, and we made telephone calls. The body count remained around 400. The U.S. government planned to bring the victims home after first suggesting that they be buried in a mass grave in Guyana. The body bags were handled by U.S. Army volunteers, and placed two and three to an aluminum coffin. The U.S. Air Force then flew the coffins from Georgetown, Guyana to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

On Wednesday, the State Department told us no further identifications would be made until the bodies were returned to the U.S. The earlier identifications

were tentative anyway, and had not been confirmed by fingerprints or dental records. The bodies were in such a state of decomposition that visual identification was impossible anyway.

In addition to calling the State Department several times, Mac called the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. The committee chairman, the late Clement Zablocki (D-Wisc.) announced on Tuesday that the committee planned to investigate the death of Leo Ryan. Mac talked to a staff member to ask that Congress look into attacks on Peoples Temple as well as the attack on the Congressman. Any investigation into Ryan's death had to lead back to California, he told the staff member, because that's where Peoples Temple's roots lay.

I wrote a letter that day to a friend in Congress expressing my hope that the investigators "will not take the 'easy' way, but that they will dig to find the truth." I asked him to give the letter to the committee chairman. In my own letter, I quoted Ann's last letter to me about conspiracy against Peoples Temple, and added:

I am concerned that the real story of what happened in Jonestown, Guyana may never come out... Because Peoples Temple was socialist in outlook, and because a Member of Congress was murdered, I am afraid any investigation will be a cover-up -- an attempt to discredit Peoples Temple as just a bunch of loonies.

I concluded by telling the committee what I thought it ought to do.

The biggest question for me is how much of Rev. Jim Jones' fears were mere paranoia, and how much were based on solid information. It is the duty of the Congressional committee investigating Peoples Temple to answer these questions.

Mac called William Beveridge, the ombudsman for The Washington Star, to complain about the sensationalistic coverage the paper was giving Peoples Temple. He didn't get to talk with Beveridge until we got back from Reno. At that time, Mac pointed out that the Star's front page story of November 21, which suggested that seniors had been killed long before the

suicides, had no factual basis. Beveridge's defense was that the story came from a Time Magazine correspondent. Time owned the Star. He implied that the paper had no responsibility for the story's accuracy, since it wasn't by a Star reporter.

"Here you have the most sensational story of the decade," Mac told him. "If you simply reported the facts, it would still be bizarre enough to sell lots of papers." Beveridge had no answer to that.

When Mac objected to the Star's use of the word "cult" -- reminding Beveridge that Peoples Temple was a long-standing member of the Disciples of Christ denomination -- the ombudsman said, "Well, 'cult' is a short, four-letter word that fits well in headlines."

We didn't feel it was fair to categorize Carolyn and Ann, and all the other people connected with Peoples Temple whom we knew, as cultists. Besides, it was inaccurate.

We knew of one example of the misunderstanding created by the media's use of the word "cult". A friend told us his pastor planned to speak on the danger of cults in his sermon on the first Sunday following the suicides. Our friend told the minister that Peoples Temple belonged to the Disciples of Christ denomination, the minister's own. The pastor said it was impossible, but began searching in the Disciples' national directory. Peoples Temple wasn't listed in San Francisco, but it was listed in Redwood Valley. The minister learned, to his amazement, that the church was one of the largest, and one of the most generous, in the entire denomination. As a result, he preached a different sermon.

Our efforts to correct a few inaccuracies, which included writing a letter to the editor of the Star, were puny compared to the hundreds of column inches spent slamming Peoples Temple. That Wednesday, for example, the Chronicle's headline read: "Cult took members' homes, sold them to get funds." The hit squad story mushroomed. Ron Javers described an assassination plan in detail in the Chronicle. And the ex-husband of Sharon Amos, Sherwin Harris, marched into the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown with a list of Temple members he considered dangerous.

That night, November 22, a friend drove us to the airport. I'm usually nervous flying on airplanes. That time, however, I had absolutely no anxiety. The worst had already happened to me.

When we arrived in Reno, after catching a connecting flight from San Francisco, I was more dis-

oriented that before. "Being here is like being in the twilight zone," I wrote in my journal. I expected John to be reserved, and Barbara to be emotional. Instead, my father wept at the airport, and my mother behaved as if that were a normal, holiday visit.

It was far from normal, of course, as her journal entry for that day indicates:

In the early dark hours of the morning,
an old hymn from my childhood came to mind.

'Sing them over again to me,
wonderful words of life....'

They came to me as I recalled the carnage,
the TV revelations of the hundreds of bodies
strewn about the main building of the Peoples Temple compound and the description
of the tragedy and vast stench of decomposing bodies -- many in family groups,
their arms about each other...

Her journal stops after a few additional entries.

That night, or the next day, John talked about Carolyn, and the fate that took her to Ukiah where she met Jim Jones. We talked about Annie, how she joined just as she left her nuclear family. John said he hoped she didn't distribute the poison or feed it to the babies. Nothing about Jonestown seemed more horrifying than that possibility.

All of us discussed, endlessly, every conceivable alternative as to where the survivors were, and whether or not Carolyn, Ann and Kimo were among them. The papers said there were paths from Jonestown going to Indian settlements in the jungle. We found out it was a two-day walk to Venezuela. But the people who fled were those working on the perimeter, we assumed, not the core. "If Jim's dead, they must be dead, too," I told John. Still, we all fantasized that they at least were spared.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 23, we learned that two instant paperbacks were due out the very next week, on December 3. Suicide Cult: The Untold Story of the Peoples Temple Sect and the Massacre in Guyana, by Marshall Kilduff and Ron Javers, would be a rehash of Kilduff's New West material and Javers' eyewitness "every evil thing" account. The Jonestown Massacre: An Eyewitness Account, by Laurence Stern and Charles Krause, both of The Washington Post, would mix Krause's observations based on his 36-hour visit to Jonestown with Ryan, and his interviews with defectors. More half-truths to come, we felt.

That morning Barbara expressed her fear that Jim was still alive and that Carolyn and Annie were with him in a "death squad". The papers that day said a "female fanatic" with masochistic tendencies was in charge of ordering assassinations. There was no clue, of course, as to who that might be. We projected our own fears into what little news we had.

Thanksgiving was awful for us, as we imagine it was for everyone affected personally by what happened in Guyana: the families of Congressman Ryan and the newsmen, members of an anti-Temple group called the Concerned Relatives, surviving Temple members, and people like us -- people waiting to hear the worst.

About thirty Jonestown survivors had emerged from various parts of the jungle. None had emerged since Monday, however. Some of the survivors included the people who left Jonestown with Ryan, and some who left before the suicides started. U.S. Army helicopters flew over the jungle, announcing over loudspeakers that it was safe to come out. We doubted that any survivors would find that announcement reassuring.

There were 500 people still missing. As long as they were missing, Barbara had hope. Before Thanksgiving dinner, she told guests that the only thing she worried about was Carolyn's and Annie's re-entry into society. I said I didn't think she needed to worry about that right now. The FBI had confirmed Jim Jones dead the previous day. The fingerprints matched.

The house was packed with holiday visitors. Half the people at the dinner table were red-eyed and silent. The other half were jolly. A Los Angeles radio station called during the meal to ask if Carolyn had been Jim's mistress. John told the caller he wouldn't discuss Carolyn's personal life with anyone. We had agreed to respond in this manner to queries like that.

As much as I grieved the loss of my sisters and nephew, I suffered my parents' loss more acutely. After all, the last time I saw my sisters and Kimo was in 1976, two years before. They'd been removed in time and place. For John and Barbara, however, who had seen them only a few months before, who had monthly radio contact with them, and regular letters, they were real.

Ann and Carolyn were also real to hundreds of friends all across the country who wrote to express their sympathy and concern. Many letters included anecdotes about one or the other.

And the phone rang several times an hour. John and Barbara received at least twenty phone calls a day that week. Most of the callers were reporters. Some

had picked up on the story from the Reno papers, others knew of John and Barbara from a press conference in May, and some heard through some sort of grapevine we were unaware of. Papers were interested in part because we were remotely related to Larry Layton, who'd been arrested at the Port Kaituma airstrip and charged with the murder of Congressman Ryan.

Another reason reporters sought John and Barbara was that they were two of the very few people who didn't talk about the bizarre side of Peoples Temple. Instead, they talked about the people who died. While the newspapers blared "Cult Leader Jim Jones -- A Man Obsessed by Death" and "Sex Boasts, Lust for Power Also Marked His Ministry", John and Barbara shared their grief, incomprehension, and thoughts about what happened and why. It took a bit of courage then to say something nice about Peoples Temple.

The day after Thanksgiving, some TV news reporters from a station in Sacramento drove over Donner Pass to interview John and Barbara. "I hope you ask the right questions," John told the reporter as they were setting up. The reporter asked him what the right questions were. "The questions should be about the elements of destruction within all of us," John replied.

A reporter from the Star called and asked if I'd like to make a statement. All I could say was that my letter to the paper was my statement. I felt it was important to say who Carolyn and Annie were, and why they went to Guyana, so I wrote:

Annie was a nurse and Carolyn a history teacher. They joined because they believed in justice for all people. They wanted to work to change the world. They were enthusiastic about the health care, day care, education, housing and other kinds of services that Peoples Temple offered to the outside community as well as to its members.

They moved to Guyana two years ago and saw their home in the interior as a place where people who had had nothing in this country, had something: a piece of land, a job, responsibility, respect.

The day the Star printed my letter, it also ran a letter from someone who wrote:

Many of these cult leaders live on steak and champagne while their followers exist on



Carolyn Layton and Kimo in Jonestown, May 1978.

bread and water. Most cult leaders have claimed they've seen visions, but currently the vision most sighted is one most Americans are familiar with -- the dollar sign.

On Friday morning, John went jogging as usual. The German shepherd that usually just watched him, walked with him for the first time. It seemed like an omen.

The Chronicle printed a telephone number for Dover Air Force Base that relatives could call for information. A two-paragraph article, buried in the middle of the paper, said relatives should send medical and dental records to assist in identification of bodies. John and Barbara spent part of the day trying to get those sent off. The only records available for Kimo were those from his birth. John called Dover several times. The number printed in the paper was a general number. Our earlier calls had already cracked that and obtained another that put us in touch with people who had something to offer.

Friday night, Army officials announced that 300 more bodies had been found. "More bodies," I wrote. "Children lying beneath their parents. So all present and accounted for." U.S. Army volunteers had been bag-

ging bodies since Wednesday. As they worked, the stacks of dead did not diminish. Apparently no one could accurately calculate the number of bodies until each was removed from the pavilion area. Now there were over 700.

"It's futile," Barbara said angrily. "They must be dead." John and I discussed funeral arrangements for the first time.

On Saturday, the Chronicle said there were 780 bodies. We didn't call the State Department that day or the next, because we presumed Ann and Carolyn were dead. Even Barbara began to talk about a funeral -- what music should be played, who should speak.

John told Mac that he and Barbara might take a long trip after it was all over. "We might go to Guyana for Larry's trial," he added. Larry Layton had been arrested in connection with Ryan's death. We had maintained contact with the Laytons after Carolyn and Larry divorced. Larry's father, Laurence, called us that week.

John had spent part of the previous days working on his Sunday morning sermon. He'd told Barbara he couldn't preach for a long time. "You have to," she replied. So he asked each of us what we thought was important to say.

On Sunday, November 26, with the death toll at 912, John preached a sermon that eventually appeared in major newspapers all across the country. More important than that, however, was the way the sermon spread among church people, who all seemed to read it by osmosis. A friend of mine in Connecticut said she got a copy from her father-in-law in Philadelphia. Religious publications reprinted it widely in December 1978, but many people had somehow gotten photocopies of photocopies.

We feel the immense interest the sermon generated grew from a need people had to understand the inexplicable event in religious -- rather than sociological or psychological -- terms.



Annie Moore, February 1977.

The secular interpretations failed to help people cope with the enormity of the tragedy. The news media could not handle the existential questions Jonestown posed. It was therefore appropriate for a minister to interpret the event from a religious viewpoint.

Barbara and I were on a retreat last Sunday when I was called out of a meeting. I returned my sister's call and was told of the assassination of Congressman Ryan and the others. Mike and Foofie Faulstich brought us home. On the way Mike said: "John, this is your calling." I knew what he was talking about.

We have been called to bear witness to the word God speaks to us now. I say "We," because you are as much a part of this as I am. There is no witness to the Word apart from the hearing of it.

Barbara and I are here by the love and strength of God which we have received through your caring and your prayers. I never imagined such a personal blow, but neither could I have imagined the strength that has come to us. We are being given strength now to be faithful to our calling.

I am a sponge. If my voice breaks or there is a long pause, I want you to know that it's all right. I am preaching this morning, because we alone can make our unique witness, and today is the day to make it.

Following the sermon we shall join in prayers of intercession for all the people involved in this tragedy, from those first shot down to all who died, and all who grieve.

During these past days we have been asked frequently, "How did your children become involved in Peoples Temple?"

There is no simple answer. We are given our genetic ancestry. We are given our families. We are all on our personal journeys. All of these, along with the history of the race, converge upon the present wherein we make choices. Through all of this, providence is working silently and unceasingly to bring creation to wholeness.

I will talk only of our children's personal histories. The only way you can understand our children is to know something of

our family. In our family you can see the relationship between the events of the Sixties and this tragedy, just as there is a relationship between the self-immolation of some Americans during those years and the mass murder-suicide of last week.

Our children learned that mothering is caring for more than kin. Dad talked about it from the pulpit. Mother acted it out. More than fifteen teenagers and young adults shared our home with our children. Some were normal, but others had problems. One did not say a word for three months. At least two others were suicidal. One young man had come from a home where his father had refused to speak to him for more than a year. From childhood, our girls saw their mother respond to people in need from unwed mothers to psychotic adults and the poor.

Carolyn loved to play, but as president of the MYF [Methodist Youth Fellowship], she pushed the group to deal with serious issues. She had a world vision. She traveled to Mexico with her high school Spanish class. Four years later she spent a year studying in France. At UCD [University of California at Davis], she majored in international relations. As a member of Peoples Temple, she stood with the poor as they prepared and stood in court. She expressed her caring both in one-to-one relationships and as a political activist.

From 1963 until 1972 when Annie left home, Annie and Becky walked with us in civil rights and anti-Vietnam War marches. We were together in supporting the farm workers' struggle to organize. They stood in silent peace vigils. In high school they bore witness to peace with justice in our world. Their youth group provided a camping experience for foster children. When Annie was sixteen, she worked as a volunteer in Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C. She worked directly with the children, playing with them, playing her guitar and singing. The children loved her. She decided that she wanted to work in a burn unit, which she did at San Francisco General Hospital before going to Guyana.

Our children took seriously what we believed about commitment, caring about a better,

more humane and just society. They saw in Peoples Temple the same kind of caring for people and commitment to social justice that they had lived with. They have paid our dues for our commitment and involvement.

The second question we have been asked is: "What went wrong? What happened to turn the dream into a nightmare?" I shall mention two things that were wrong from the beginning. These are idolatry and paranoia. I speak first of idolatry.

The adulation and worship Jim Jones' followers gave him was idolatrous. We expressed our concern from the first. The First Commandment is the first of two texts for my sermon. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Our children and members of Peoples Temple placed in Jim Jones the trust, and gave to him the loyalty that we were created to give God alone.

It's not that they were so different from other mortals, for idolatry has always been easy and popular. The more common forms of idolatry are to be seen when people give unto the state or church or institution their ultimate devotion. The First Commandment says "No!" and warns of disastrous consequences for disobedience. The truth is that the Source of our lives, the One in whom we trust and unto whom we commit our lives is the Unseen and Eternal One.

To believe the First Commandment, on the other hand, affirms that every ideal and principle, every leader and institution, all morals and values, all means and ends are subordinate to God. This means that they are all subject to criticism. There was no place for this criticism in Peoples Temple.

The second thing that was wrong was paranoia. This was present through the years that we knew Peoples Temple. There's a thin line separating sensitivity to realities from fantasies of persecution. Jim Jones was as sensitive to social injustice as anyone I have ever known. On the other hand, he saw conspiracies in the opposition. I remember painfully the conversation around the table the last night we were in Jonestown. Jim and other leaders were there. The air was heavy with

fears of conspiracy. The entire conversation on Jim's part dealt with the conspiracy. They fed each other's fears. There was no voice to question the reality of those fears.

As their fears increased, they increased their control over the members. Finally their fears overwhelmed them.

The death of hundreds and the pain and suffering of hundreds of others is tragedy. The tragedy will be compounded if we fail to discern our relation to that tragedy. Those deaths and all that led up to them are infinitely important to us. To see Jonestown as an isolated event unrelated to our society portends greater tragedy.

Jonestown people were human beings. Except for your caring relationships with us, Jonestown would be names, "cultists," "fanatics," "kooks." Our children are real to you, because you know and love us. Barbara and I could describe for you many of the dead. You would think that we were describing people whom you know, members of our church. If you can feel this, you can begin to relate to the tragedy.

If my judgment is true, that idolatry destroyed Peoples Temple, it is equally true that few movements in our time have been more expressive of Jesus' parable of the Last Judgment of feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, giving shelter to the homeless and visiting those in prison than Peoples Temple. A friend said to me Friday, "They found people no one else ever cared about." That's true. They cared for the least and last of the human family.

The forces of life and death, building and destroying, were present in Peoples Temple. Death reigned when there was no one free enough, nor strong enough, nor filled with rage enough to run and throw his body against a vat of cyanide, spilling it on the ground. Are there people free enough and strong enough who will throw themselves against the vats of nuclear stockpiles for the sake of the world? Without such people, hundreds of millions of human beings will consume the nuclear cyanide, and it will be murder. Our acquiescence in our own death will make it suicide.

The forces of death are powerful in our society. The arms race, government distant from the governed, inflation, cybernation-unemployment are signs of death. Nowhere is death more visible than in the decay of our cities. There is no survival for cities apart from the creation and sustenance of communities within. Cities governed by law, but without a network of communities which support members and hold them accountable, these cities will crumble, and will bring down nations.

This is what made the Jonestown experiment so important for us. It was an effort to build this kind of common life. Its failure is our loss as we struggle against the forces of death in our cities.

I have talked of history and our personal histories, of our journeys and our choices. Providence is God's working with and through all these. God has dealt with tragedy before, and God is dealing with tragedy now. We are witnesses to the resurrection, for even now, God is raising us from death. God whom we worship is making all things new.

Our Lord identified with the least of humans. Christ is present in the hungry and lonely, the sick and imprisoned. Christ, the love and power of God, are with us now. In Christ we are dying and are being raised to new life.

My last words are of our children. We have shared the same vision, the vision of justice rolling down like a mighty stream, and swords forged into plows. We have shared the same hope. We have shared the same commitment. Carolyn and Annie and Kimo served on a different field. We have wished that they had chosen ours, but they didn't. And they have fallen. We will carry on in the same struggle until we fall upon our fields.

No passage of scripture speaks to me so forcefully as Paul's words from Romans: "Nothing, absolutely nothing can separate us from the love of God we have known in Christ Jesus our Lord." This week I have learned in a new way the meaning of these words of Paul: "...love never ends."

Now may the Word which calls forth shoots from dead stumps, a people from dry bones,

sons and daughters from the stones at our feet, babies from barren wombs and life from the tomb, call you forth into the new creation.

There were just the four of us at dinner that night: John, Barbara, Mac and myself. John's brother and sister had gone, and all the many friends were away. It struck me that this was the extent of our family now. Parents and a husband. Annie, Carolyn and Kimo were never coming home.

The seven days that had passed since we'd learned of Ryan's death seemed like a long time. We'd gone through every possible emotion. The waiting period was through, however. Now we had to accept the fact of death.

I heard my mother weep for the first time on the morning of Monday, November 27. A family friend called to say he'd read that Annie had been shot. We traced the story from The Sacramento Bee to The Modesto Bee, and from there to Mike Prokes and the Guyana Defense Force.

We didn't know what to believe. The earliest reports claimed that three people had been shot. According to the Chronicle, Jim Jones and Temple financial secretary Maria Katsaris were two of the three. The third was Don Sly, the man who'd attacked Ryan with a knife.

On Monday, Mac hounded the State Department for more information. If the Guyana Defense Force knew Ann had been shot, why didn't State, we wondered. The fact was, State had known all week that Carolyn and Ann were dead, because Odell Rhodes, a Temple member who survived the suicides, identified them visually on Monday, November 20. The State Department was unwilling to notify any families, however, unless visual identification was confirmed with fingerprints and dental records.

When Mac talked with State that morning, he asked it to note in Ann's file that there was a possibility of a gunshot wound. With the limited number of such wounds, we thought that that would help in identification. State replied that the files on Carolyn, Ann and Kimo were missing.

When Mac called again later on, State had found the files, all clipped together. They'd been pulled, it was explained, because someone was going to call to tell us that Carolyn's death was confirmed. They had no information on Annie.

The news that Carolyn was dead was anti-climactic. The news that Annie had been shot was, in a

strange way, liberating. "Maybe Annie knew," I wrote. "Maybe she was trying to escape. Maybe she didn't poison people. Maybe she refused. So she was shot. I hope she and Carolyn refused." We wanted so much to believe she had resisted. John and Barbara told reporters that her death confirmed their belief that she wasn't a participant. She wasn't like the rest of them. She fought and she died.

The Modesto Bee called us back. Temple publicist Mike Prokes was from Modesto, where his family still lived, and the paper was covering the hometown boy angle. The Bee was interested in Carolyn's relationship with Prokes, since her son's name was Jim-Jon Prokes. A Bee reporter asked who Kimo's father was. After discussing it among ourselves, we decided the appropriate answer to questions like that was: "Carolyn was married to Mike Prokes." But Jim Jones was Kimo's father.

We wondered when the truth about Kimo would come out. It was simple enough for a reporter to find out, and we suppose some did. Apparently it was a detail too trivial, or not bizarre enough to print. We never saw anything about it.

At noon on Monday, a shocked and nervous friend stopped Barbara and me on the street. She told us San Francisco Mayor George Moscone had been shot. After a week of stories about hit squads, we feared Moscone's death was connected with Peoples Temple. We soon learned it wasn't. A disgruntled ex-supervisor, Dan White, shot and killed the mayor and another supervisor, Harvey Milk. Police quickly picked up White and squelched rumors that the deaths had anything to do with Peoples Temple.

San Francisco reeled under the tremendous shocks. Peoples Temple was a San Francisco institution. Everyone had heard about it before the suicides, and many knew people in the church. Many others had relatives who were involved. The leftist community in particular had worked with Peoples Temple on several projects. The death of Mayor Moscone and gay activist Harvey Milk stunned the normally unflappable city.

"We never talked about it," one community activist later told us. "No one could say anything. There was a loss we couldn't discuss." Others confirmed the silence that fell over San Francisco.

We didn't know how long it would take to process the bodies. We decided that Carolyn, Ann and Kimo might have to be cremated in Delaware. I would return the remains to Reno for burial in California.

Tuesday, November 28, Mac and I flew back to

Washington, D.C. On the connecting flight from Denver, I saw a cousin I hadn't seen in more than ten years. He wanted to talk about Carolyn and Ann, and was relieved to see me.

Friends picked us up at the airport, drove us in, and had dinner all ready for us when we arrived. We were completely taken care of, and didn't have to think about anything. Monica, who'd driven us in, said her mother's church was praying for us. Other friends dropped by.

Once everyone left the apartment, I wrote a letter to the Ambassador of Guyana. The State Department and the Justice Department had announced that day that no autopsies would be performed "because there is no indication the deaths were in violation of U.S. law... The Justice Department's [John] Russell said the FBI has 'enough eyewitnesses who have given us accounts of what happened at Jonestown' and has no need of autopsy findings." I wrote the Guyanese Ambassador to ask that Guyana investigate the deaths in Jonestown, since the U.S. wasn't going to. I felt I might have to go to Guyana myself to find out the truth.

We were growing more and more alarmed over the government's treatment of the Jonestown victims. First the State Department wanted to bury the bodies in Guyana. Then it shipped everyone to a place far away from all the relatives. Now State and the Justice Department had decided they wouldn't investigate how, or why, people died. They hadn't performed any simple tests, let alone autopsies in Guyana, and they didn't plan to in this country.

Wednesday, Mac went back to work. He called me at home with the news that Time Magazine reported Annie was shot. It also claimed she was Jim's mistress. When Mac read me the story over the phone, I cried with anger. No one had contacted my parents to ask if Ann were indeed Jim's mistress. Nor had the editors hedged their assertion with a "reportedly" or "allegedly". There it was in print, absolutely untrue.

Time referred to Ann as Annie. That meant someone who knew her had identified her, since Annie wasn't the name on her passport. At the time we didn't know how identifications were made, so it was something of a mystery.

Still more mysterious was the fact that Newsweek reported that it was Maria Katsaris who had been found shot in Jim's cabin.

We came to the conclusion that either Ann, or Maria, or Carolyn had been shot. The media assumed any

woman found in Jim's cabin was his mistress. As far as reporters were concerned, the three women were interchangeable.

We faced a dilemma. We could bury Ann and Carolyn, never knowing how they died, or which one was shot. Or we could order autopsies. The examinations would never tell us why, but they might tell us how.

On November 29, we decided to look for a medical examiner who would perform autopsies on Annie and Carolyn. At that point we didn't trust the U.S. government to conduct an impartial examination. Our decision marked the beginning of our loss of faith in the government. We later realized that the decision to get autopsies also marked the beginning of our own investigation into Peoples Temple, and the deaths at Jonestown.

CHAPTER TWO

LAST RIGHTS

When anyone dies by violence, or suspicion of violence, regardless of whether violence is suicidal, accidental, or undetermined, it is an ancient responsibility of government to officially inquire into the death. This is of paramount importance to the administration of justice.

-- The late Dr. Milton Helpern
Chief Medical Examiner
New York City

The general policy of the state is that Delaware does not want to get involved.

-- Dr. Ali Hameli
Medical Examiner
State of Delaware

Nine hundred people don't commit suicide en masse every day. In a philosophical sense, Jonestown was a cataclysmic event that raised unanswerable questions about the human spirit. In a more mundane sense, however, it was simply a case of 900 suspicious deaths.

The Guyana Defense Force (GDF) found two crime scenes on Sunday, November 19. Soldiers reached the first at dawn. Congressman Ryan, three newsmen, and one Peoples Temple defector lay dead at the Port Kaituma airstrip. The crime was political. It wasn't murder; it was assassination.

Guyanese troops discovered the second crime late that afternoon. They encountered several hundred bodies at the Jonestown settlement: at first count, 383. The circumstances of the deaths seemed unnatural. The bodies ringed a vat of fruit punch, and the odor of almonds, characteristic of cyanide, permeated the air. Empty bottles of poison and tranquilizers, and discarded syringes lay scattered about. The few survivors who'd emerged gave conflicting accounts of what had happened.

Members of the Guyanese police arrived the next day and surveyed both situations. Saturday night they had investigated still another crime scene: the Peoples Temple Georgetown home. Sharon Amos and her three children died there, their throats cut.

By the time the police got to Jonestown, the GDF had disturbed what evidence there might have been. The gun which presumably killed Jim was 25 feet from his body. Looting had occurred, according to an officer at the U.S. Embassy. Clothes and papers lay strewn along muddy paths.

Guyanese police tried to treat Jonestown as the scene of a crime rather than as a natural or political disaster. They picked up several Temple members for questioning, arrested others, and placed everyone in the Georgetown headquarters under virtual house arrest. It wasn't until Monday, however, two days after the tragedy, that two police photographers and two finger-

print specialists arrived. They photographed the bodies they considered important: Jim and the people in his cabin.

Guyana's chief pathologist, Dr. Leslie Mootoo, along with an American forensic pathologist, Dr. Lynn Crook, performed brief post-mortems on Ryan and the others who died at the airstrip. Mootoo also made cursory examinations of over 200 bodies in Jonestown. He later told a coroner's jury that he saw needle marks on at least 70. With the help of Dr. Crook, Mootoo concluded that cyanide was present in some of the bodies. An analysis of the contents of the vat revealed several tranquilizers as well as two strong poisons: potassium cyanide and potassium chloride.

While the GDF searched the jungle for survivors, Assistant Police Commissioner Skip Roberts and Jonestown survivor Odell Rhodes attached cardboard tags to 183 bodies Rhodes could identify by name. He recognized many, but frequently knew only a nickname or first name. Other survivors who came to help, like Tim Carter and Mike Prokes, were stunned, and unable to assist.

Early Monday morning, Guyana's Minister of Health, Housing and Labor, Hamilton Green, asked the U.S. Ambassador what the U.S. intended to do with the bodies. They were meeting with other officials of the two governments as an emergency task force suggested by John Burke, the U.S. Ambassador. At that time, Guyanese officials, as well as Embassy staff, assumed the bodies would be returned to the U.S., and the Ambassador described some rough plans for evacuation.

The representatives of the two governments also considered autopsies at that first meeting. Ambassador Burke cabled the State Department that the

Government of Guyana has in mind to separate poison victims from gunshot victims and perform spot autopsies on randomly selected bodies in each group for purposes of their investigation. Obviously there is no intention to perform autopsies on all bodies.

The very next day, however, U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance ordered immediate burial of the bodies in a mass grave in Guyana. In his cable to the U.S. Ambassador, Vance cited health and cost as the reasons for his decision. "We felt that local burial would be the most sanitary and humane way of dealing with the problem," explained an Embassy adviser after visiting Jonestown. Vance agreed.

The Government of Guyana balked at the proposal. It insisted that the bodies be returned to the U.S., since all but one were U.S. citizens. To facilitate the removal, Guyana waived its requirement that victims of non-natural death receive autopsies.

Some American pathologists blame the lack of adequate on-site examination of the bodies on this very haste. Dr. William Cowan of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology said, "The Government of Guyana just wanted the bodies out of there." He felt the government was extremely hostile. Dr. Crook, the American forensic pathologist who accompanied Dr. Mootoo, said the Guyana police let him look at the bodies, but wouldn't let him touch anything.

Guyana can't be blamed entirely for the failure of the U.S. to take field samples. Col. William Gordon, who was in charge of the body recovery operation, said no one told him of the importance of post-mortem examinations. "I don't know of any discussions that took place... No one mentioned it to me as being critical or necessary."

The confusion and antagonism among federal agencies in America rivaled that between the United States and Guyana. The State Department, the Defense Department, the Justice Department, and the Office of Management and Budget eventually established a Federal Task Force to coordinate their activities. State organized the Task Force, since American deaths occurring overseas come under its jurisdiction. It supervised the whole operation and took charge of notifying kin and releasing bodies. The Defense Department handled logistics: body removal, clean-up and storage. The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, along with the FBI, worked on identification. The Justice Department investigated Ryan's death, since the assassination of a Member of Congress is a federal crime, even if it occurs outside the U.S. Justice also went after Temple assets to reimburse the government for the cost of recovering the bodies. OMB monitored the cost of the airlift and subsequent identification.

The division of labor immediately created jurisdictional problems. While the State Department debated a mass grave in the jungle, the U.S. military began preparations for removing the bodies. On Tuesday, November 21, Secretary of State Vance and Defense Secretary Harold Brown finally announced the decision to get the bodies out of Guyana. The announcement cleared the way for a U.S. Army graves registration team to enter the country. The first detail arrived

in Jonestown on Wednesday morning. Five days later, the evacuation was complete.

The military detail included over 25 specialists who were supposed to identify the bodies before placing them in bags for removal. They didn't. Odell Rhodes made the last visual identifications on Monday. The rapidly decomposing bodies, lying in sun and rain for four days before the U.S. Army began its job, had become unrecognizable. They had to be removed quickly before they contaminated water and food for the neighboring village of Port Kaituma.

The official body count stood at 410 for nearly a week. Even after two days of processing bodies, the U.S. Army still based its calculations on the Guyana Defense Force's original estimate. It wasn't until Friday, almost a week after the deaths, that the Army realized the initial count was wrong. Soldiers had begun to clear out what they thought was the final group of bodies. According to Air Force Captain John Moscatelli, "We got into an area on a different side of the Temple pavilion and found more and more bodies... and we found more and more and more." Other accounts described the situation differently. Lt. Col. Alfred Keyes said:

The best way I can describe it is similar to people sitting on the hillside of a rock concert and then everyone decides to sprawl out. It was just a couple of football fields full of people just laid out.

U.S. Army Major Tim Hickman explained it this way:

When they committed suicide, they stood in nice, neat little circles, children in front of them, and as they died, they folded into the interior of the circle. And there were mounds of people. And as we pulled out the circles' cover, we found more and more people under the mounds. Apparently ... there were children in front of the parents. The parents were on top of them.

It's hard to see how the GDF and the U.S. Army could have been so wrong in their initial figures. Perhaps the number of children -- about 260 as opposed to the first count of 83 -- as well as the advanced state of decomposition explain part of the discrepancy. In the brightly colored tangle of bodies, the GDF couldn't distinguish individuals. Nevertheless, aerial

photographs taken at the beginning of the week clearly show more than the 410 counted on Monday.

Despite the fairly rapid processing of bodies out of Guyana, the days dragged by as we waited for confirmation that Ann, Carolyn and Kimo were dead. The most efficient work was too slow. Some delays were needless, however. It should not have taken 48 hours to decide that the bodies of American citizens must be returned to their homeland.

We could never learn who exactly made the decision to send the bodies to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. Perhaps Vance and Brown collaborated on that as well. We were puzzled that the Air Force didn't take the victims to Oakland Army Base in California, site of a large military mortuary which had processed bodies during the Vietnam War. Most of the victims' families lived in California, where the church was headquartered. It would have been easy to get medical records from San Francisco and the Bay Area. Finally, the bodies would not have had to be shipped across country for burial, an impossible expense for many relatives.

Newspapers and officials gave two reasons for taking the bodies to Dover. First, it was closer to Guyana. Transporting them to Oakland, or to Travis Air Force Base 50 miles further north, would have required the planes to stop en route for refueling. Second, the Dover mortuary was supposedly better equipped to handle a large number of dead. A few years earlier, it had processed the remains of 327 Americans who died in an air crash at Tenerife in the Canary Islands.

As it turned out, the Dover mortuary could not handle the Jonestown job by itself. Volunteers from the air base supplemented the mortuary's small fulltime staff. Thirty-five pathologists and specialists from Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., twenty-nine graves registration experts from Fort Lee, Virginia, and FBI fingerprint technicians also worked on the remains. Additionally, a local funeral director who had an annual contract with the mortuary received about a quarter million dollars for his participation in the processing. He charged the federal government \$413 for each adult and \$232 for each child under three feet.

In fact, most of the people working on the Jonestown bodies did not normally work at the Dover mortuary. The volunteers and specialists could have worked anywhere.

We believe the bodies went to Dover simply because they would be close to government bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. who had to travel there. It was con-

venient for federal officials, but it wasn't for the families. Estimates to ship a single body across country ranged from \$400 to \$1400. On Friday, November 24, the State Department announced that the families would have to bear the cost. Otherwise, the department threatened, the bodies would be buried in Delaware at public expense.

We also believe the Air Force flew the victims to Delaware rather than California because the government didn't want to be bothered by relatives. NBC Nightly News reported that Dover was selected because of its "distance from California, thus reducing chances of families crowding the scene." A mortician at the air base told us the same thing. When I pointed out that it might have been easier to get medical and dental records in California, he replied, "Well, there are two sides to everything."

Early Thursday morning, November 23, the first bodies arrived in Dover. The same day, the mortuary staff announced that all bodies would be cleaned and embalmed. However, they were not routinely embalmed at first, according to Dr. Cowan. The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology apparently hesitated two or three days while the Justice and State Departments haggled over the question of autopsies. After that period of waiting, and with no resolution to the decision imminent, AFIP decided to proceed with the embalming.

New York Times reports corroborate this time frame, in part. The Times noted that five bodies were embalmed on Friday, November 24. By the following Monday, Dover morticians had embalmed only 70 bodies. Since all the bodies had arrived by then, they were not automatically embalmed. However, a news article of Wednesday, November 29, reported that after all the bodies were fingerprinted, embalming would begin "in earnest."

AFIP's decision to embalm -- replacing bodily fluids with a preservative -- was critical. It precluded any meaningful post-mortem examinations by destroying physical evidence within the bodies. The pathologists knew that when they made the decision. This means someone consciously decided that there would be no autopsies. Although AFIP could have saved the fluids for later testing, it chose not to. "We didn't have any authority," Dr. Cowan asserted.

Morticians at the air base justified the embalming because it arrested decomposition and allowed the FBI to fingerprint and identify the remains. One mortician told us, "Our main concern was to preserve the

bodies." The rationale rings false, though. By Saturday night, FBI identification experts had taken fingerprints from 374 bodies. Few of them had been embalmed.

Identification was a difficult task. The names Odell Rhodes and Skip Roberts carefully wrote onto cardboard tags washed off in the rain and humidity. People wore each others' clothes, so the name tags sewn into collars and waistbands didn't help. One man wore the clothes of several different people. None, it happened, were his own. The kerosene used to kill maggots made it hard to get good fingerprints.

The State Department was supposed to help in getting medical records and notifying next of kin, once a positive identification was made. It publicly requested medical and dental records from relatives. We noticed the request by chance in a small two-paragraph article buried in The San Francisco Chronicle. ABC News announced a telephone number which State had provided for information -- and displayed a different number during the announcement. It's amazing the Air Force got as many as 100 records by December 1, considering how little importance the State Department attached to them.

Dental and fingerprint records arrived from Guyana by December 1. Over 700 adults had been fingerprinted upon entering the country, and the records helped the stalled identification process. According to the FBI, it would have been impossible to identify more than 100 victims without Guyana's records.

Morticians from Dover, AFIP pathologists, FBI specialists and air base volunteers worked around the clock in eight-hour shifts, printing, x-raying, cleaning, and embalming the bodies. They looked like a baseball team, said one report. "The workers wore blue baseball caps with white FBI letters on them."

Two and a half weeks after the deaths, the workers had positively identified 521 bodies. The remains, bagged and kept in refrigerated trucks until processing, were placed in caskets and stored in Bays Number 3, 4 and 5 on the Air Force Base. All information about an individual was keyed to the number assigned in Jonestown.

Army volunteers had numbered the bodies in no particular order. Ann was number A001, while Carolyn was 2A. They lay ten feet apart in Jim's cabin. Skip Roberts claimed the Army assigned numbers one through 22 to bodies found in the outlying houses. He believed the first 13 referred to the bodies in Jim's cabin. However, Dr. Cowan told us that one woman found in the cabin was numbered in the "B" series.

In theory, Carolyn's son Kimo should have been among the first 13 counted, since several news articles quoted individuals who saw him there alive while the suicides were in progress. We believe Odell Rhodes identified Kimo and John Stoen in the cabin, since the first bodylift included Jim and two children "he was believed to have fathered," according to The Washington Post. Roberts told us there were three children in Jim's cabin, two boys in bunkbeds and an infant lying between a couple on Jim's bed. We could see the two boys in a photograph Roberts showed us, and he pointed out John Stoen, the center of a child custody suit involving Jim. Dr. Cowan implied to us that he knew the other boy was Kimo, but AFIP failed to identify either of the boys positively.

Only 47 people had been identified by the time Mac and I flew back to Washington, D.C. from Reno on November 28. Carolyn was one of the 47. The State Department gave out the phone numbers of Dover morticians at random, and we called several to compare prices.

We also tried to find out how we could get autopsies. We couldn't get through to Mike White, one of two State Department liaison officers working out of Dover Air Force Base. But one of the morticians did, and reported that White said they were formulating a policy on autopsies. In hindsight, we presume "they" were the Justice, State and Defense Departments. The Justice Department already had announced publicly that it was not going to authorize autopsies, so we weren't optimistic.

The need for autopsies seemed more pressing than ever. With a lot of bad press about the Temple in general, and about Carolyn in particular, we felt we had to establish records about the deaths while we had the chance. If something were to come up later, after the bodies had been cremated, we would have no protection against possible legal actions. A misidentification might have repercussions we could barely imagine. What if, for example, neither Carolyn nor Annie had been shot? We'd have to decide if we had the right bodies.

We were lucky we lived in Washington, D.C., only 120 miles from Dover. We didn't have to make long distance calls often, and the ones we did make were a lot cheaper than from California to Delaware. On November 30, we drove to Dover to meet personally with a mortician. Mac had talked on the phone to a jolly funeral director, and liked him. I had talked to another, who was charging about \$30 to \$40 less for his services.

The mortician Mac had spoken to joked with us, and told us about the problems they were having with the bodies. "Maggots," he said, wrinkling his nose in disgust. He mentioned that several funeral directors, "except for the coloreds," had gotten together on a price. I didn't like him, but nevertheless signed a release authorizing him to pick up the bodies at the base.

As soon as we left his office, I felt we'd made the wrong decision. At 11 p.m. we called the mortician I'd contacted earlier in the day. His wife answered the phone and said that Mr. Minus wasn't in, but would be back soon. She invited us to their house.

Mr. and Mrs. Minus came to the door in their bathrobes. It was obvious we'd gotten them out of bed. Mrs. Minus was warm and friendly, while Mr. Minus was sober and concerned. They were also black. They listened intently as we explained why we wanted autopsies. Mr. Minus suggested that we call the state medical examiner, since he had announced he was willing to do some. We made arrangements with Mr. Minus, who told us what papers we'd need to get for him.

I felt much better. Carolyn and Annie would have wanted Mr. Minus, I thought. But the other mortician still had the release I'd signed. I got a little hysterical, and told Mac we had to get it back that night, although it was after midnight. We woke him up, and I got the piece of paper, giving some kind of phony excuse. We arrived back in Washington at 3 A.M., tired but somewhat relieved.

That same day, December 1, we learned that the Justice Department announced it would autopsy Jim Jones, Temple financial secretary Maria Katsaris, Jones-town doctor Larry Schacht, and four randomly selected bodies. We also heard that the Air Force would perform autopsies on request, so John and Barbara sent a telegram authorizing examinations for Ann and Carolyn.

Mike Abbell, head of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department, told reporters that public criticism prompted the agency to reverse its decision not to perform autopsies:

We're better off to put things to rest at an early date and make sure that all questions are reasonably answered rather than face second guesses in ten to fifteen years... We thought that a full pathological examination, at least of selected individuals, would be desirable to put questions to rest.

Abbell's announcement was a bit more modest than that of Assistant Attorney General Philip Heymann. He declared that the Justice Department intended to "find out exactly how and why more than 900 Americans died in the jungle of Guyana."

We called Abbell and told him the situation. He said Ann could be one of the four "randomly" selected victims, but he thought Carolyn's relationship to Ann made it difficult for both of them to be considered "random" choices.

With little encouragement from Abbell, we continued to try to find a private pathologist. Mr. Minus called after checking around and told us no pathologist in Delaware would touch the bodies from Jonestown. There was an unofficial hands-off policy.

The state medical examiner, Dr. Ali Z. Hameli, seemed more encouraging. Several news stories quoted his offer to perform post-mortems. Apparently he had received no requests. Mac phoned and said, "Here's a request to examine two bodies." He added that we'd reimburse the state for its expenses. Dr. Hameli said he'd get back to us, and noted that we were the only family to make a request.

Since Delaware looked unpromising, we began to call pathologists in Washington. We reached one in the District of Columbia medical examiner's office, who criticized U.S. handling of the bodies. "If they'd really been interested in how those people died," Dr. Leroy Riddick told us, "the State Department should have sent 15 pathologists to Guyana." Dr. Riddick seemed curious and concerned. Others were not.

Our countless phone calls had one goal: to make sure nothing "happened" to Ann's or Carolyn's body. It seems paranoiod now that time has passed. At the time, however, we were scared and skeptical. We believed anything could happen.

On Saturday, December 2, a State Department employee called at 1 P.M. to confirm Ann's death. Like the confirmation of Carolyn's death, the call was anticlimactic. We'd known she was dead. It was simply a matter of waiting for the State Department to catch up with us.

On Monday, December 4, Dr. Hameli told us he couldn't perform any autopsies, but would forward our request to the FBI. One autopsy, he said, would open the door to 900. Delaware would not issue death certificates either, since the bodies would just be passing through "in transit". In a bizarre catch, Hameli said the Attorney General of Delaware would not approve any

cremations because the deaths had been of suspicious causes.

I wrote Dr. Hameli an angry letter that night.

I have to say I am greatly disappointed by your performance. Your own refusal to assist my family in obtaining autopsies for my two sisters -- in the face of confirmed reports by the Guyana police that at least one of them died of gunshot wounds -- indicates a profound disrespect for truth and justice. Your state's refusal to cremate or bury any of the victims is insensitive to their families, at the very least, and quite possibly racist, at the worst.

By return mail, Dr. Hameli explained that it wasn't his responsibility.

I fully understand your concern and sympathize with your problem. However, I would like to advise you that your letter of concern should have been addressed to the federal authorities, specifically, the officials of the U.S. Departments of State and Justice who took custody of the bodies in Guyana, transported them to a federal zone, which happens to be located in the territory of the State of Delaware, and still have the jurisdiction over and possession of the remains.

Although not directly involved in the process, it is my understanding that other officials of the State of Delaware have been trying to resolve the various aspects of this massive problem with the officials of the U.S. State Department.

I would like to correct your statement indicating my own refusal to assist your family in obtaining autopsies for your two sisters. Please be advised that:

1. As of this moment, I have not been informed directly or indirectly by the U.S. Government officials as to their decision of how to handle the disposition of the bodies brought from Guyana.

2. I am totally unaware of their decision as far as medicolegal investigations of these deaths is concerned.

3. As the Chief Medical Examiner of the State of Delaware, I am empowered by law to investigate cases that come under our jurisdiction. Once the Federal Government decides on a final course of action and the State of Delaware is the recipient of the vacated responsibilities of the Federal Government, then I, as the Official Medicolegal Officer of the State, will exercise my duties in the appropriate manner.

As Medical Examiner for the State of Delaware, Dr. Hameli could have ordered autopsies, in spite of the fact that the bodies came under federal jurisdiction. He could have stipulated that bodies buried in Delaware must undergo forensic examination. The federal government cannot usurp this power. Local authorities do have the responsibility when deaths occur on federal property, such as national parks, Indian reservations, federal buildings, or military bases. Perhaps Dr. Hameli wanted to fulfill his responsibilities towards the Jonestown victims. But Governor Pierre DuPont and the people of Delaware wanted the bodies out of the state.

"Delaware might be the 'First State,'" said Sgt. Lardizzone, one of the staff members at the Air Force base who gave us miscellaneous bits of information. "But it's last in the hearts of its countrymen." Lardizzone told us the callers on a local talk show expressed absolutely no sympathy for anyone connected to Jonestown.

Dr. Hameli bore the brunt of the rage I felt towards everyone in the state. I told him in my letter:

As relatives, we did not desire the Jonestown massacre to occur; nor did we desire our family members' bodies to be sent to Delaware. Over 90 percent of the victims' relatives live in California.

Nevertheless, Jonestown did occur, and the remains of our families are deposited in your state. I can assure you that many families do not have the financial resources to transport victims' bodies to California, and that your state may still have to assume some responsibility, however unwillingly, for their disposal.

But Delaware refused to assume any responsibil-

ity. In negotiations with the State Department, Delaware succeeded in keeping the problem in federal jurisdiction. By December 5, the parties involved had negotiated a "letter of transit" which was supposed to satisfy Delaware law in lieu of a death certificate.

In yet another twisted catch, Governor DuPont's press aide announced Delaware's policy this way: "Claimed and identified bodies, for which there are requests to bury them in Delaware, cannot be removed [from the Air Force base] in the absence of death certificates." But neither the state's attorney general nor the medical examiner would issue death certificates. Delaware funeral directors could remove bodies from the air base only after they signed a statement swearing they would transport the remains out of state.

This policy created problems for everyone. Funeral homes in Delaware took some of the bodies across the state line to cremate them in New Jersey. The New Jersey attorney general questioned, and eventually stopped the practice. The funeral homes we contacted in Washington, D.C., would not, or could not, perform cremations without death certificates.

Delaware prevailed because the State Department could not cope with the situation. Although responsible for overseeing this part of the bodylift, State's lack of co-ordination led to missed -- and contradictory -- communications. For example, we called State Department liaison Mike White to find out if Carolyn and Ann were embalmed, since we learned it would adversely affect the autopsies. He told us to call the base mortuary. The mortuary told us to call the State Department liaison. We went back and forth several times before we finally learned from the mortuary that they'd already been embalmed.

The State Department could have ordered the mortuary to retain blood and urine samples for future analysis. State could have kept the bodies on ice for weeks. But the State Department could not act. It viewed Jonestown as a political rather than a criminal case. The suicides were an international embarrassment. Better to leave the bodies in Guyana, or dump them in a mass grave in Delaware, or get rid of them quickly somehow -- than think of them as people.

State defended its conduct by saying it had no authority to investigate deaths of U.S. citizens in foreign countries. In fact, no one from any state or federal department we spoke with ever admitted anything but the most limited responsibility. When the Justice Department finally decided to authorize autopsies, in

response to public criticism, it was too late for the examinations to be meaningful.

On Wednesday, December 6, an FBI agent named Lou Stevens called to tell us the bureau wanted to autopsy Carolyn and Ann. In our initial request to the Air Force base, we'd asked that an independent pathologist be present at the examinations. I mentioned that to Stevens. He said fine, although doctors from the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology would actually do the procedure.

Stevens called back within a couple of hours to tell me he'd learned John and Barbara had requested an independent pathologist in their earlier telegrams to the Air Force base -- exactly what I'd told him during our first conversation. Now he said it'd be a big inconvenience. The AFIP was doing the autopsies as a favor to us. It was unnecessary anyway. "There is no government plot to hide or cover-up anything," he said angrily. Besides, he added, it'd be a "prodigious hemorrhoid" to get the AFIP to agree to our request.

Stevens wondered why we hadn't called the FBI in the first place. I went through the list of government agencies we had called: the Justice Department, the State Department, Dover Air Force Base, the Delaware Medical Examiner. We didn't know the FBI was involved with anything but investigating Ryan's death.

Mac and I discussed with John and Barbara an alternative set of conditions, if any, we should specify. We came up with four:

1. Autopsies on both Carolyn and Ann;
2. Written report of pathologist to John and Barbara;
3. Identification and medical records released to family as well as the report that identified them, and how identification was made; and
4. A lawyer present, or at the very least, access to the tape made during the autopsy.

Stevens called one last time that day to explain how FBI agents in Reno would get John's and Barbara's signatures on release forms. It was at that point he told us Mike Abbell was the one who'd referred our request for autopsies to the FBI. John and Barbara signed the release, with the conditions specified on it. The Reno FBI agents were optimistic about having a lawyer present.

The next time Stevens called he was brusque and

official. The Air Force would rather have a pathologist present than a lawyer. There was "no way" we could have one there. "The Air Force is doing you a favor honoring your request. If you insist on attaching a lot of conditions to the autopsy, they'll just pick another body." He said he considered our conditions "a personal affront."

Mac pointed out that Stevens couldn't take it personally since we'd requested a pathologist long before the FBI became involved. He explained that we wanted a lawyer as a reference point, to protect the family against future legal actions.

Nevertheless, we decided to drop the request for a lawyer and proceed with the exam. Seven victims of the Jonestown suicides would be autopsied at one time. We had to wait for other relatives to sign releases, even though family consent isn't necessary in case of unnatural death. Another week passed.

On December 15, almost a month after the suicides, the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology examined the remains of Ann and Carolyn, as well as Jim Jones, Larry Schacht, Maria Katsaris, Richard Castillo and Violet Dillard. Our family and Dr. Schacht's were the only two to request the examinations. A few days later, we learned that the Air Force had allowed Dr. Rudiger Breitenecker, a Baltimore pathologist, to witness the proceedings. Dr. Breitenecker was the person we'd wanted to be present in the first place. He told The New York Times that the autopsies showed Jim and Annie had died of gunshot wounds to the head, consistent with either suicide or murder. In Jim's case, the contact wound made him a likely suicide. Breitenecker felt the cause of death of the other five people might never be known because of advanced decomposition and embalming.

We were working with all the handicaps. The bodies were so seriously decomposed that you could not tell if they were white or black, and the examination was aggravated by subsequent embalming. This was two strikes against a proper medical-legal autopsy because toxicologic tests in such a situation are hit or miss. You can hope by some miracle you can come up with something, but it's not very likely.

No miracle occurred. It took almost four months to complete several experimental toxicologies. Lou Stevens said we'd receive the autopsy reports sometime

after Christmas. In January, when we found it would be another three weeks, we decided it was time to inter the remains, despite the lack of a complete report.

As weeks passed and we still had no description of the post-mortems beyond what we'd read in the papers, we called Lou Stevens again. The toxicologies were still incomplete, he reported after checking with Dr. Cowan, who supervised the autopsies. AFIP had been negotiating with Guyana for tissue samples that might help their own examination. Since Guyana didn't want U.S. pathologists to second-guess its investigation, the two nations were "in a pissing contest."

Another month passed. This time I called Dr. Breitenecker, who repeated to me what he'd told the press. You couldn't tell from the wound if Ann had been murdered or committed suicide. He seemed to think, however, that Jim had shot himself since the "wounds he had were easily compatible with suicide. But," he added, "you can't really exclude the possibility that he had a gun pressed against his head."

He told me to call Dr. Cowan, who patiently explained that AFIP pathologists were still waiting for test results. They were having problems with the toxicologies because of the embalming.

Still another month passed. We called Lou Stevens again. He responded by exclaiming, "I don't believe it." Mac gave him an ultimatum: we wanted the autopsy reports in one week. Otherwise, we'd start calling some Members of Congress.

Two weeks later, Stevens had the reports. We met him in the FBI Building, and he went over the contents of the documents he waved about in his hand. I didn't believe he was going to give them to us, but he did. He felt Ann was murdered because of an injection mark in her shoulder. He thought it was possible, however, that she'd chosen multiple suicide: poison and gunshot. There was no evidence of cyanide in Carolyn.

As we walked through the stark white halls to the exit, Stevens turned to me and said that the case was closed. "Your sisters are dead and you can't do anything to bring them back."

The reports themselves were hard for us to understand. John's doctor in Reno perused them and concluded Ann had been cut on the face. It wasn't until we talked with Dr. Cowan in July 1979 that we learned part of the truth.

Ann hadn't been injected. The marks on her shoulders were bruises which might have occurred at any time prior to death. The pathologists couldn't

observe any injections except for ones made by embalmers. And injections administered in Jonestown would have been erased by decomposition. All incisions on her face had been made by pathologists.

The reason for the four-month delay, Cowan explained, was that they tried to develop a whole new set of tests to compensate for the embalming. The whole thing had become "a research project," he said. "The embalming fluid was a nightmare."

It was a nightmare the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology itself had precipitated when it decided to embalm the remains. But the Justice and State Departments have to bear the ultimate responsibility for initially refusing to consider autopsies.

Mac asked if AFIP had made any changes in policy to help it cope with similar disasters in the future. Ideally, Cowan responded, the bodies are processed at the site of the disaster. This happened when a DC-10 crashed outside of Chicago. He felt that the military was better equipped to process large numbers of bodies than were communities, because it had wartime experience.

Dr. Cowan did say they were preparing a report to help the Defense Department deal with disasters more effectively in the future. When we tried to obtain a copy of the report two years later, we learned it had never been written.

The results of our arduous efforts to obtain autopsies and of our four-month wait were inconclusive. For Annie:

Cause of Death: Acute Cyanide Poisoning; Gunshot wound of the head, laceration of brain.

Manner of Death: Undetermined.

For Carolyn:

Cause of Death: Probably cyanide poisoning.

Manner of Death: Undetermined.

Lou Stevens was right: the autopsies wouldn't bring Carolyn or Annie back. But they were necessary, first of all, to determine who had been shot, and second, to establish some records, however paltry, as to how some of the Jonestown people died.

There were many grisly details in the reports: maggots; fingers amputated to obtain prints and then tossed back into the body bag; decomposition making

them unrecognizable; incisions made to compare teeth with dental records; and of course the horror of Ann's wound. We dealt with these horrors by compartmentalizing them. They had nothing to do with the persons we knew as Carolyn and Ann. The autopsies were scientific procedures performed on human flesh, not human beings.

What affected me more than any physiological detail was the notation in the report that Ann wore a pair of blue tennis shoes with her name written on the outside of each: "Annie Moore."

Kimo, like 234 other children, was never identified. We didn't have a copy of his footprint to send to the FBI, since the hospital where he was delivered took photos of newborns rather than footprints. Dr. Cowan said the footprint wouldn't have helped anyway.

Metal coffins containing the bodies of unidentified, and some identified but unclaimed bodies, were stacked in hangars at Dover Air Force Base. They sat there while the State Department wondered what to do with them. On January 19, 1979, the day Carolyn and Ann were buried in California, State suggested dumping the remaining bodies in West Virginia.

Delaware had already refused to accept the bodies, although State Senator W. Lee Littleton offered to bury 30 or 40 Peoples Temple children in his backyard so he could watch their bodies rise on Judgment Day. In December, Governor DuPont asked President Jimmy Carter to fly the bodies to California, but the State Department insisted that the government had neither the authority nor the money to release the bodies.

Religious leaders and churches in San Francisco had been talking and working together on the Peoples Temple problem since November 19. They cancelled an ecumenical memorial service they'd planned because they feared the publicity would create an "incident". In December, the ad hoc group, called the Emergency Relief Committee, urged the courts to set aside \$1 million of Temple assets for burial costs. "Somewhere the courts have to find the key so that people can bury their families and life in this city can return to normal," its statement read.

Over a month elapsed before the State Department agreed to work with the 27-member Committee. This time, the group went to court with a proposal that asked for \$215,850 to reimburse next of kin, and \$55,000 to pay for the cost of transporting the bodies. This time, they succeeded.

On March 30, 1979, a San Francisco Superior Court judge awarded the Committee \$300,000 to pay for

the operation. It was another month, though, before the bodies left Delaware. The problem was lack of a destination. Various communities in California resisted the idea of having a mass grave in neighboring cemeteries.

Skyline Memorial Park in San Mateo originally agreed to accept the Jonestown victims -- at a cost of \$349.10 for single interment, and \$560.70 for double depth interment in the same space. The cemetery backed out after nearby residents complained. Marin County's Daphne Fernwood Cemetery was willing to bury the remains, but the Marin County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution asking that the bodies be interred in several counties. Vandals spray-painted the cemetery walls with epithets, and convinced Robert Fabian, the Receiver of Peoples Temple assets, to change the site once again. "I decided I was not going to send them to a place that doesn't want them," Fabian told reporters. Finally, Evergreen Cemetery, located in a predominantly black neighborhood near Mills College in Oakland, accepted the bodies.

In late April 1979, the bodies finally made it to the West Coast, transported on tractor-trailers by a Delaware moving company. One hundred identified remains went to Fort MacArthur in Los Angeles, while another 201 went to Oakland Army Base. The 234 still unidentified went directly to Evergreen Cemetery. After months of organizing, including filing a lawsuit, the Emergency Relief Committee anticipated that many relatives would come forward.

"The reaction was just the opposite of what we expected," Donetter Lane, the president of the San Francisco Council of Churches told us. "We expected lots of calls, lots of interest. We'd been working on this a long time. But when the bodies



Kimo Prokes, 1977.

arrived, nothing. No response."

One reason the Committee wasn't flooded with calls was a court order which required relatives to file a statement of destitution before any bodies could be released to them. This discouraged many who were not poor, but who could not afford all the extraordinary costs associated with moving bodies across country and burying them. The fact that many lost more than one relative added to the burden.

Evergreen Cemetery buried the unclaimed and the unidentified in a mass grave on a steeply sloping hillside. It was May 11, 1979, almost six months since they'd died.

We're grateful the Emergency Relief Committee acted on behalf of thousands of relatives, including us. We were unable to take responsibility for Kimo, because his death was never confirmed. We're glad someone could.

We're also thankful the U.S. government finally recognized its obligation to American citizens, and brought the Peoples Temple bodies back from Guyana. The Army and Air Force performed their jobs with commendable speed and efficiency. We never thanked the individuals who did the dirty work of handling and processing the bodies, although we appreciated their efforts.

Not everyone felt that way. The commanding officer of Dover Air Force Base received only two letters of support, according to public information officer Lt. Joe Saxon. The rest criticized the military for transporting the victims. Several Members of Congress objected to the government financing the airlift. The outcry was so great that both the Justice and State Departments announced they might attempt to recover expenses from Temple assets. Responding to the announcement, The Arizona Republic editorialized:

We commend the attorney general to the task [of recovering money] with every effort bent towards recovering whatever he can on behalf of taxpayers who do not begrudge charity but are outraged by having to pay for the deranged behavior at Jonestown.

At the end of November 1978, the federal government claimed its Jonestown expenses ran to \$9 million. When the Justice Department finally filed a civil suit against Peoples Temple in January 1979, the figure shrank by half, to \$4.2 million. And in May 1979, the General Accounting Office calculated a cost of \$4800

per body, or over \$4.3 million for the entire operation. At the time, the Agency for International Development (AID) picked up the tab. When the Justice Department finally settled its claim in November 1983, the judge awarded only \$1.4 million, retaining the rest of the Temple's assets for survivors and other claimants.

This wasn't too much to spend on "the proper and decent thing to do," as White House Press Secretary Jody Powell categorized the airlift. In fact, the government could have done much more for the people who died in Jonestown. It could have followed routine forensic procedures to accurately determine how 900 people actually met their deaths.

The fact that it didn't, shocked medical examiners across the country. "Once [the U.S. government] assumed responsibility," said Cyril Wecht, the medical examiner for Allegheny County, Pennsylvania,

the medical/legal work was inequitable, ridiculous, inadequate and negligent...

This was not garbage to be picked up. They're people. It shouldn't matter what we thought of cults or whether these people deserved to die. There should be no moral, ethical or philosophical decisions. We should behave like a responsible country or agency.

The President of the National Association of Medical Examiners, William Sturner, described the U.S. investigation as "badly botched", and called the follow-up "chaotic".

Family members will never know how their loved ones died and will be nagged for years by unanswered questions. Insurance claims and other matters of adjudication will be mired in doubt for years to come.

I wrote to Dr. Sturner when I read his comments, and described all the problems we'd had. He responded to my criticism of Delaware Medical Examiner Ali Hameli -- who turned out to be on the Association's Board of Directors -- by saying:

Because of the jurisdictional definitions in Delaware and the fact that the bodies were under the auspices and control

of the Federal Government, it is understandable that Doctor Hameli, the Medical-Legal Officer in charge of the State, would be unable to examine any remains in his capacity of Chief Medical Examiner. It is obvious to all by now that the government did not request anyone with jurisdiction in this State, especially Dr. Hameli, to dispose of the remains, much less perform postmortem examinations on them. Incidentally, Dr. Hameli did request a clarification of this jurisdictional dispute.

The United States government wronged the victims of Jonestown and their families when it removed the bodies from Guyana without making any tests at the scene of the crime. It wronged them, and us, when it took the bodies to Dover, Delaware. It wronged us when it embalmed the bodies before conducting post-mortem examinations.

By failing to follow routine medico-legal procedures, the government raised questions about its own performance and motives regarding Peoples Temple. More important, however, it obscured the true cause of the deaths in Jonestown, irrevocably.

"All someone had to do was drain a little urine or blood through a needle, and not even do an autopsy," Dr. Breiteneker said after the autopsies. "If it was worth the expense of several million dollars to fly the bodies back, maybe it would have been worth a needle to establish what happened."

CHAPTER THREE

JONESTOWN, GUYANA

They said I could go and see,
but I didn't want to. I didn't
want to see the children.

-- A cook in the
Matthews Ridge
hospital

Guilt goaded us in the months following the suicides. John and Barbara wondered if the upbringing they provided had sown the seeds of the tragedy to come. Maybe if the past had been different, they wrote me, Carolyn and Annie wouldn't have been in Guyana.

I too felt guilty when days went by and I hadn't done some small bit of research that would bring me closer to understanding why they'd all done what they did. When news about various investigations appeared, I would relive the feelings I'd had in November. And feel guilty that I hadn't yet learned the real story.

The personal contacts we'd had with U.S. and Guyanese officials did not encourage us. The truth would not come from the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which showed little interest in what we had to say; nor would it come from the Guyana police, whose duty ended with the conclusion of a public inquest in December of 1978. It wouldn't come from the press, or from the survivors returning to the United States.

At Christmas of 1978, therefore, Mac and I decided to go to Guyana ourselves. We believed that might be where most of the answers lay. Peoples Temple had flourished, and died there. Perhaps we would be able to find a clue in Jonestown, something that everyone else had missed. We didn't know what we would find, but we knew that was the next place to look for answers.

In January, we began planning a trip for May. The people at Pan Am and KLM Airlines responded rudely to our inquiries about flights to Guyana. "Why would you want to go there?" the clerks wondered aloud. It was a typical reaction. A salesman in the camera store where I bought a dozen rolls of film asked where I was going. When I told him, he said, "So what's in Guyana besides Jonestown?" The proprietor of Guyana Overland Tours, Mr. J. Dalzell, wrote our travel agent:

Yr letter of Mar 10 received today. May 18-21 accom. at Charlo's, with three meals a day, return M/Ridge airstrip transfers (5 miles

each way) and tour to Port Kaituma and Jonestown will be \$150.00 US for Mr. and Mrs. McGehee.

Although our agent had said nothing about Jonestown, Dalzell assumed that was our interest in Guyana.

John told Larry Layton's father, Dr. Laurence Layton, that we would visit Larry in prison. None of the Laytons had gone to Guyana since Debbie Layton Blakey fled in May 1978. Dr. Layton wrote us several letters instructing us about what we should do and what we should tell Larry. He sent us a box of books, and a bag of vitamins, peanuts and mosquito netting to deliver to his son. The clothes Larry wore to a court hearing in early 1979 were the ones in which he'd been arrested, nearly four months before. This bothered Dr. Layton. He sent some new clothes for us to take.

We arrived at Timehri Airport in Guyana at midnight on May 16, 1979. Even at that hour, the open-air terminal was crowded. The customs officer studied Mac's passport and gave him a one-day visa, because Mac had listed "writer" as his occupation. I got a week's visa because I'd written "student". Mac would have to go to the immigration office the next day to get an extension.

The airport is 25 miles away from Georgetown. An Indo-Guyanese cab driver picked us up and careened along the narrow highway into the city. I was afraid to talk to him; he turned around in his seat to answer my questions. As it was, he almost hit several bicyclists and pedestrians. Meanwhile, the cool air blowing through the wide-open windows brought the aromas of tropical vegetation, a sugar factory, farms and animals. They were different odors, foreign but pleasant.

The driver took us to a hotel called Le Grille, after we cruised by the Hotel Belvedere, where we had reservations. "The Belvedere is not a nice place," he told us. He was right. At one A.M., the place was busy. People lounged in the hotel entryway and in the street in front. Music blasted from several rooms. A few kids came up to the cab, begging for money. Our frightened driver sped down the block.

Le Grille was dark and quiet. The driver rang the doorbell and woke up another Indo-Guyanese, a sleepy-looking woman. She let us in and took us upstairs to the main floor. A few minutes later, the manager, Mrs. King, showed us several rooms. We chose a narrow cubicle on the third floor. It had an air-conditioner which circulated hot air through the room. We quickly fell asleep on the lumpy bed.

Early the next morning, the clip-clop of horses' hooves woke us. Guyana is a poor country. Sandwiched between Venezuela and Surinam (formerly Dutch Guiana) on the north coast of South America, Guyana identifies itself as a Caribbean, rather than South American, nation. The Dutch and British colonized the country, establishing vast sugar, cotton and coffee plantations. The sugar trade eventually dominated the economy, and its exporters virtually ruled the country.

In 1831, following forty years of rivalry in the South American territory between four European powers, Britain unified it as British Guiana. After emancipation of the African slaves in 1838, the British brought indentured workers from India, Portugal and China to work the plantations. The East Indians were most successful in the hard agricultural labor, and tended to remain in Guyana on small farms when their five-year period of indenture ended. The Portugese and Chinese drifted into trade. Blacks, systematically excluded from agricultural labor, formed a semi-skilled and professional labor class. And the AmerIndians, the original inhabitants who had named the country Guyana -- Land of Many Waters -- were forced into subsistence life in the forests and jungles.

The majority of blacks now live in Georgetown and other cities within a few miles of the coast. Many of the descendants of the East Indian indentured servants are scattered throughout the rural areas of the interior. With little access to the capital, Indo-Guyanese have less political power and influence than they should have, considering that they are the majority ethnic group. They account for 53 percent of the population, while blacks constitute 40 percent. The remainder consists of Asians, AmerIndians and Europeans.

In 1966 Britain granted Guyana independence after a long, and violent, struggle. Four years later, Guyana became a co-operative republic, mixing private, public, and co-operative ownership in its economy. The largest sector today is public. With 70 to 80 percent of its industry nationalized, Guyana is second, after Cuba, as the most socialized nation in the Western Hemisphere. In 1971, the government nationalized Canadian-owned bauxite mines, and in 1975 nationalized U.S.-owned mines. That same year, it acquired the assets of Jessel's Securities, which included two sugar factories. Ten years after independence, Booker McConnell Ltd. was nationalized, a symbolic victory for the country once known as Booker's Guyana.

We found that despite independence, the Guyanese

still sheltered vestiges of the British Empire. As whites, we were seated at the head table at Le Grille, the one closest to the windows where the breezes came in. We were also served first. Later that day, when we ate lunch at the Park Hotel, our feeling of being imperialists returned. The hotel restaurant is on a beautiful second-story veranda. The entire floor is open. Potted palm trees wave beside green wicker furniture. A large Indo-Guyanese family sat at a table in the restaurant's lounge, and a black man at an organ played songs like "The Way We Were", "Cloudy", and "Yesterday".

A white-coated waiter didn't ask us what we wanted. He silently brought us soup, a meat dish, and some vegetables. We could have been ordinary patrons in an ordinary restaurant, but we were white. That made us both privileged, and different. We couldn't be ordinary because, compared to most Guyanese, we were rich.

Jonestown, the event rather than the place, had become an inextricable part of Guyana, like colonialism and rum. The first morning in Le Grille, Mrs. King, a native of the Caribbean born of white parents in Barbados, asked if we'd ever heard of Jonestown. I told her that some of my relatives had died there. She was very solicitous after that. She claimed that Peoples Temple had tried to buy Le Grille. The church needed a place in town to accommodate its visitors and as a source of revenue. "I can see why they wanted it," she said.

Two days before the suicides, she continued, waving at a table in the dining room, "the ex-Marine was sitting right here with a child." She referred to Charles Beikman, the man accused of killing Sharon Amos and her children. Then she brought out a newspaper published a week after the deaths, saying she thought we might like to read it. The pictures that appeared in it gave the Guyanese their first glimpse of the bodies, since Guyana has no TV. "I don't believe it all," she said.

At eight that first morning, Mr. Dundas from the Information Ministry telephoned Mac and asked to see him. We thought it strange that Mac had been tracked to Le Grille, since we'd written on our entry forms that we'd be staying at the Belvedere. It was the first intimation we had of how small the capital was.

Georgetown is a beautiful city. Not in the neat, tidy way of some European cities, nor in the ultra-modern, ultra-planned way of some U.S. cities. But in an old-fashioned, picturesque sense, the city is lovely. Most houses sit on stilts, with the main floor being the

second, and the ground floor housing a garage, shop or office. Canals line many streets to carry water run-off during violent thunderstorms. A major canal, grassy and tree-lined, runs through the center of town. Most of the buildings are wood, and many, particularly government offices, were erected in the last century.

The city is below sea-level. The Dutch built dikes along the Caribbean to claim the land at the mouth of the Demerara River, then established a port to service the colony. The land by the river is good for rice, the second major export after sugar.

The wind from the sea cools the city. But when we went out early that first morning, the sun was already hot, and the sky intensely blue. We had to slow down. Our American walk was too fast in the dense heat.

Our first stop was the U.S. Embassy. Although the Deputy Chief of Mission, Richard Dwyer, wanted to talk with us, he was busy and asked us to return later. We left the Embassy for a while and walked down the back streets of an industrial district. There we found some very poor shanties. Water flowed into the street from some of the buildings. As we walked by, several workers stared at us. Graffiti sprayed on a wall revealed political unrest under the serene surface of the capital city: "De Shah Gone, Gairy Gone, Who Next?" The Shah of Iran had fled his country four months before our trip. The people of Grenada had just ousted Prime Minister Eric Gairy.

We couldn't read the future from the slogan on the wall. Our own problems and concerns seemed more important than Guyana's. We accepted the serenity, the pleasantness, the ease of the country, and didn't look any further.

So when we finally met with Richard Dwyer at the U.S. Embassy, our first question was: what happened at the Port Kaituma airstrip? Dwyer didn't answer right away. He seemed to think we were members of the Concerned Relatives organization, and began by explaining that neither the Embassy nor the State Department could have intervened in Temple affairs. A slow-spoken man, cigar jammed into his mouth, Dwyer justified the Embassy's inaction, elaborating on how the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act prevented the Embassy from doing more.

Eventually Dwyer answered our original question, giving his side of the story about events at Port Kaituma. After the shootings, he'd taken charge of the wounded. He himself had been shot in the hip and was lying on one side of Congressman Ryan pretending to be



Street scenes in Georgetown, Guyana, May 1979.

dead, when the gunmen came up. "The only reason I can figure I wasn't shot again was the guy only had five shells, so he went after people he recognized -- like Ryan and [NBC reporter Don] Harris." I didn't pursue the obvious question: wouldn't he have been as recognizable as anyone else in the Ryan party? I also didn't know then that the tape made during the last hours of Jonestown featured Jim Jones saying, "Get Dwyer out of here," so I didn't ask him about that.

Although Dwyer had visited Jonestown only twice, he said he'd had two personal concerns about the future of the project. He wondered if it could ever become self-sustaining. And he didn't know how people could be motivated to stay. Yet they did stay. Embassy staff had been surprised by the number of family units found in Jonestown after the suicides. "Everyone was related, or had a relation in Jonestown," he observed.

As we left, Dwyer and his assistant, Doug Ellice, said they didn't think we'd be able to get into Jonestown. Either the weather, or the government, would stop us.

We got a second warning about Jonestown later that day from Mr. Dalzell, the agent for Guyana Overland Tours. Dalzell, one of those smalltime business entrepreneurs who enjoy the tropics but never seem to flourish in them, told us he'd just assumed that we wanted to go to Jonestown, since Matthews Ridge was only thirty miles away from the jungle settlement. He'd made all the travel arrangements. When Mac told him about his visa problems, Dalzell cautioned, "Just be very cagey with the Home Secretary."

Our third warning came not long afterwards. En route to the Ministry of Home Affairs to get the visa extended, a young black man walked up to us and asked us where we were going. Arafat Amin -- "My first name is the same as the PLO leader, and my last is like the one in Uganda" -- told us he was a freelance journalist. As we talked, he said he might want to write a news article about us: American relatives traveling to Guyana to find out what happened in Jonestown. We asked him not to, although our presence in Georgetown, less than 24 hours after our arrival, was apparently no secret to anyone.

Amin's work as a journalist gave him access to numerous government officials, so he was able to take us directly to the ones who could help. Escorting us up the stairs of the Home Ministry, he advised us to say nothing about Jonestown. The uniformed official we talked to said Mac had a problem because he was a writer. Unspoken, the word "Jonestown" hovered among us.

With Amin in charge, we trooped across the street to the police station where the immigration office was. People crowded the small immigration room, waiting silently for passports to get them out of Guyana. Amin himself had wanted to emigrate to Grenada until the coup forestalled his plans.

Again the young journalist cut through the red tape. He took us to the front of the line and through a gate to an immigration official he knew. We left the building ten minutes later, and Mac had a nine-day visa.

After Amin led us through several back streets to Doc's Restaurant, we sat down with glasses of mauby -- guava punch -- and talked about Guyana's perceptions of Peoples Temple. Amin said most Guyanese didn't know about Jonestown before November 1978, "since it was just a bunch of Americans." When news of the airstrip attack and mass suicides came, people asked, "Jonestown? Where's that?" Amin felt most people in Guyana believed there was a deal between Jones and officials within the government of Prime Minister Linden Forbes Burnham.

By the time we finished talking, it was three in the afternoon. The day had cooled slightly. After agreeing to meet Amin at Doc's the next day for lunch, we walked back to Le Grille, hoping to take a nap. Before



Bicyclist in Georgetown, May 1979.

retiring, however, I called Larry Layton's lawyer, Rex McKay, to set up an appointment. McKay invited us to come over immediately. Fortunately, the owner of Le Grille, Mr. Moutay, planned to see McKay too, so he drove us over. He complained about gas prices and how hard it was to get parts for his car since Independence.

Ironically, that same day, taxi drivers went on strike to protest high gas prices. The Transport and Harbours Department workers, many of whom ferried commuters into the capital city, had struck earlier over other issues. The result of the two actions was rush hour chaos. Taxi drivers who didn't strike charged double the normal fare.

Rising oil prices had become a major problem for Guyana. Because the country buys its oil in U.S. dollars, inflation in America hurt Guyana. Many of the taxi drivers complained their gas was watered. An article on gas conservation appeared that same day in the government-run newspaper.

McKay's office was situated in a row of law offices across the street from the Victoria Law Courts, a large courthouse constructed of wood. The law offices on Croal Street in the Stabroek District of Georgetown looked a lot like rickety old houses. Some were unpainted, the wood weathered to a gray-brown. McKay's office was painted white, and was the neatest on the row.

The reception area, open to the street by large windows, was plain. A clerk worked on a document, writing in a careful longhand. While the rest of the building was cooled only by the air flowing through the windows, McKay's inner office was well air-conditioned.

As we introduced ourselves, I forgot all the advice we'd received about talking with the Guyanese. Instead of exchanging pleasantries for a few minutes, and slowly directing the conversation to our concern, I jumped right in and said we wanted to see Larry Layton.

McKay overlooked my gaffe, and quickly replied with his concern: legal fees. He pointed out that Chuck Beikman's family had already paid him more than they could afford. He seemed to feel that Dr. Layton should pay a commensurate amount, since he was wealthier than the Beikmans.

Mac and I were glad when the meeting concluded and the lawyer offered to take us to the prison. We drove to an immense tin-walled compound which took up an entire city block. McKay led us to the warden's office, then left to confer with another prisoner else-



Law offices of Rex McKay on Croal Street, Georgetown, 1979.

where. The warden, Janak Seegobin, talked with us for several minutes while Larry came from his cell to the visiting area. Seegobin expressed his own doubts about Larry's guilt. It was a surprising admission coming from an official of the government prosecuting Larry. Seegobin added that McKay was the best lawyer Larry could have asked for.

The warden's office looked out over the prison yard, a dusty area except during rainy weather. From what we could see of the cells, they opened directly onto the yard. The wall facing the yard was heavy mesh. We could see a guard accompanying Larry, a small figure in shorts and a striped shirt, across the compound.

We left the warden's office, walked downstairs and into a kind of trough which looked into a cell enclosed by three wire screens. Larry was waiting there. It was so dark, I couldn't see him at first, but as my eyes adjusted, I was relieved to see that he looked fine. Thin, but fine.

We talked about what he was reading, how his drug-taking had decreased, and what food he ate in prison. He said the Guyana court system was based on one's ability to pay: "A poor person can go to jail for seven years for stealing \$85," he said, "and a rich man can get off with nothing for murder." He concluded by saying he didn't want his father or John to come down for a visit, since he thought he'd be out very soon.

Our ten-minute visit was quickly over. Like other prisoners, Larry was allowed two ten-minute visits a week. Since we were only going to be there a week, however, the warden allowed him a visit every day.

We assume Larry sacrificed future visits during our stay.

We didn't know if we should wait for Rex McKay or not. Weary from walking around all day, we decided that we wouldn't. We found that Camp Street, on which the jail entrance was located, ran straight across the city to Middle Street. Two blocks down from that was Le Grille. We walked back slowly through a district of small, shabby businesses, then behind St. George's, a huge wooden Episcopal Cathedral, and up a more residential part of the street. We walked about five miles that first day.

That night I tried to log everything that had happened, but my hand tired and I fell asleep before finishing.

We started the next day by going back to the jail. We waited with other visitors under a tin-roofed open shed across the street from the Camp Street entrance. A uniformed guard wrote our names into a large ledger. When he had enough names, he went back across the street.

A half hour later, the guard returned and called out some names, but we weren't on the first list. Everyone else left, and we sat by ourselves, wondering if we'd arrived too late. But the guard then made a special trip, and we were led into the warden's office.

Janak Seegobin talked with us for a long time that day, and on subsequent visits, we talked even longer. Sometimes we waited in his office, unsupervised, for fifteen or twenty minutes, reading slogans tacked up on the walls: "Be humble enough today. You may be giving orders -- Someday." And: "Always speak gently. When you wield the almost incredible range of power that you have, you don't have to talk loudly to make yourself heard." And finally: "In a socialist state, the burden of some tasks is shared by all."

As we got to know Seegobin, we realized that he took these admonitions seriously. A slight, soft-spoken Indo-Guyanese, Seegobin talked about religion and prison with us. While we sat there that second day, several prisoners walked into his office and talked to him. One had missed the boat to another prison. Another, a young man wearing an Oakland Raiders T-shirt, giggled when he said he'd been arrested for breaking and entering. Following these interruptions, Seegobin told us he'd been assigned to the Georgetown Gaol to alleviate the unrest among the prisoners. "When I got here," he said proudly, "I kicked the doors open."

During another visit, as the conversation turned to Peoples Temple, Seegobin asked if we were Christians. He said he was, and described a miracle that happened to him. A prisoner accidentally backed a truck into him and broke his leg. In the hospital, waiting for it to be set, Seegobin had a vision. Jesus, standing before a church at the head of a flight of stairs, held out his arms to him. Then Jesus began to tumble down the steps. Seegobin jumped forward to save Jesus, and awoke in a sweat. His broken leg had set itself. "If there had been any witnesses in the room where it happened," he concluded, "I would have made the history books."

We discussed how, or why, the people of Jonestown could have killed themselves. "Why did no one rebel?" the prison official asked. "It would have been a simple act to turn over the vat." If that had happened, the guards would have had to shoot everyone, he said. He'd talked with Chuck Beikman about it, and Beikman said he would have thrown over the vat. But Deborah Touchette, a Temple member who'd been in Georgetown at the time of the suicides, told Seegobin she would have taken the poison.

On that second day, the warden asked how our visit with Larry went. We told him we were surprised he looked as good as he did. Seegobin said Larry had really improved. "The more he reads, the more direction he gets. It concentrates his mind," he added. He circled his finger at his head to imply that Larry had been slightly crazy when he first arrived at the prison. But the reading had helped him so much, Seegobin let Larry have four books at a time, instead of the two normally allowed. After Larry read a book, he and Seegobin would discuss it.

The warden spoke again about Larry's case and explained why he thought Larry wasn't guilty. He'd asked Larry what happened on the airstrip. Larry replied he didn't really remember, it happened so fast. Seegobin said he couldn't visualize Larry committing the crimes, of which he'd been accused. Larry was too gentle. Besides, he added, the government had no evidence.

When we finally got to see Larry the second day, over an hour after we arrived at the prison, our visit was brief and anti-climatic. We asked him about Peoples Temple, about Carolyn and Ann. Larry blamed Jim Jones for causing all the trouble. The members of Peoples Temple were committed to the struggle for social justice, he said. Carolyn had been a "freedom fighter". He wouldn't tell us what she'd done, but he did say "she'd gone on several dangerous missions" somewhere in South Amer-

ica. He assured us that she wasn't an "enforcer" who kept people in line. That was our biggest fear. Instead, he said, "she was always organizing committees."

We left the prison and walked to Doc's to wait for Amin. We returned to the Creole section where we'd been the day before, and ordered lunch. We ruminated over the people we'd met thus far. They all seemed like characters from a Graham Greene novel. In general, people were friendly and outgoing. Everything took longer than we planned because people liked to stop and talk.

Amin soon joined us. We didn't know whether we could trust him. But we enjoyed his company, and he'd helped us a great deal.

After lunch, Amin helped us find Mr. Dundas at the Ministry of Information. Just before we went into the office, Amin again advised us not to say anything about going to Jonestown.

Mr. Dundas was a large, fat man who chatted with us about our visit to Guyana and our impressions of the country. The reason he'd called us, he explained, was that there'd been hundreds of journalists in the country after Jonestown. He wanted to know if Mac planned to write anything about the country -- more specifically, anything negative. Amin tapped Mac's foot with his to remind him to be careful. Mac responded truthfully that he didn't plan to write anything at all. He was simply a tourist on vacation. We did tell Dundas, though, that I had lost relatives at Jonestown. He was quite sympathetic.

Then I asked whether he knew of CIA involvement. "There were a lot of rumors," he conceded.

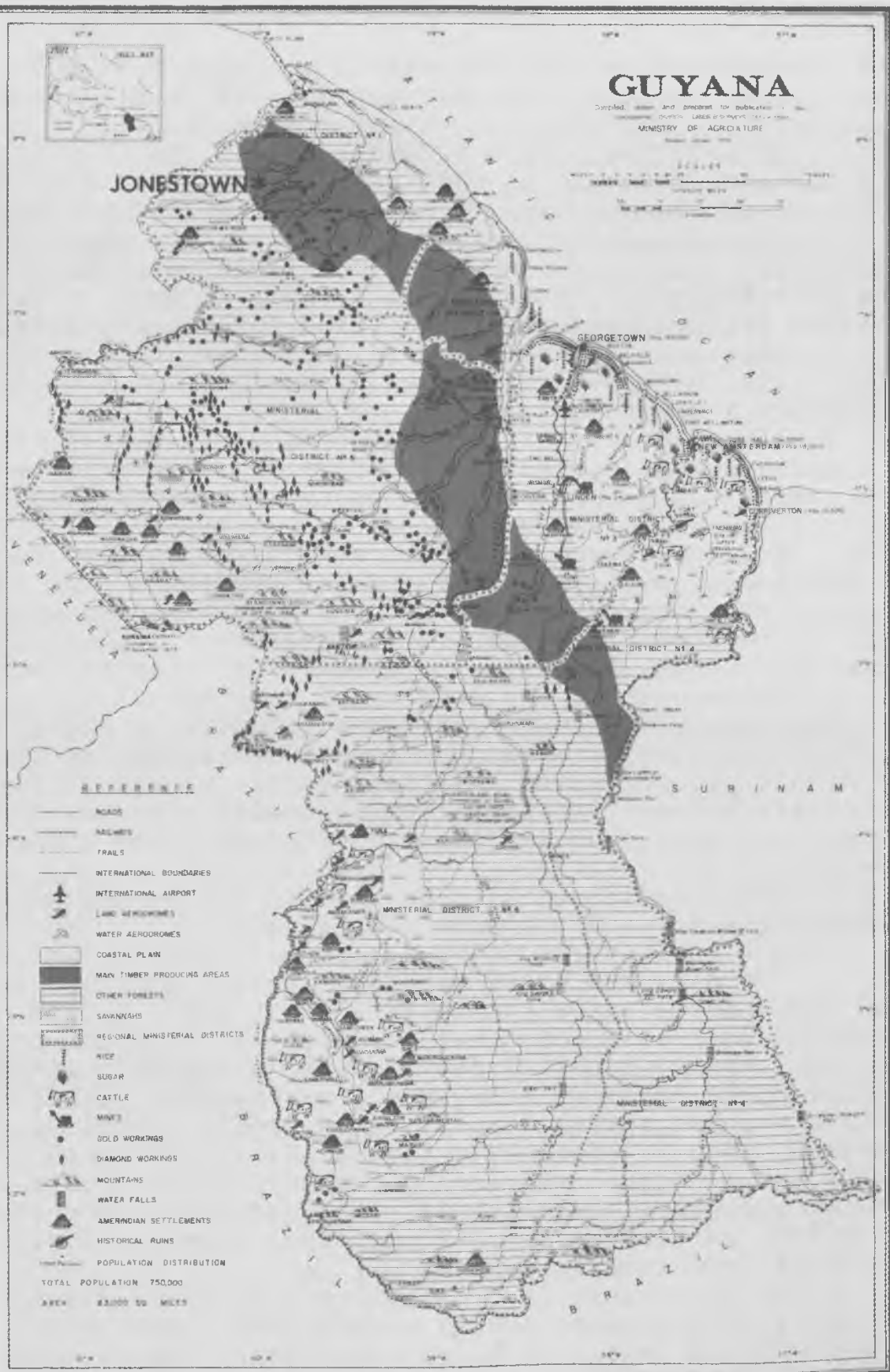
The days and hours jumbled together quickly. We saw many people and did many things. It all required walking great distances in heavy heat. We remember an evening stroll, however, past Guyana House, the president's home, and down very lonely streets lit by solitary streetlamps. Another day we walked to Promenade Gardens, about a block away from Le Grille. We sat under the afternoon sun, doing nothing. A boy with a machete eyed us, suspiciously I thought, but the gardens were full of teenage couples and other people enjoying the brilliant flowers and shade trees.

We never made it to the city's tourist attractions, like Stabroek Market, or the thatch-roofed museum, Umana Yana, out by the Caribbean. But we walked up and down Camp Street so often that we felt as though we lived in the neighborhood. Uniformed schoolgirls giggled when they saw us, and one boldly said "Hi!" One



GUYANA

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REFERENCE

- ROADS
- RAILWAYS
- TRAILS
- INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES
- INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
- LAND AIRCRAFT
- WATER AERODROMES
- COASTAL PLAIN
- MAIN TIMBER PRODUCING AREAS
- OTHER FORESTS
- SAVANNAHS
- REGIONAL MINISTRIAL DISTRICTS
- RICE
- SUGAR
- CATTLE
- MINES
- GOLD WORKINGS
- DIAMOND WORKINGS
- MOUNTAINS
- WATER FALLS
- AMERICAN SETTLEMENTS
- HISTORICAL RUINS
- POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

TOTAL POPULATION 750,000
AREA 83,000 SQ MILES

day a nicely-dressed Indo-Guyanese woman stopped us after we'd barely made it across a street, and warned us to be careful. "The drivers here are not very considerate," she said primly.

A thread of poverty ran through the colorful city streets. Several times we saw a woman selling sweets on a corner. Her two tiny daughters sat in a wooden box by her side. The men with the horses and handcarts were very quaint, and very poor. A beggar stopped us at the post office. I wondered how there could be beggars in a socialist country.

Guyana faced serious economic problems, however. Verging on bankruptcy, it would soon apply for, and get, a loan of \$81 million from the International Monetary Fund. IMF would require more austerity than the country already practiced. And in comparison to other South American countries, Guyana's Gross National Product was slipping -- from 13th out of 26 in 1960, to 19th out of 26 in 1975.

Everyone we talked to complained that things had deteriorated since Independence in 1966. You couldn't get certain vegetables. Rice, the country's third largest export, was being imported. One day we saw a tremendous line of people winding around Guyana Stores, the government-owned department store. They were waiting to buy liquor and beer.

To aid its development, Guyana had limited imports to what it could not produce itself. Everything else had to be manufactured within Guyana. The policy consequently confined most consumer goods to necessities: clothing, food, shelter.

We talked to several people, teenagers especially, who could hardly wait to leave Guyana. They'd decided the U.S. -- notably New York City -- was the place to live. They wanted clothes, cars, TV.

Others jokingly blamed themselves for Guyana's state of affairs. "We voted for Burnham," they explained. They laughed about American journalists' depictions of Georgetown as "sleepy" and "backward", but their laughter was bitter.

Everyone had an opinion about Jonestown. One of the teenagers, named Ringo, who manned the desk at Le Grille, told us that bodies had been found in Jonestown long after the suicides, locked in a vault. They had supposedly starved to death.

Another person we met showed us a bizarre collection of five-by-seven photographs of the carnage at the Port Kaituma airstrip: the airplane shot full of holes, close-ups of dead bodies. He showed us one picture of

what looked like a rag soaked in oil, and asked if we could guess what it was. We couldn't. It was Congressman Ryan's brain.

At noon on our third day in Guyana, a cab driver hired by Guyana Overland Tours took us to the airport. A crowd of people waited for the tri-weekly Guyana Airways flight to Kamarang and Matthews Ridge. As the departure time neared, we got nervous. No one had appeared at the counter to take our tickets. Meanwhile, crowds of adults and children gathered in front of the terminal. White-jacketed troops from the Guyana Defense Force marched in formation. When a clerk finally showed up at the counter, adding our body weights to that of our luggage, we learned that the Vice President of Iraq was arriving. Our flight would be delayed.

We joined the crowds on the runway waiting for the dignitary. We understood the foundation for this display of friendship: oil. A day earlier, Guyana had signed an agreement with a West German firm to search for uranium. The French had already made a similar agreement two months before.

As we listened to a steel drum band, we got the feeling we were being watched. With less than five percent of the population white, or European, we stood out. We were the center of attention, because we were white. We were far more interesting than the Vice President of Iraq, a sour-faced man.

When we finally boarded our flight, we understood why we'd been weighed along with our baggage. The plane was a small, propeller-driven craft, more than half full of supplies for the residents of the interior. Cartons of eggs and sacks of rice were more important than American tourists.

The airline served no snacks. There were no flight attendants, no restrooms, and no door to the cockpit. We had a good view of a flashing red light when the plane dropped several hundred feet during a thunderstorm later on.

The plane unloaded some supplies at Kamarang, an old mining outpost. The runway was a short grassy strip surrounded by jungle. In the 160 airmiles between Georgetown and Matthews Ridge, there was nothing but jungle. No roads, no villages, no mark of any kind made by humans. Nothing but a dark cover of trees.

We landed at the Matthews Ridge airstrip around six. The clerk, who listed arrivals in a big ledger, locked up the one-room shed that served as a terminal, and drove us to the guesthouse in his LandRover. Another

passenger, who'd just completed her first plane flight, rode with us.

Matthews Ridge was five miles from the airstrip. We drove along a dirt road, black from manganese, for the town began as a mining center. We wound through jungle, spotting only an AmerIndian family -- half-naked, with their possessions in baskets on their heads -- walking along the road. Their faces were expressionless. More houses appeared, most of them on stilts, and we drove down a long hill -- known as Hell Hill because two bars were located at the bottom -- to what was more or less the center of Matthews Ridge.

Mac and I tried to visualize the guest house. We thought it might be a colonialist mansion, white with a big porch and rocking chairs. Or maybe something smaller like a country inn. Charla's Guest House was neither. A two-story structure common in Guyana, it had a ground floor, housing a restaurant, bar and kitchen, and an open porch encircling the second floor and leading to four bedrooms.

We heard Charla's before we saw it. There, in the middle of tropical jungle, American Top 40 tunes from a year earlier blared from a small record player. Someone at Charla's had a 45 collection and played it full volume the entire time we were there, except for the hours when the village's electricity was turned off.

If the guest house were less than our expectations, the manager exceeded anything we could have hoped for. Rita McEwan, who ran Charla's while her father was away on business, was a warm, motherly woman who took care of us as if we were her children. She was interested in us, and curious about our search.

She herself had had little contact with members of Peoples Temple. Occasionally they stopped in the restaurant for a soda en route between Jonestown, 30 bumpy miles away, and the Matthews Ridge airstrip. But they kept to themselves. They didn't mingle with her children or with other customers in the restaurant. They were always very pleasant, but, she repeated, "They kept to themselves."

We slept that night under a mosquito net. The walls of the room stopped a foot short of the ceiling, to let the breezes in.

The next morning after breakfast, we walked by ourselves to the hospital where Annie said she'd worked. We asked one of the nurses about Peoples Temple members who'd been there. She was new to the hospital and didn't know of any, but she offered to take us on a tour of the small complex.

The mining company had built the hospital on a hill visible from most of the town. Three squat one-story buildings, constructed of concrete blocks and painted yellow, made up the facility. It had no doctor, and everything needed repair or replacement. The maternity room contained a blood-stained leather cot and a crib. The pharmacy had a refrigerator, but the room itself was open to the elements. Tooth extractions were performed in the operating room. It was relatively primitive, but it was the only place in the Northwest District where people could receive any medical treatment. The serious emergencies were flown to Georgetown.

The nurse then took me into the women's ward. Two women lay on iron beds, one an AmerIndian named Dorothy. She recognized a photograph of Ann. "Yes, I know her. Did she die?" I said yes. She asked if longtime Temple member Patty Cartmell had died too. I said yes. "Patty was very funny," the woman said.

We saw the hospital's laundry room and kitchen, small bare rooms with windows open wide to let in light and air. One of the cooks repeated what Rita McEwan said: "They kept to themselves." She'd heard that Temple members had been told the Guyanese hated them, and would rape the women and beat the men. When their boat, full of supplies, docked at Port Kaituma, she said, everyone, "even the children," worked all night to unload it, so they didn't have to mix with the Guyanese. "When we heard about the children," she concluded, talking about the deaths, "all the mothers here cried, like those children were their own. It was a tragedy for us. They said I could go and see, but I didn't want to. I didn't want to see the children."

Our last visit to Matthews Ridge hospital was with Doc Hopkins. Doc was a grizzled old black man, with many teeth missing, who ran the hospital and performed extractions. He thought he remembered Ann.

"They never worked here," he said. "They just brought people in for X-rays. Once they got their X-ray machine, they never came back to the hospital." He added that none of the Temple medical staff had been licensed to practice medicine in Guyana.

What Doc said bothered us. For one thing, it contradicted Ann's claim that she worked in the hospital for a time. His statements also belied the rhetoric of Peoples Temple and its boast that the church was helping the needy people of Guyana's Northwest District.

Doc was suspicious of the Temple, at least in the aftermath of the tragedy. "They projected a very good image," he said, implying he thought at the time that it

was false. "They were always friendly to us. They always waved and said hello. But only certain people were allowed to leave Jonestown. Only the people trusted to project the right image were allowed to come to Matthews Ridge. We didn't know what was going on. The police weren't allowed. The police stopped going. They kept to themselves. But they always projected a very good image."

We walked back down the hill, across a dirt playing field, and over to the road back to Charla's. Some young blacks at a small store yelled "Honky" at us, but their tone wasn't disparaging or antagonistic. We waved back. We were the only honkies around for miles and miles.

Rita was angry over our unscheduled departure. She'd planned several tours, and they'd been postponed because we were off somewhere. We didn't have to tell her where we'd been. She knew. It was, after all, a small village.

A silent middle-aged man in a government Land-Rover took us on our first tour. As we drove up the black road cut through the jungle, he laconically noted the area's points of interest. We passed a timber mill, and the thatch-roofed dwellings of some AmerIndians. We knew we'd arrived at Papaya, the government's own agricultural development, when the thick forest abruptly opened onto large fields.

Since Independence, the Burnham government has encouraged people who live in the "hinterland" to remain there, and those who live in the coastal cities to migrate to the interior. The alternative to military service is GNS, Guyana National Service. Papaya was one of the service projects, although there were several small houses for permanent residents.

The workers at Papaya had cleared a large amount of land, and had erected dormitories and classrooms. But the commander of the camp expressed disappointment that they hadn't done more, and that they couldn't persuade more people to move to the interior.

A young girl, addressed by her last name of Phillips, showed us the chickens, pigs and rabbits, and then took us around to some of the buildings. She asked about Washington, D.C., and we told her there were as many people living there as in the whole of Guyana. "Overcrowded," she remarked, "like our pigs."

We stopped by the project's guest house, where the Prime Minister stayed on visits. Our driver finally cracked a smile when he saw us trying to peek through the windows.

When we got back to Charla's, we learned that



Abandoned manganese mineworks, Matthews Ridge, Guyana.

Rita had planned another tour for us. A young AmerIndian in a yellow Datsun pickup was going to show us everything there was to see in Matthews Ridge.

He stopped at an abandoned mineworks, where a number of tin sheds and troughs jutted out from a steep hill. Manganese had been discovered in the 1960s, and Matthews Ridge developed as a company mining town. A railway linked Matthews Ridge with Port Kaituma, where the manganese was shipped downriver to the Caribbean. By 1969 or 1974 -- depending on if you talk with local people or rely on Guyana's own records -- the company, a subsidiary of Union Carbide, packed up overnight and left. Our driver didn't know why. Rita said later she thought the reason was political: the company was afraid Venezuela might try to take over the Northwest District and expropriate the mine. More likely, however, was Guyana's own program of nationalization, which began in 1971 with the takeover of bauxite mines. Whatever the cause, the economic base of Matthews Ridge collapsed when the company left.

Our driver then showed us around the electrical generating plant for Matthews Ridge, a huge, noisy, greasy operation. Next to that was the government garage, where several semi's lay disemboweled.

The houses where the European community of Mat-

thews Ridge settled are in a hilly area several miles outside of town. Most of the houses are empty now, abandoned when the mining company left. One remains open as a guest house for the Prime Minister when he visits the region.

The government's regional offices perched atop another hill. Constructed as headquarters for the manganese company, the building resembled the cement block hospital which the company also built: low, squat and institutional. Our guide showed us the room in which the inquest into the Jonestown deaths was held. It was no bigger than a large conference room, empty except for a few chairs and a table. The guide pointed to the makeshift witness stand and the magistrate's seat.

I suppose I expected to feel more upon seeing it. It was, after all, the place where a coroner's jury ruled that Annie had killed herself, where the first official findings about Jonestown were made. But it was just a bare room, and I couldn't feel any ghosts.

We drove back through town again, out past the police station, beyond some small shacks in which people lived, and to the water pumping station. By that time we were out of town, on the road which led to Jonestown and Port Kaituma. We stopped by a lagoon a few miles out to turn around. The tires spun on the slick, muddy grass, and Mac and I got out to push the truck.

When we returned, we thought we might take a nap, since the electricity, and the record player, were off. I lay on the bed and began to cry. I wasn't sad. I was angry, angry at my sisters and at Peoples Temple. The material poverty of the people of Matthews Ridge -- few had indoor plumbing or running water -- and the destitution of the "hospital" made me mad. The members of Peoples Temple had worked only for themselves. They didn't seem to care about anyone outside their own community. All the talk about the agricultural "mission" and how they were "serving" the people of Guyana was pure propaganda.

It rained that night and the next morning as well. It was the day we were scheduled to visit Jonestown. Rita assured us we would go, but the road looked wet and sloppy. At eleven o'clock, it began to clear a little, and around noon, our silent friend in the government LandRover arrived. Rita packed a lunch and we took off. Rita accompanied us, since she'd never been to Jonestown.

It took three hours just to get to the entrance

of Jonestown, 28 miles away. The hard-packed black road ended shortly after we left Matthews Ridge. We skidded along the mud and splashed into water-filled ruts. The two-mile road into Jonestown itself was even worse: sticky, gooey, gummy. At times it seemed certain the LandRover would fall over on its side.

The famous sign -- "Welcome to Peoples Temple Agricultural Project" -- had been removed, but the posts remained. A small guardhouse stood at the gate. One of the other passengers accompanying us in the LandRover said the guards had been armed.

It was a sad road into Jonestown. The fields, once meticulously cleared and cultivated, were ragged. Grass grew around rows of banana trees, rows of a second, low-lying crop, and a lemon grove. Cows stood beside the road.

The jeep stopped at the pavilion. We walked to a large, bark-covered building, one of the first built in Jonestown, where we met the new commander of Jonestown, Lloyd Rodney. He'd arrived November 26, and had been there ever since.

The Guyanese had cleared the settlement, burning the papers and belongings that remained. Although they tended the area, they didn't really work at cultivating the crops.

Rodney guided us around the settlement. We started at the cage of Mr. Muggs, the chimpanzee, an enormous wooden structure larger than that at many zoos. We stepped on wooden walkways, gray with weathering, past the Jonestown infirmary, to the cooking area, the herb kitchen, a giant refrigeration pit, past small and tidy cabins to Jim's house.

Unlike most other dwellings, Jim's was unpainted. It had three small rooms. The first had two bunkbeds in it. Rodney pointed to where Annie had been found, next to the door. The middle room contained a large safe. No bodies were found in that room, the commander said. The third room had a double bed and a dresser. I asked Rodney if that were the only double bed in Jonestown. He smiled slightly and said yes.

On the wall in the first room, beside a bunkbed, I saw a drawing which could only have been done by Annie. It was a dull-colored snail dreaming of becoming brilliantly-hued. I asked if I could have it, and Rodney consented. I took it down from the wall. It was Annie's. She'd signed it on the back.

I found two more drawings Annie had done on the headboard of Jim's bed. One was a get-well card for Jim. It featured a grizzled farmer and an assortment of



One view of Jonestown from its radio tower, 1979.

ducks, ostriches, worms and frogs saying, "Howdee thar Jim! The whole crew is here ta say -- We hope you feel better this very day. From Uncle Zeke and the Gang." A frog in a floppy hat added, "Barrummp! Howdy Jim."

The other drawing depicted silhouettes of the tall trees we'd seen in the jungle against a yellow-orange sky. Annie had titled it, "South American Sunset". She probably sold some like this in Georgetown, as she'd written they were selling her artwork there.

Afterwards, as we stood on the porch looking at a small grove of citrus trees behind the house, Rita said to me, "This is the first time I've realized what it meant. There were people here, with relatives. It made me sad when you found something that belonged to your sisters."

From Jim's cabin, we walked to a tower. We climbed ladders up forty feet to the top. The view from the tower revealed something we hadn't noticed before: Jonestown was quite small and compact. Although an immense amount of land had been cleared, the people of the settlement lived in a relatively small area.

We could see something else quite clearly. Everything done in Jonestown was done communally. There were no private places, except perhaps the fields and jungle. The houses weren't houses at all. They were simply places to sleep. There was no formal dining area. There were few places to lounge. Speakers mounted on wooden posts were aimed at the houses. What privacy that could be found inside or on the benches outside each door, could easily be broken.

We climbed back down and wandered among the houses. Guyanese families lived in a few of them now. We went into a vacant cabin and counted eight bunkbeds. Rodney thought each cabin housed about twenty people, with several sleeping in the loft.

Most residents had beds, however. The U.S. Army initially counted 600 single beds when it arrived in Jonestown. It later revised its count upwards, discovering a total of 847 beds. This meant about 50 people -- children most likely -- doubled up or slept on the floor.

Nevertheless, Jonestown had impressed that unlikeliest of admirers, the U.S. Army. It resembled "a military camp in the appearance of neatness," according to Lt. Col. Alfred Keyes, who had led the body recovery six months before. He noted particularly "the way the facilities were kept clean."

Our final stop was the pavilion. Rodney pointed to Jim's green throne at one end, where rows of wooden benches faced George Santayana's warning: "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." But there were other hand-painted signs, like "Love One Another", mounted along the rafters of the open-sided building. We failed to write down all the quotes from the Bible, from Acts and from Paul. But they were there as well.

The camp commander showed us where the vat of poison had been. It hadn't been inside the pavilion, as we had thought, but behind a raised platform. The Guyanese later built a fence around the area where the bodies lay in stacks four feet deep. The earth inside the fence was bare. Rodney explained that the fluids from the decaying bodies had seeped into the ground and killed the grass.

The school was next to the pavilion. Large wooden bookcases, locked shut to protect their contents from the rain, divided the area into small classrooms. Colored maps and posters still decorated the areas.

It was sad to see the empty houses, the lifeless school and nursery and fields. The trip to Jonestown liberated us from one fear, however. It was not a death camp. The love that had made the community was tangible. Hand-lettered signs, artwork, a playground, neatly-built houses, each one painted, each one surrounded by flowers and plants. The rows and rows of crops under cultivation. Soldiers, news reporters, villagers and police officers had taken the valuables out of Jonestown. The U.S. Army had removed 1900 pounds of documents. What remained was the evidence of love.

There were posters on the walls of many cabins. The open-air nursery was almost intact. A book of Winnie the Pooh lay open on a low table. The lesson plan of a day six months before was written on the blackboard. Rita thought it was a shame that all the toys were going to waste.

It seemed as if all the residents of Jonestown had stepped out for a moment, but would soon return. Bottles of homegrown spices lined the walls of the herb kitchen. Flowers, planted and nurtured by the seniors, lined the wooden walkways. One yard was full of pine-apple plants. A wooden basketball court was ready for a game. In the artists' shop, an open bottle of Higgins India Ink sat beside some paint brushes. Someone had made windchimes out of pieces of wood.

As our tour came to an end, I asked Commander Rodney about suicide drills. He said he'd read testimonials found in Jonestown from individuals who'd written they wanted to die for Jim. In the letters, apparently written to Jim after a drill, several said they were sorry they hadn't really died.

I also asked if he'd found an arms cache. He said he hadn't, but he'd heard press reports of a large Temple arsenal.

We climbed back into the LandRover and rode into Port Kaituma, to the docks, past a new high school, and to the airstrip. It was slightly longer than a football field. Children played outside small houses within sight of the landing field. Again, I didn't feel anything in particular. I merely thought, so this is where it all started.

Our last three days in Guyana were hectic, once we flew back from Matthews Ridge. We visited Larry three more times and did some errands for him. On one occasion, he was nervous and agitated. He opened the conversation by saying, "I can't wait to get away from this shit." He then asked us to transfer some money into a fellow inmate's prison account.

We asked Larry during our next visit if he were satisfied with his lawyer and with the way things were going. He was convinced he would be released soon, and said he was thinking about places outside the U.S. to live. "I think there'd be a lot of prejudice against me in the U.S." Time Magazine had called Larry, "Jones' executioner," and Larry wanted us to suggest to his father the possibility of suing the newsmagazine for libel. But Time wasn't the only publication which had hurt him. Larry felt that, "People are probably afraid of me because of that and other articles."

Our last visit with Larry was in the warden's office. It was the only time we saw him without a heavy mesh screen separating us. Mac told him he looked much better than he did in the photos when he was first arrested. The newspapers showed him with a three-day beard growth. "I probably had a three day beard growth," Larry replied. By that time we had said everything we had to say. He gave me a hug and said, "Give my love to my family."

Although we didn't get to see everyone on our itinerary, we did get a chance to meet the Temple members remaining at Lamaha Gardens, the church's Georgetown headquarters. Only a few survivors had stayed on: Mike and Debbie Touchette, Mike's father Charlie, and Phil Blakey, husband of Temple defector Debbie Blakey.

It was the first time we'd met. When they saw me, one said I looked like Carolyn; another said I looked like Ann. They finally all agreed that I looked exactly like Kimo.

Mike, Charlie, and Phil had been in Jonestown from its beginnings in 1974. Mike was a brawny young man who wore a scowl. His father, Charlie, was an older version, tanned and toughened by hard work. Phil Blakey, another hardened young man, was dark-haired and soft-spoken. Mike had been in Georgetown with the basketball team at the time of the suicides. Charlie and Phil had been on the Temple's trawler in Trinidad.

They were all interested in our trip to Jonestown, since none of them had been back there, and asked in particular about the land and equipment. They'd made the original clearing and erected the first buildings on the site. We told them the jungle was coming in to reclaim the fields, and the heavy machinery stood idle, beginning to rust. They were anxious to put memories of Jonestown behind them, but our news saddened them. It was a lot of work for nothing, they felt.

Our conversation circled around warily without getting anywhere until I finally said, "I don't see how you can stand being survivors." Debbie, a beautiful black woman, did most of the talking at first. She said a psychiatrist had told them they'd been subjected to brainwashing: they'd been isolated from others; they had no watches; they heard no news except that read, and interpreted, by Jim. But when I asked if she thought it was only brainwashing, she said, "My family lived on scraps from the garbage cans behind the A&P and Kroger's in Indianapolis. I was raised in Peoples Temple. No one will ever make me think that social change is brainwashing. Peoples Temple was really helping people."

Like Larry Layton, they blamed Jim for destroying Jonestown. They believed he was on drugs, not ill. As he became more irrational, dissent and unhappiness grew among his followers. Mike was gone for three months, between September 1977 and January 1978, and when he returned, he found Jim dramatically changed. Charlie added he couldn't stand Jonestown once everyone moved in during the fall of 1977. It was overcrowded, and Jim kept ordering people around. Charlie made frequent requests to be transferred to Georgetown, and in September 1978, he was.

"I detest the man now," Charlie said. "But he did do one good thing. He brought the races together." Charlie admitted he could not have accepted his black daughter-in-law, Debbie, even five years ago. And once he did, his own mother stopped writing.

The Touchettes and Phil Blakey didn't answer all my questions. I felt suspicious because they were alive, and my sisters and nephew were dead, even though they had lost family too. But I realized, after talking with them and with others, that most of my questions couldn't be answered. I could only keep asking. That in itself was something.

One of the people we thought would have answers was Guyana's Assistant Police Commissioner for Crime, Skip Roberts. Newspaper articles had quoted Roberts widely. Since he'd conducted Guyana's official investigation into the suicides, we were anxious to meet him.

We waited outside his office on our next to last day in the open air hallway of police headquarters. I took a few photographs, until someone told me not to. Roberts led us into his office, air-conditioned to a cool 60 degrees. It was a modest room: a shelf lined with lawbooks, a refrigerator in one corner, a wooden desk with a broken footrest, and several framed awards, citations and commendations hanging on the wall. We saw Roberts twice. On our second visit, he offered us a beer, and we learned that the refrigerator held a case of Banks Beer, and nothing else.

Roberts is an attractive person, tall and outgoing. He spoke rapidly, with a Caribbean accent so thick I couldn't understand him at times. An informal man in jeans and a workshirt, he had people coming in and out of his office all the time. Finally he took his phone off the hook so we wouldn't be interrupted.

Roberts' desk seemed to contain nothing but Peoples Temple memorabilia and evidence, which he'd pull from drawers to illustrate points he was making. He

showed us a letter from the parents of a seven-year-old boy, with a picture of the boy attached. The parents were positive the boy had escaped the suicides, and was living in one of the villages near Jonestown. "He was friendly with the Indians," they wrote, pleading with Roberts to search for him. Roberts shook his head, sympathetic, but realistic enough to know the results of such a search.

We asked him why he thought Ann was the last to die in Jonestown, a theory he gave at the December 1978 coroner's inquest in Matthews Ridge. He said there'd been six shots: bap, bap, bap-bap, bap, and then much later, bap. At the inquest he said he thought Annie shot Jim first, at his bidding, before shooting a dog, then Mr. Muggs -- who was shot twice -- then another dog, and then, late that night, herself.

By the time we talked with Roberts, he'd changed his story. Perhaps it was to accommodate us. Perhaps he had received new information. Or perhaps it simply wasn't that important to him, and he had forgotten. He now said that Muggs' owner, Albert Touchette, shot him twice, and that accounted for the first two shots. The third and fourth shots, in quick succession, were for two dogs. The fifth shot was for Jim. Roberts no longer said Annie shot Jim. He felt Jim killed himself, although it was possible that Jim had shot Annie, or that Annie had shot him.

Nevertheless, he still believed the final shot was for Annie. Her notebook seemed to conclude after the other suicides. We told him we'd been trying to get the notebook, but the FBI had it and wouldn't release it. "That's funny," he said, pulling the notebook from his desk drawer. He said he'd released the contents to the press because "I thought it was a very beautiful statement."

At one point during our first conversation, while the commissioner discussed the evidence that led him to conclude Ann was the last to die, he withdrew some photographs from the same drawer. He wanted to show us where she'd been found: next to the door inside Jim's cabin, where Lloyd Rodney told us she'd been, not near the safe in the middle room, as the press had reported. I didn't want to see the pictures, since the newspapers had also reported that half of her head had been blown away by the bullet. But Roberts reassured me, "It's a very attractive photo. She looks like she's sleeping." We looked at it. He was right, except for one detail: her eye was open and staring. She lay on her back, her head turned to one side, her arm up by her head. Her

head was matted at the exit wound, but if it had been a bloody mess, we couldn't see it. Another picture showed Maria Katsaris and two children lying in bunkbeds behind Annie. Yet another picture showed Carolyn, face down. I didn't recognize the body as Carolyn, but Roberts claimed it was. He had another photo, of a couple lying on Jim's bed, with an infant between them, but it was "very offensive," he said, and didn't offer to show it to us. Temple leader Jim McElvane, and we presume his wife and child, were those who died on Jim's bed. +

At our second visit the next day, Roberts was able to clear up a few more questions. For example, he denied telling Time Magazine that Ann was Jim's mistress. He'd understood she was his personal nurse. He also cleared up the confusion about the number of people shot in Jonestown. His initial statement had been that three were found with bullet wounds: Jim, Annie, and Don Sly, the man who'd attacked Ryan with a knife. They found out later that Sly hadn't been shot. This made Roberts nervous. He worried for a while that the U.S. Air Force mortuary might find 500 had been shot, since his examination of the mountains of bodies was cursory. He was relieved to learn that only two, Jim and Annie, had bullet wounds.

I told Roberts that, in addition to finding out more about my sisters and about Peoples Temple and Jonestown, I was interested in uncovering any U.S. government infiltrators. "Going to do a little police work?" he asked. But he agreed that there was a strong possibility that infiltrators or agents provocateur had been working in Jonestown. He said he'd talked with some Cuban agents -- "the best there are" -- who believed Jonestown had the earmarks of an espionage job. He thought the people to investigate were the survivors, and he added, they'd all left Guyana. "I've come to a dead end in the investigation here. I've gone as far as I can. The rest of the story is in the U.S." +

His personal suspicions about infiltrators had centered upon Tim and Mike Carter and Mike Prokes, who carried a suitcase full of money out of Jonestown during the suicides. Roberts had "grilled them for days," with no results, he admitted, but he didn't change his mind about Prokes until Mike committed suicide in March 1979.

Roberts mentioned at that point that Mike had misquoted him in the statement he gave to the press before shooting himself. "He said that I said if I'd been in Jonestown, I would have taken the poison. If I'd been in Jonestown, and Jones told me to shoot my wife, I'd shoot him. But," he continued, "what I did

say was that if I'd been part of that community, I probably would have taken the poison." The commissioner thought the people of Jonestown were healthy and happy. He remarked several times on the beauty of the women and the strength of the men.

We asked if the local police had stopped going into Jonestown, as Doc Hopkins told us. "There was no reason to go in," Roberts observed. "No one reported being beaten, strangled or tortured. Guyana authorities visited the place, but everyone was smiling. They all said 'Hi' and waved."

As we concluded our second visit with the police commissioner, we asked if he considered Jonestown the crime of the century. "Jonestown?" he repeated. "No. I have more interesting crimes here in Georgetown after a Saturday night."

Roberts spoke from the point of view of the Guyana police, but he might have been speaking for most of his countrymen as well. The "crime" had occurred in an isolated part of the interior few of them would ever see. It involved a group of foreigners they didn't know, and the Guyanese leadership many resent. We often got the feeling that two Americans in Georgetown on a personal quest aroused more curiosity than 900 Americans who died in a jungle.

Skip Roberts was right. The rest of the story was back home. We'd traveled thousands of miles to learn that we had to look in our own backyard, and in our own family, to find the heart of the matter. It lay in America, not in Guyana.

CHAPTER FOUR

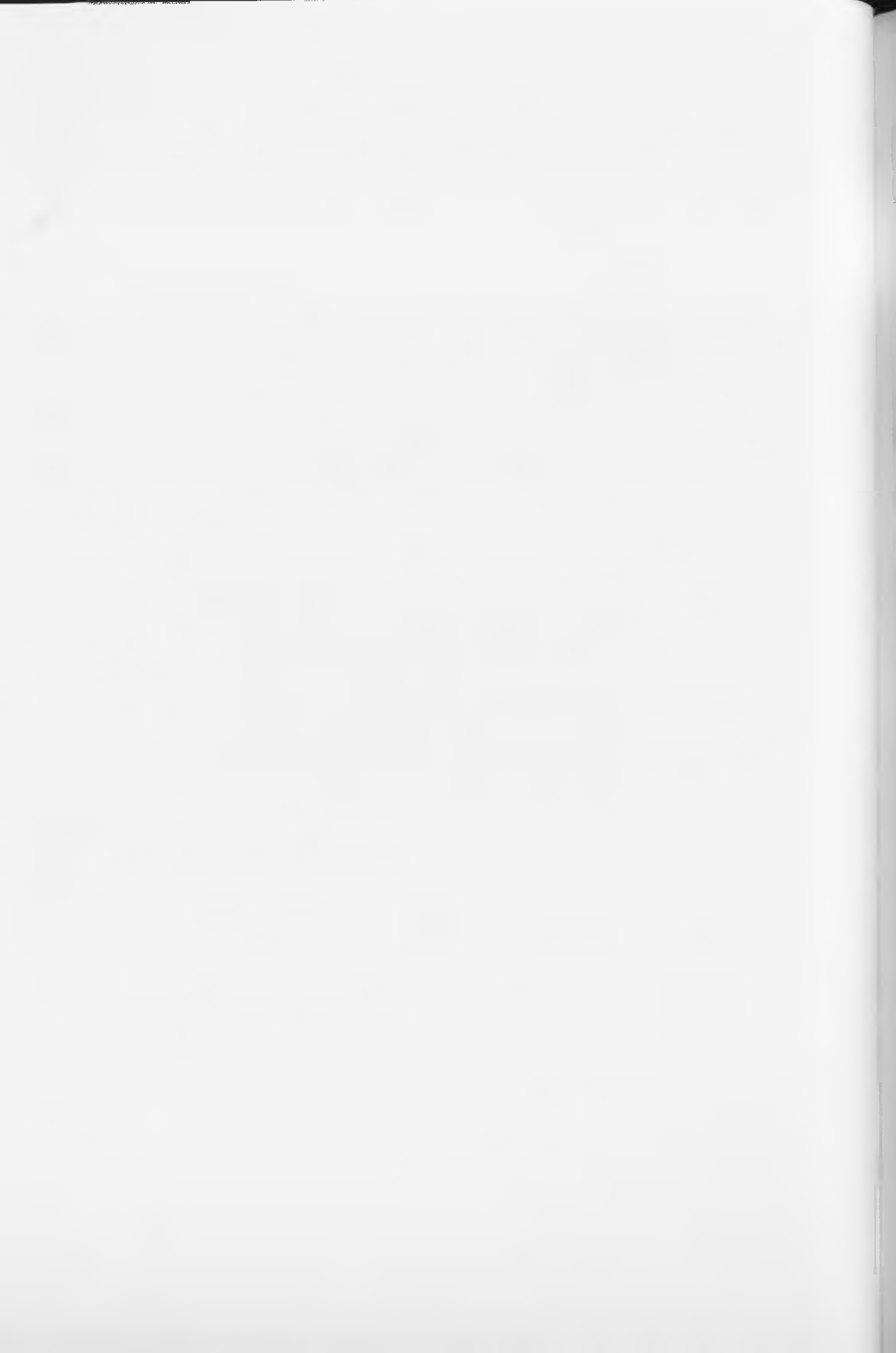
CAROLYN AND ANNIE

I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother... He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me...

-- Matthew 10: 35-38

Dad, I do not want my living to be in vain...

-- Self-criticism letter
found in Jonestown



"I could have imagined Carolyn joining the rebels in the Spanish Civil War if she had been in Bordeaux at that time," John reflected a year or two after the suicides. "Or, if we were Jewish, of going to Israel to cast her lot with the new nation."

We can picture Carolyn risking her life in a number of political confrontations. If she'd finished school in 1964, she'd have gone to the South to join the freedom riders. If she'd been a college student in 1968, she'd have demonstrated in Chicago with the SDS. In the 1980s, she might have struggled with the guerrillas in El Salvador. In 1984, I saw a woman on television who looked like Carolyn. She had been convicted of transporting Central American refugees across the border. I thought, that could have been Carolyn.

But Carolyn traveled between the times. When our family moved to San Francisco in 1962, she begged John and Barbara to let her stay behind in the small town where her friends were to finish her senior year of high school. They consented to her request, but according to a family friend, she was "a small, lost shadow" without us. She studied abroad the year the civil rights movement splintered into dozens of factions. And she graduated from college just before the Vietnam War escalated.

It was only a matter of time for Peoples Temple to find Carolyn, and for her to embrace it as the political organization she sought. She had to be involved in changing the world.

Ironically, it was our own religious training that made Carolyn an activist and prepared her for Peoples Temple. The message of the Bible was clear: serve the poor. But the churches she'd known didn't seem to care about the poor, at least, not enough. The pietism of traditional white Protestantism bored and frustrated her. What did evangelism and prayer have to do with feeding hungry people, or caring for the sick?

As long as Carolyn lived at home, she tried to work within church structures. She became an active youth leader, and organized discussions of current prob-

lems. At the same time, however, she must have already been disillusioned. She later wrote John and Barbara, "I have been a Communist since I was 15, if you can recall my many, many discussions with Dad on the subject of socialized medicine, the dialectic, and other related topics." She added:

You cannot learn democracy until you learn sharing, and sharing is Communism.

A sense of life's unfairness developed early on. A junior high school teacher wrote:

Carolyn was always very special to me when she was a member of my class... I remember one time when she came to me out of class to discuss the poem "Invictus". I remember suggesting that she read some biographical information about William Ernest Henley. We had a good talk. Even then her sensitivity to human need was apparent.



High school graduation picture, Carolyn Moore Layton, 1963.

We don't know if it were something at home, at church or at school that ignited the fervor of the revolution in Carolyn. Our family had moved every four years; we'd known different kinds of people. In Youngstown, Ohio, Carolyn attended an all-black nursery school. Her first Santa Claus was the black director of the school. Our father's parish in Sacramento was in a poor, working class rural area. Our church in Hayward exposed us to all races and classes of people. In Chico, the church, and town, were collegiate, and the times -- the late 50s and early 60s -- seemed free of problems, at least for us.

Once she left home to go to college, however, her interest in politics and social studies developed into a major in International Relations at

the University of California. She had already traveled to Mexico with her high school Spanish class. She studied in Bordeaux, France, for a year, living apart from the American students. She found a French boyfriend, Alexandre. One of her aunts wrote a long and angry letter, labeling her un-American and asking what was wrong with this country.

Carolyn never replied to the letter, but it hurt her. She hid her sensitivity to what people thought of her under a veneer of self-assurance and, at times, intolerance. Temple critic Jeannie Mills wrote in Six Years With God that Carolyn "had the personality of a pickle." Perhaps she did occasionally. Her outgoing, aggressive, ambitious exterior, however, disguised a basic lack of self-confidence.

This deficiency affected her relations with men. We don't know what happened in France, but we surmise the romance ended unhappily. Within a few months of her return, she met Larry Layton and was living with him.

Larry wasn't exactly the man we imagined Carolyn marrying. Gentle and somewhat passive, Larry couldn't equal Carolyn's drive or dynamism. Maybe that's what she wanted then: someone who couldn't hurt her. She found someone she could dominate, one who could not dominate her.

They married in 1967 and the next summer moved to Talmage, California. Larry, brought up as a Quaker pacifist, worked in Mendocino State Hospital to fulfill his alternative service requirements. Carolyn taught high school in Potter Valley, a small town near Redwood Valley, and later, at Ukiah High School.

It was a rural area: conservative, suspicious of strangers, ingrown. When they first moved to Talmage, they visited the United Methodist Church in Ukiah. They found the church stuffy and unfriendly, although they liked the pastor.

Peoples Temple, in nearby Redwood Valley, had an interesting congregation of every color, culture and class, as well as friends they'd known at UC Davis. The church was involved in many of the projects mainline churches always talked about but never actually sponsored.

The church ran a facility for retarded boys. The administrator and his wife had given up a lucrative business in Southern California to work at the home. There was also a home for retired people. The residents operated the facility. There was an active program for juvenile delinquents, and an animal shelter for unwanted pets in the community. With the closing of many mental

institutions, including Mendocino Hospital, Peoples Temple set up a home for former patients who had no families or homes of their own. Carolyn eventually moved into a house on the edge of the property where one home was situated.

Carolyn and Larry learned the church, with its large black following, peacefully integrated the local Masonite plant. The cross-section of people attending Peoples Temple, its social service program, and the friendliness and commitment of its members drew Carolyn and Larry in. Larry told John, long afterwards, that the Temple and its service to people offered a real alternative to Vietnam, and all that the war stood for.

I heard about Peoples Temple from my first husband, Pat Clary, who visited Carolyn and Larry one weekend. He said they'd joined an unusual church, and then described an unusual incident. Jim Jones, the minister, had told Carolyn and Larry to get rid of the marijuana plants they were growing in their backyard. He foresaw an arrest if they didn't. In telling Pat this story, Carolyn expressed amazement that Jim knew about the plants. They were well-hidden, and besides, he'd never been to their house.

Carolyn's letters from Talmage soon filled with "Jim Jones thinks..." and "Jim Jones says..." John finally wrote, "Carolyn, I would rather hear what you think than what Jim Jones thinks."

We weren't concerned about Carolyn's or Larry's involvement until we met Jim. It was a traumatic first encounter. Carolyn had moved from Talmage to a small house on Highway 20. She shared the house with Carol and Richmond Stahl and, we assumed, with Larry. We visited her at the house one weekend in the spring of 1969. There was a rifle beside her bed. She explained that she had learned how to use it because there'd been prowlers from the highway. John and Barbara suggested she get rid of the gun, and after that, didn't see it again.

Carolyn also had a black eye. She said a P.E. student kicked her jumping over a gym vault.

Jim Jones came by later in the afternoon. Annie and I were sent outside while Carolyn talked to John and Barbara. As we walked outside in the tall dry grass, we speculated that Carolyn and Larry were getting a divorce. They'd been married a year and a half.

When we came back, John, Barbara and Carolyn all looked as though they'd been crying. We soon climbed into the car and began the drive home. It was true. They were already divorced. Larry had worked as a dishwasher in Reno for six weeks to establish Nevada residency.

Carolyn said she hadn't told us about the divorce before because she thought John and Barbara would try to keep Larry and her together. She told us that she loved Jim. John had a feeling that was exactly what she was going to say. "A phony preacher. Another Elmer Gantry," he thought.

Carolyn and Jim had discussed telling us about their relationship. She was angry and hurt that we didn't feel thrilled about the most important person in her life. Jim said, "I told you, Carolyn, that they wouldn't understand." In that conversation, he added that, "I have never had a sexual relationship with anyone but my wife." He also claimed that, "Marceline couldn't respond sexually."

Carolyn contended that Jim couldn't divorce Marcie because she was mentally ill. In January 1970, she wrote:

Marcie's parents have said that she has been mentally disturbed since childhood, but she has actually been better according to some of the older church people since Jim and I have been relating. Perhaps it's triggered something in her psyche... Jim was completely faithful to a sick woman for 20 years as Marcie herself will explain, and he is my real companion and love. He is not impressed with the superficiality of many women.

Carolyn had rationalized the affair by assuring herself that Marcie was sick. Yet she didn't really care, so great was her passion for Jim.

I realize that I was always bored by men until I met Jim. Whatever interest I'd had in all men before him faded and boredom ensued within a few days and sex was never fulfilling. I can't express how completely every need for companionship and romance is fulfilled by him. He gives me so much time and he sleeps only a few hours a night. This way he can give his children the time they need to do the things they want and he also gives Marcie the time her psyche needs. He is always there when I need him.

Around the same time, she also told me that she

was the reincarnation of Lenin's mistress. Jim, of course, was Lenin. This kind of spiritualism was new for Carolyn, and foreign to our background. She herself acknowledged its strangeness when she wrote me another letter about Jim, dated February 2, 1970:

Our communication is so deep that we can often know the other's emotions. I naturally have no para-psychological powers and am very down-to-earth, but I know him so well I often can tell how he will feel about things. He knows more about me than I know myself and always accepts me totally. Total acceptance and communication make our love deeper than I thought possible between two humans...

The affair upset us greatly. Barbara would awaken in the middle of the night, sobbing. I formed an immediate dislike for Jim.

John wondered if he had unintentionally set off an Oedipal conflict when Carolyn was young. In 1975, long before the deaths in Jonestown, he described an incident to me in an attempt to understand Carolyn, and her relationship with Jim.

When Barbara was critically ill, Carolyn lived with the grandparents for almost six months. When Barbara and Carolyn came back to Youngstown [Ohio], Carolyn was terribly anxious. She was two, or perhaps three. She cried whenever separated from us. The only way she would go to sleep was with me lying on the bed with her. Gradually she trusted. I rocked her. I put her in the crib and held her hand while I was lying on the bed. Then I'd sit in the room with her until she went to sleep. We left the hall light on. It was weeks, perhaps months, before she could go to bed without me. I was the one close to her in those months, because of Barbara's recovery from her illness...

Of you three girls, Carolyn is the only one who never embraces me. I wonder if that early physical relationship established a bond, and if in her adolescence the unconscious attraction for father made her relate to me the way I related to my mother in those years. The difference is that I grew

beyond that with my mother, or I think I did. Carolyn still does not put her arm around my neck as you and Annie.

It is interesting that Carolyn is deeply attracted to and in love with a minister. I wonder if her resistance to marrying Jim is related to her feelings for me. The oedipal overtones are present. At least ... I wonder about it...

In high school, Carolyn verbalized this. "I expect that I will be a bachelor girl," she told John, revealing her doubts about forming a solid marriage. She was prophetic, at least as far as Larry Layton was concerned. Their marriage was doomed to fail, with or without Peoples Temple, simply because she chose the wrong person.

In 1969, a strange occurrence made us more concerned than ever about Carolyn's involvement in Peoples Temple. A friend of mine from New York wanted to travel around California, so I asked Carolyn if he could stay overnight with her. She consented, and David went off for a week.

When he came back, he said Carolyn, Jim, and some others had threatened him, and offered to give him money if he would leave. He said they'd acted weird and paranoid. I called Carolyn. She said David had threatened them, and tried to extort money. This seemed unlikely. I was so worried, I phoned John and Barbara, and had David tell them what happened.

Nothing David or Carolyn said made sense. But coupled with Carolyn's black eye, her Nevada divorce from Larry, and her relationship with Jim, this new story frightened us. Our misgivings about Peoples Temple grew.

Annie graduated from high school in June of 1972. She planned to move to Washington, D.C. to live with Pat and me. She had come the previous summer and worked as a volunteer in the burn ward of Children's Hospital. Just before the trip out East, however, she made a last visit to Carolyn in Redwood Valley. When Annie came back and announced she was joining Peoples Temple, John thought, "Oh, God. Isn't one child enough?"

In her next letter, Annie told Pat and me of her change in plans.

I hope you won't be angry at me for not

coming to stay and I hope that you won't think that I don't love you...

The reason is because (and you'll probably groan) I am going to maybe live with Carolyn or in one of her church dorms. I visited her and her church a week or so ago and I am convinced that it is a good place to be. (Even better than D.C. I guess). I get along with you guys better than I get along with Carolyn but I think her church really has something to offer. It seems like most of the people who go there, stay. Well, now I know why. Her church or Jim Jones has and knows more secrets about the world than any other group or person. Also their church is socialist in the real sense (the kind of society Jesus was talking about). I thought I may be dumping the real regular world by joining with them, but I think there is little alone that I can do.

When Annie joined Peoples Temple, she quoted some scripture Jim had undoubtedly taught her: "If you love me less than your family, you are not worthy of me." Jesus told his followers they must forsake their families to follow him. This was the choice Annie saw. She wanted us to join Peoples Temple so we would all be together. If we had, the family tie would not have been broken. Instead, she chose the Temple, a new family.

Barbara wondered if Carolyn and Annie had been unhappy at home. My own feeling was no, exactly the opposite. They had good feelings about our family. Upon leaving it, they searched for something like it, a group of individuals who cared about each other and the world.

Barbara, however, felt the choice Carolyn and Ann made was a rejection of us. Bewildered, she wrote:

How this could happen to two gals brought up in a liberal tradition in a home where social service was a way of life is beyond me -- almost! It's the primitive beliefs of Jim Jones that aggravate and of course he himself is still fighting the battle of his past fundamentalism. The way our two dears swallow that reincarnation blap is amazing. Of course there's no proof one way or the other but why can't they sift out, weigh and accept or reject some of the concepts and carry on without this kind of Jeho-

vah's Witness type zeal to save us and the world for reincarnation. And of course their way is the true and right way...

Annie sensed some of the anguish John and Barbara felt over her decision. "I think another reason Mom and Dad are bugged is because they think I'll be like Carolyn and cut all ties with my family and friends," she wrote me.

I have tried to convince them that I won't do [that]. Carolyn kind of went overboard and I don't think I'm the kind that would.

John and Barbara, with more at stake, were more diplomatic than my first husband and I. We didn't like it, and we told her so. We were selfish in part: we wanted her to live with us. We'd also seen Carolyn's withdrawal from the family. Our letter in reply must have been critical, because Annie wrote back:

You obviously think that the Peoples Temple is just another cult or religious fanatic place or something like that. Well, I'm kind of offended that you would think I would stoop so low as to join some weirdo group. I think I am a pretty sensible person and I can tell what's real and what's not. People have a hard time fooling me. The reason that the Temple is great is not just because Jim Jones can make people cough up cancers but because there is the largest group of people I have ever seen who are concerned about the world and are fighting for truth and justice for the world. And all the people have come from such different backgrounds, every color, every age, every income group, and they have turned into constructive people from being dopers and thieves and being greedy, wanting lots of money and having "things". So anyway it's the only place I have seen real true Christianity being practiced. Well, I can't explain all of why I want to go there; I guess I kind of want to be a follower because I sure can't try to change the world all by myself.

If Carolyn saw the world's salvation in political action, Annie saw it in good works. Like Carolyn, though, her religious upbringing had prepared her for a life of commitment.

She entered Peoples Temple in the same way a woman might enter a religious order: with a vow of poverty. She sold her records, which Barbara bought from her. And she was going to sell her guitar, but Peoples Temple told her to keep it. Her readiness to renounce possessions was something she had learned at church. "Go sell all you have and give it to the poor" (Matthew 19:21).

Annie's relationship with Jim, unlike Carolyn's, was never romantic. She idolized him as a messiah, but her commitment was to Peoples Temple as a religious group. Its miracles impressed her, as well as its projects.

I was also convinced about Jim Jones' power and his "words of wisdom" when I saw him pull incurable cancers out of peoples' throats. I've never heard of any faith healer who could do that (let alone any doctor).

Yet knowing how it must have sounded to us, she added, "You probably think that I am brainwashed and stuff, but I think I am a sensible person and no one can tell me what to do. I decide for myself."

Annie had been drifting before she joined Peoples Temple. Just graduated from high school, she was trying to make some decisions about what she would do with her life. For an eighteen-year-old, she'd already done a lot. In addition to working in the burn ward at Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C., she'd served as the treasurer for the Yolo County Hunger Hike for several years. She kept the money hikers collected in the butter compartment of our refrigerator. She organized antiwar activities at the high school and persuaded the principal to show the students a film about the air war.

In the meantime, she composed songs on the piano and guitar. She made ceramic sculpture. With a felt-tipped pen she drew intricate designs: one continuous line from beginning to end. She painted. Three years after Jonestown, someone stole a painting she'd done of the blues singer Leadbelly and other art from John's church in Sacramento. Barbara was so incensed by the theft, she called the newspapers, encouraging them to do a story in hopes that Leadbelly, at least, would return. He didn't.

The Temple channeled Annie's concern for people and the world into nursing, the career she probably would have chosen on her own. With some briefings by church members on how to take blood pressure and read a thermometer, she got a job as a nurse's aide in Ukiah Convalescent Hospital shortly after she joined the church.

The work is really hard and tiring but I like it OK because I like the old folks. It's a messy job of cleaning up the people and crap. The funny part of it is going around and seeing who's had a B.M. Then you have to ask if it is large, medium, or small. You have to watch with half the people because half of them don't know what they're doing anyway because when Mendocino State Hospital closed down, most of the convalescent hospitals got their share of patients coming into their hospital. What they do in ours is hide them all in the back so when people come in, they won't see them. The patients in front get a whole lot more visitors than in the back. The people in the convalescent hospital are really pathetic, some of them, but there sure are a lot of humorous moments too.

She moved to a Peoples Temple dorm in January 1973 and began to attend Santa Rosa Junior College in hopes of getting admitted into the nursing program. With some recommendations from influential friends, and assisted by Peoples Temple representatives in the area, she got



Graduation from nursing school, Annie Moore, 1975.

in. Just before school started, she wrote:

I'm getting all excited about nursing school. I'm the youngest one or one of the youngest ones in the program now. When I start in September, they will put us all in the hospital right off. I'll know how to give shots by December and everything. They told me that they first practice on oranges. I'd rather do that than practice on each other at first. I guess I'll have to get used to blood and gore again from when I was working at Children's with the burn patients. One lady must have had cancer on her legs here at the hospital and they are all raw as if the cancer was just cut off. They are looking a lot better now.

Although Annie got used to the "blood and gore", she never adjusted to the system that discarded the old and the weak. She came to see a person's perception of world suffering as a barometer of kindness. The convalescent hospital where she worked convinced her of this.

Boy, all I can say is that our society is really screwed. This hospital is such a perfect example of how bad it is. Nobody cares about old people. They are just a lot of excess material hanging around, cluttering up the world to Americans. It makes me sick how they are treated... Some of these nurse's aides treat them as if they are some object or piece of machinery, the way they throw them around, rolling them one way and then the other way. It sickens me to even think that this is one of the better convalescent hospitals around. Just imagine the hundreds of other places that are worse than this... It is so terrible to think of all those who have been set off from our society because us more fortunate ones don't have the care, time or patience to do something constructive with them. I guess it must be some kind of test to have all of these ones around to see how people will respond: who will be compassionate and who will want to do their own thing. It is so painful to think of all this suffering that exists right now that most of us don't want

to hear anything about it. We would rather live as ostriches with our heads in the sand than face truth, the whole world stirring and churning full of the many kinds of suffering.

Annie's letters show her growth as a nurse, and reveal a developing awareness of the problems of racism and insensitivity. Her own experiences in the real world had as much to do with these changes as anything Peoples Temple taught her. Doctors and nurses disillusioned her.

I have really learned a lot about medical stuff along with learning about people this one semester. One thing is that the nurses in a regular acute hospital aren't much more sensitive to the patient's feelings or anything than the nurse's aides at the convalescent hospital that I worked at. They made fun of this man that was incontinent of his bowels and already had a urinary catheter and felt demasculinated because he had a prostatectomy/vasectomy both. This one dumb ass of a nurse told me what a dumb ass I was for buying a Datsun or having one and that I should buy from Americans and all this stuff. She is always convinced that anyone who shits in their bed does it on purpose just to get attention. I hope that when she gets old that she can't control her bowels and then maybe she won't think that.

This one guy in the church whom I am friends with (not Chris) has called me at work -- and he has a low, deep voice and everyone who answers says they want to go out with him and they tease me -- thinking he's my boyfriend. They always say Who is that sexy young man and BS like that. I'd like for him to come in sometime because he is black. They would pee in their pants if they ever saw who they said all this stuff about. They are really racist.

Her reactions were even more vehement two years later in 1976.

Boy I can tell you about this asshole

doctor and what he did (or wouldn't do really) last night. He was on city call for the night, which means that if there are any emergencies, he has to come in and get \$50 for the night. Anyhow this guy came in with his hand cut up and this doctor refused to come in. He said send him to Hillside (that is this other hospital). The ER nurse had already sent one patient to this other hospital, then she got mad and said "No!" to the doctor which floored him and he ended up coming in. That is sure nervy to do that. I hope that when he needs help someday that some one will refuse to take care of him. Now I just hope that that nurse doesn't get fired because that doctor is an S.O.B. and would try to get her fired for doing that to him.

Twelve months later, Annie was working in the burn ward of San Francisco General Hospital. She had overcome some squeamishness nursing the burned kids in Children's Hospital when she was seventeen. Still, helping burn patients is a difficult job, physically and emotionally. Annie viewed it as an art.

Working with burn patients takes a little getting used to, but after the initial shock, it is very interesting. The patients need a lot of extra care because their conditions are so painful plus they are often permanently scarring and disabling if in the fingers or really any important joints. From the beginning of the healing process until the end the work to be done takes skilled craftsmanship. Nurses who aren't artistically inclined don't make good burn care nurses because any clumsiness of any kind can cause the patient a great deal of pain plus may permanently ruin the patient if it is a fresh new graft. I don't know if it is the nurses at my hospital (which is a very hang-loose hospital) or just the nurses in this field but many of them are very mean and sadistic -- to the point of true sickness. The ones I will work with at night are nice but some of the others are something else. I feel like I'm coming home from a Nazi torturing camp half the time. I think one of

the main reasons the nurses are so terrible is because SF General is a county hospital -- the patients are almost all Medi-Cal and poor -- black, Mexican, poor white. The nurses couldn't get away with it at a private hospital because private hospital patients are used to royal treatment. And the more sensitive nurses quit because the morale which is so low -- is too much for them and they don't want to stick it out with some of these dumb-head clutzes. The situation can really be depressing and it will take a lot before it can ever change.

I called my parents one morning in August of 1974 to tell them I was separated from my first husband, Pat. My announcement was lost in the flurry of another crisis. Carolyn was pregnant. She asked if she could stay with John and Barbara. We knew that Jim was the father.

"Barbara responded by pressing the point of marriage with Jim," John wrote.

Barbara frequently raised this issue. Jim responded that he had tried to persuade Carolyn to do this. Carolyn almost always, as best I recall, met the question with silence. I think now those were words for our benefit. Jim and Marcie's relationship was always eulogized whenever I was in their meetings. I think that Carolyn accepted that reality.

In our conversation after Carolyn's request, I expressed the feeling that Carolyn was not asking us about marriage. She was asking us about living with us during her pregnancy. Barbara called back soon saying that we would be glad to have her.

Early during her stay with us, Jim told me that Carolyn had gone to an abortion clinic. According to Jim, he sensed that she might be trying to get an abortion. He tracked her down in a clinic and persuaded her to cancel the abortion. According to him, she was waiting to have the abortion done right then. I never discussed this with Carolyn, and have only Jim's word.

Carolyn planned to keep the birth of the baby a secret. She got a leave of absence from her teaching job

in Ukiah. When she returned to Redwood Valley, she would announce that she had adopted a baby. To explain her absence from the church, Temple leaders said she was jailed in Mexico as a political prisoner. Meanwhile, Carolyn asked us not to discuss it with anyone.

The silence about Carolyn's pregnancy was a terrible burden. There was none of the joyful anticipation about having a grandchild. It had to be a secret from the relatives and from friends. Barbara resented the secrecy.

Annie says, "Aren't you excited about being a grandmother?" And I said, "No. There was no one I could talk about it with, so it didn't seem like much of a reality." I've told a couple of people that I'll be taking care of a baby in February that belongs to one of the Youth Alternative girls and that my daughter plans to adopt it. Oh I am so clever, so quick with the answers!

It was a bitter time. Barbara swallowed her hopes and fears in order to keep peace with Carolyn. It was a difficult time as well. In December 1974, John went into his study and found a marriage license on his desk -- with a note asking him to sign it. The marriage would legitimize the unborn baby. John felt used.

I was angry with Carolyn that she had not talked to me about marriage... She and Mike Prokes had taken out the license. Prokes was at the time in Guyana. I did not sign the license then, because I wanted to discuss the matter with Carolyn. I thought of working out a proxy wedding ceremony. Barbara said Carolyn was terribly upset, and Barbara was worried. We both signed the license. I chose not to involve Annie or anyone else as a second witness.

With Carolyn at home, Barbara and John got to know Jim Jones. This was not the charismatic leader, businessman or guiding father of the Temple who came to their large house on Ashby Avenue in Berkeley. Instead, they saw a quiet, concerned individual with a pessimistic view of the world, one who could also tell jokes and goof-off. His visits to our house were his vacations.

Barbara wrote in early 1975:

We've been settin' around the Saturday lunch table, telling each other slightly obscene jokes, singing off-color songs -- learned by Dad in childhood (he's out and I'm repeating them like a naughty child) -- and eating honeycomb bars which we bought yesterday.

"We" refers to Carolyn, Jim, Annie, Patricia [Cartmell] and Mama.

Last night we really thought "Suzy" was on the way. Carolyn had what she thought was a slight breaking of water. We were all on guard. Annie and Patricia had gone to one of those 4-in-1 movie houses but checked in periodically to see how Little Mother was progressing (not one contraction but a visit this A.M. to the hospital to see if any dilation had occurred). No!

Annie and Patricia are on semester break for 2 weeks so the house has been full. Carolyn has been doing quite a bit of the cooking. Dad and I are zipping about so that I can have one last fling before the baby arrives...

Next letter, "Suzy" had arrived.

Little James Jon (Jimmy-Jon) is 7 lbs. 4 oz. and 19 inches long and very cute. Pug nose, brown hair growing like yours and others in our family. Healthy and happy and so far -- good.

Annie was with Carolyn up to delivery time, then Jim went to the delivery room with her. (Only one observer at a time.) The nurses were helpful to Annie and she learned considerable...

Carolyn will return to teaching March 1st. Then she'll be doing home-teaching. Back to the classroom next fall. (And she probably won't fool a soul -- but will not be fired as she has tenure and has not flaunted her situation before everyone as some do).

Our house was a refuge for Jim, where he could be comfortable. No one pressured him to perform. He would go to Carolyn's room, where he slept, or merely retired from the world for hours at a time. He seemed to appre-



John and Kimo, 1977.

Great-Grandmother Marian,
Grandma Barbara, and Kimo, 1977.

ciate John and Barbara as people, not just as assets he could use to bolster his reputation. In 1975, "Jim and Carolyn gave Dad a beautiful ring with a real gold nugget inset," Barbara wrote. "It's an investment ring. He [John] doesn't wear it as he doesn't want to get mugged."

John and Barbara in turn treated Jim as a person rather than a savior. They tried to involve him in some of their activities.

Dad's class from the seminary came on Thursday eve and heard from Jim ... all about agnostic humanitarians, their good works, and how his life was threatened when he was Human Relations Commissioner in Indianapolis, etc. The class was fascinated and asked good questions and the food was rather good too as I anticipate hunger along with intellectual stimulation... Carolyn sat in on it and participated in the discussion. The whole thing kind of blew the minds of some of the students and they were still talking about it the next morning in class. That sort of thing helps counteract one or two dull guest lecturers who manage to overwhelm dad with their ineptness...

Monday all of Jim's four sons spent the day as they were here to celebrate his birth-

day with dinner out and a show. Well it was okay as Carolyn took care of their food and they slept part of the day. The changing of the sheets in this commune is much like the changing of the guard...

If Jim had any friends at all, they were probably John and Barbara. John wrote in June of 1976, when he and Barbara were moving to Reno, Nevada, that:

Jim has expressed more than anyone else deep feelings about our moving. The house and Barbara and me have all meant something to him, I think more than to Carolyn and Annie. Our selling the house and moving is for him, as he now feels it, the end of an era. Coming together in our home will not be as frequent, although we expect to be in the Bay Area with some frequency and will be seeing them.

Our acceptance of Jim, however, was never without doubts or reservations. Jim was the only person Annie's dog Willie ever growled at. Barbara felt the dog instinctively knew something about Jim's personality. As early as June 1975, she wrote:

I am becoming very stubborn. I even take a dim view of Peoples Temple at times, especially of Jim Jones who gives me a big pain the better I know him. He is doing a great deal for a group of people's physical well-being. At the same time, I'm not sure of their psychic health and his paranoia which is not without substance. Ah well...

"Jim says he would finance us if our cash ran out. But I wouldn't want him to," she said in another letter.

He's got arthritis at present and clots and stuff and doesn't feel well. Says it's probably partly psychosomatic. He's mad at a few people. Needs to scream and kick and carry on. He really needs to lay it all out to Dad as there are some bad vibes about him among some people and he needs to be reminded that when you throw out God and replace that Life Force with yourself, you're no better than Sun [Myung] Moon ... in the eyes

of an observer who is not aware of the good works and projects. I guess his harangues (sermons) are pretty bad ... from what I've heard. Psychologically, people need an Other than themselves. They seem to crave an Unknown. It's part of the human make-up. Even explains why the Russians have a highly developed concept of ESP, a sort of mysterious unknown.

Every so often I ask myself how two daughters who were surrounded by love and a wholesome child development could fall for all that verbal baloney. The social outreach I can understand. A lot of the other stuff is junk ... especially the worship of Jim Jones.

Jim's philosophy and attitude disturbed us. The idolization of him always troubled us. We all remarked upon it. As a result, Carolyn and Annie cooled it in our presence. Before that, however, their praise for him was unadulterated, as in Annie's letter.

I am the gladdest I have ever been, to be in this church working for social justice and brotherhood. There's no place else that I would rather be because I know I am doing what my conscience says is right to do. It's not important that Jim Jones can heal people of cancer and blindness. What counts is that he gives his whole self for others. He averages 2 hours of sleep a week because he is up all night doing counseling and church work. I never saw any soul care and have so much love for all aspects of life as I have in Jim Jones. He would not kill the slightest bug or pull a weed unless it was harming man as a whole. I've never seen such dedication in any person before. This is how I know the church is good. No one else could bring black and white as close together as in the church.

Carolyn and Ann wanted me to join Peoples Temple. Their letters described a group of people committed to doing wonderful things. The life of the church filled their conversation. But still I hesitated. Something spooked me. Perhaps it was the trip on which we learned of Carolyn's divorce: her black eye, the gun beside



Annie, Becky, and Carolyn Moore, 1956.

her bed, a strange minister in sunglasses, and everyone weeping. Other incidents made me suspicious as well: David's encounter with the church; and a second, more personal encounter with Peoples Temple in Redwood Valley.

When I visited Carolyn in the summer of 1975, I got the grand tour of all the projects in the valley. I had an audience with Jim and some of the church leaders in Jim's living room. I felt vulnerable: I hadn't been working to change the world the previous year. Separated from Pat, and truly on my own for the first time in my life, I felt pretty messed up.

Jim and Carolyn, and possibly Annie -- I don't remember for sure -- preyed on this. During my visit, they told me two lies. One was that Pat had had an affair with someone I knew while we were married. The second was that Pat called up Annie and asked her if she'd live with him and support him while he was in medical school. At the time, I didn't know for sure that these were lies. But they didn't sound like Pat to me. They created a big fuss in the family, especially his phone call. Barbara remarked:

I was furious over his call to Annie. I still can hardly believe it and wonder at his motivation. I didn't know whether he still hoped for a tie with the family, a meal ticket, or a few laughs from Anna-banana. I did not intend ever to tell you this.

I could hardly believe it myself. My own fears made me suspicious. At any rate, these blows to my ego did not make me run into the arms of Peoples Temple.

Six months after the suicides, I called Pat to ask him about his alleged infidelity and call to Ann. He denied both, and I believe him.

The Temple, or more specifically, Carolyn, Jim and even Annie, lied to us about a lot of people. They told us various church leaders were homosexual, or irrational, or had mistresses, or were wife-beaters. We didn't know any better at the time, so we believed them.

I was fortunate. I lived 3000 miles away from Peoples Temple, away from its good works. Struggling to train myself to cope with life as a single individual, I didn't think I was capable of helping others. I didn't want to join an organization when I'd just escaped a destructive relationship. By the time I considered myself strong enough to stand alone, Carolyn, Annie and Jim-Jon were in Guyana. Then when John said he'd made me executor of his will, I felt I was the only one left

to take care of my parents when they needed it. I had to be responsible for them. I couldn't have left, even if I'd wanted to.

But there was more to my refusal to join Peoples Temple than mere chance. For one thing, the politics of the church confused me. They talked a leftist line, but I never saw Annie or Carolyn getting involved in what I believed were working class issues. After Annie complained about working conditions as a nurse, I wrote telling her about the hospital workers' union. I sent her Joshua Horn's book, Away with All Pests, about medical care in China after the revolution, and, I think, Lenin's What Is To Be Done? But we never discussed these, and although the church occasionally supported strikes, it didn't seem to focus on grassroots organizing.

I was barely aware of another thing that bothered me: the fact that the leadership group, of which my sisters were a part, was mostly white. I knew blacks formed the majority of the Peoples Temple congregation, but most of the people I met -- handling the publicity, directing the homes and special projects, running the graphics studio -- were white. It seemed strange in an organization so intensely aware of racism.

Finally, I didn't join Peoples Temple because I'm not a joiner. With the same religious and family background as Carolyn and Ann, I found myself drawn in two conflicting directions: Eastern religion and Marxism-Leninism. The first was intensely individualistic and spiritual, the other, cooperative and materialistic. Yet because of something within me, neither dominated my life.

I can't say that I made the better bargain. I don't believe that total commitment to an ideal, to a group of people, to a cause, is wrong. In his autobiography, Booker T. Washington described the rewards of a life of commitment.

In order to be successful in any kind of undertaking, I think the main thing is for one to grow to the point where he completely forgets himself; that is, to lose himself in a great cause. In proportion as one loses himself in this way, in the same degree does he get the highest happiness out of his work.

I envied Carolyn and Annie. I envied the faith and hope that took them to their deaths. They believed in something absolutely real.

When the time came to make an ultimate commitment, Carolyn and Annie chose Peoples Temple, and I didn't. Who can say which of us made the right choice?

CHAPTER FIVE

FOR EVERY GOOD THING,
SOMETHING BAD

It wasn't easy, but the most
fulfilling years of my life...

-- letter from San Fran-
cisco Temple member
after November 18, 1978

Today my humiliation was more
severe. I felt the pain of
having to get down on my knees
to beg forgiveness of the master...

-- letter to Jim Jones from
Temple member who spent
seven days as a "slave"

"For every good thing you find about Peoples Temple, you'll find something bad," a lawyer for the Temple told us. Senior exercise programs and faith healings spiked with chicken guts. Rules against smoking, drinking and drugs, and beatings for breaking the rules. Thousands of dollars to churches and organizations and individual worthy causes, and overcrowded accommodations for members.

We found the bad things about Peoples Temple. But they weren't the discipline or sacrifice. They weren't the alleged sexual practices or catharsis. They weren't the 25 and 50 percent tithes. They weren't even the faked healings.

The bad things: The exploitation of poor folk with prayer cloths and meditation sheets and photos of Jim, tokens to help people...

Dear Pastor Jones,
The three things I am grateful for are:
I am recived more money now and biness is
picking up a great deal ever singh I recive the
Bless Penny [sic].
My prayer request and personal message is:
I want to get my place fix up and get move
in a good home.

The constant appeals for money, after people had given everything...

Here is my faith offering (Don't forget to
have as many sevens in this amount as possible.)
\$7.77_____ \$17.77_____ \$777.77_____

The all-night meetings...

We drove to the Temple at ten minutes to
8:00, arriving at the same time as some of the
Valley buses were unloading...

A tape of one of Jim's sermons was played.

Shortly after it was started, Jim entered on the podium; it was nearly 10:00...

On dismissing the meeting at 4:00 o'clock, Jim emphasized all should be sure to meditate at 6:00 and watch the speed limit because he had had to use his energy to keep himself alive...

I got home at 4:45. I decided to sleep until 6:30, put up a lunch, but not eat breakfast...

And the confessions. The stories people had to invent to prove they were committed, to prove they were part of the group...

I am a violent revolutionary -- (signed)
Elmer J. Mertle

I always cheat on my income tax -- (signed)
Elmer J. Mertle

To say that Peoples Temple was only evil, however, or all bad, makes nonsense of our own perceptions. The tragedy of November 18 was that Peoples Temple had done so much good.

It began as a poor and working class church in 1953 in Indianapolis, and didn't become the Peoples Temple Full Gospel Church until ten years later. At that time, it became affiliated with the Disciples of Christ, and Jim was ordained in 1964. When the church moved to California in 1965, some forty members followed. Some of the original members from Indianapolis died in Jonestown: Joyce Touchette and her son, Albert; Carol and Richmond Stahl; Walter and Patty Cartmell, and their daughter, Patricia; Jim Jones' wife Marceline and his son, Lew. Some are still living: Archie Ijames, his wife and daughter; Charlie Touchette and his son, Mike; and Charles Beikman, who pleaded guilty to attempted murder and who is serving time in a Guyana prison.

The church prospered in Redwood Valley, a small town in the Northern California wine country. It grew from its core of transplanted Indianapolis families to 86 people in 1966, according to Disciples of Christ membership figures. Its membership rose steadily: 106 members in 1967; 138 in 1968; 300 in 1969; and 772 members listed for 1970-71, when Jim Jones began to preach in San Francisco. That was the year the Temple gave 35.4 percent of its reported income to the Disciples of Christ, more than double the denomination's national

average. By 1973, Peoples Temple was sending \$13,775 annually to the Disciples. And by 1978, Peoples Temple, Redwood Valley, was the largest church contributor.

In Redwood Valley, the church acquired a small shopping center, and used the upstairs for church offices, a print shop, and a day care center. Money poured in from the state of California to finance church-sponsored nursing and childrens' homes. Profits from a laundromat and other small businesses came in. Members donated property and salaries. Jim invested the money in real estate, acquiring large parcels of fertile agricultural land. This multiplied the church's wealth. "Jim is a sharp businessman," Barbara wrote in 1975, adding that "it seems as though this kind of socialist venture makes sense, putting the dollars to work for the good of many, rather than making a profit for oneself."

"When people joined the Temple," an ex-member told The San Francisco Chronicle, "at first they were asked to give ten percent of their earnings to the church coffers. As time went by, this tithe was increased to 25, 50, and finally 100 percent of their earnings." At one time, Carolyn told John she was giving half of her salary to the church. But the millions of dollars located after the deaths did not come primarily from membership tithes.

Statistics compiled after November 18, 1978, show that most members actually had little to contribute. Over one-third of the residents of Jonestown were children under age 19. Of these, 248 had a prior welfare history. All but 25 of those had received cash and non-cash aid, like Aid to Families with Dependent Children, food stamps and Medicaid. This meant the majority of children came from poor families. Foster care funding didn't make the church rich either, since only 17 children living in Jonestown had ever been in such care. Nor could guardianship dollars: some 20 children had been under guardianships.

Similarly, fewer than 200 members of Peoples Temple got Social Security checks in Jonestown, and most were seniors. These figures show that more than half the residents of Jonestown were either over 65 or under 19, dependents either of the church or of church members.

The seniors gave their monthly checks, whether Social Security or some other kind of pension, to the Temple. Like other retired persons, they bought into a retirement care package. They signed over their property and assets to Peoples Temple. In return, the church provided their food, clothing, shelter, health care and recreation.

In most respects, the Peoples Temple retirement plan did not differ from other secular or religious retirement programs. It offered no less, and in many ways, provided much more. Seniors participated in an active community of all ages, surrounded by people who truly cared for them. Because Peoples Temple included many families, oftentimes a senior's family was close by.

Signing over one's assets and income is not unusual to retirement care programs. The membership contract for the Apostolic Corporation -- the Temple's communal program aimed primarily at senior citizens -- included this item:

I further understand that should I leave the corporation, I will not be allowed the return of my property or funds contributed by me.

Several of our own relatives are, or have been, in church-sponsored retirement communities that make this stipulation. When the Pacific Homes program run by the United Methodist Church in Southern California went bankrupt, pensioners lost everything, because they had signed over everything.

Seniors and others who bought the Temple's Apostolic Corporation plan joined a strict but loving group. Individual responsibilities included:

Each member shall be truthful, honest, and display a positive attitude; share, particularly when someone else is in need, and be cooperative and work with others...

Each member shall obtain regular medical checks, take doctor-prescribed medication and treatment and be mindful of her/his health...

Some of the stipulations seem almost puritanical:

Smoking, using drugs or alcohol are prohibited...

Each member shall have the obligation to care for and supervise our children, to see that a child behaves in decent and moral ways...

Few would argue with the church's prohibitions against "criminal conduct," "fighting, violence, or threats of violence," or possession of:

weapons, including guns, knives, nunchucks, brass knuckles, billy clubs, or other weapons; illegal drugs...

Peoples Temple dealt with many who had criminal backgrounds. The strict rules, the guidelines for employment, school work, the prohibitions, all provided a solid structure for those who'd never known any structure, or whose only structure had been that of jail and prison.

All members abided by the rules. Short hair, good grades, gainful employment. No smoking, no drinking. After I toured the Temple facilities in Redwood Valley, which included vast vineyards, Annie told me they made only grape juice. "We have so many ex-alcoholics in church, we can't have any alcohol at all. Besides," she added, "the alcohol made from grains takes food away from hungry people." The Guyana police found no alcohol, tobacco or marijuana in Jonestown, according to the Guyana Chronicle.

We never saw a Temple member who looked messy or unkempt. It was especially important in a place like Redwood Valley: small, enclosed and rural. The church had to look respectable.

Even so, the townspeople of Redwood Valley and nearby Ukiah had mixed feelings about the church. They could see that Temple followers were hard-working, law-abiding citizens. Members worked in volunteer organizations, such as the Heart Association, and did political precinct work. Jim was selected foreman of the Mendocino County Grand Jury in 1966. But Redwood Valley was concerned about all that land Jim was buying. And all those black people coming into the valley.

Even in a place as idyllic as Redwood Valley, racism plagued the Temple as it had in Indianapolis. Carolyn explained that the Temple instituted security measures when some local townspeople drove through the parking lot and shot up the place. We noticed the black-shirted men and women who stopped cars at the gate to make sure they belonged to members. Attacks on Temple members occurred throughout the Ukiah area. "To show you how racist Yukiah [sic] is," Annie wrote in January 1976,

these honkey asses attacked our church kids with bats at school last week and sprayed mustard and ketchup over this other teacher's (who is in the church) car. The principal lied and said these racists didn't do it, but ended up getting caught in his lie when this other non-Temple member said they were attacked.

The violence against the Temple escalated. In 1975, a group of whites attacked two black Temple members with knives. The case went to trial in Santa Rosa, and ended with the conviction of the whites.

The attacks and harassment in Redwood Valley which included poisoning pets, according to Carolyn, prompted the migration from Mendocino County to San Francisco around the same time. Jones had been preaching in San Francisco since 1970. In 1971, the church bought an old synagogue at the corner of Steiner and Geary in a predominantly black neighborhood. Before the big move, Redwood Valley residents rode on the Temple's fleet of a dozen buses each weekend to the San Francisco services. When the Temple opened a branch in Los Angeles in 1973 -- in an old Christian Science building -- the buses took members on the 1200-mile roundtrip every other weekend.

The empire-building extended beyond California. In 1974, a small group of Temple members traveled to Guyana to begin clearing jungle for an agricultural mission. On October 8, 1973, the church's Board of Directors had adopted Resolution No. 73-5, to establish "a branch church and an agricultural and rural development mission in the Cooperative Republic of Guyana."

San Francisco was not immune to racism or violence. A fire in the San Francisco building in August 1973 "will cost a mint of money and was one of three which burned integrated churches only," Barbara wrote. The city fire department noted the fire caused "considerable" damage to the building and its contents: \$100,000 worth. The police department found traces of a molotov cocktail and reported the arson to the FBI, the Secret Service, and the Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Temple members rebuilt the gutted building by themselves. They believed Nazis were responsible.

Three years later, Temple members met with the Jewish Community Relations Council about the rise of Nazi propaganda in San Francisco. The American Nazi Party had vandalized the church, slashed tires of church followers' cars, sent hate mail and bomb threats, and intimidated members. In the January 1977 issue of Peoples Forum, the church's monthly newspaper, the Temple responded by saying: "We are fed up. Come by our church, anytime, and try to start something. We are quite able to defend ourselves. We will resist down to the last woman and child." The trouble with the Nazis stopped after that article.

White racism was not the only problem the Temple faced in San Francisco. Peoples Temple went head-on against the Nation of Islam in a clash over turf. At one point, 300 Temple followers, dressed in security uni-

UNSURPASSED IN DENOMINATION:

"The ministry of this man, Pastor Jones, and his congregation is surpassed by none in our denomination.

"Their witness in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless and ministering to the sick and imprisoned is sorely needed in this troubled age."

. . . Dennis W. Short, Associate Pastor,
Urban Life Program, Christian Church,
Disciples of Christ Regional Office
(Southern California)



Hundreds gather in Redwood Valley for the traditional July 4th celebration.

GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE ENTIRE CHRISTIAN
CHURCH (1.4 MILLION MEMBER DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
IN A REPORT TO THE NATIONWIDE DENOMINATION:

"From my numerous contacts with members and staff of the church, I can say that they are the most committed and dedicated group of people I have known in any church anywhere."

. . . Wade Rubick, Attorney

forms, marched to the Nation of Islam headquarters in a show of force. But the two religious groups soon achieved detente, both in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The first sign of rapprochement was in January 1976, when Jim urged people to write letters in support of a jailed Muslim leader. In May of that year, 18,000 people attended a joint worship service of Peoples Temple and the Nation of Islam in Los Angeles. This was the first interfaith meeting the Muslims ever held in this country, according to The Los Angeles Times. In October, Jim addressed the Spiritual Life Jubilee at Muhammed Mosque No. 30 in Kansas City, with several hundred Temple members and Muslims in attendance.

Peoples Temple shared with the Muslims a militant concern for the rights of black people. After all, it was basically a black church. Members demonstrated against the California State Supreme Court's decision on the Bakke case. They rallied in support of the Wilmington 10, providing the only black presence at the gathering. They stood in silent vigil at San Quentin against the death penalty on the anniversary of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti.

"Next week the whole city of San Francisco is having Martin Luther King Day here at Peoples Temple," Annie wrote in early 1977.

We probably have the best auditorium for it... The NAACP will be here along with some other groups plus Mayor [George] Moscone, [Assemblyman] Willie Brown and some other old time visitors and friends.

Other prominent blacks frequently appeared at the Temple. Leaders from African nations spoke on African Liberation Day. Newspaper publisher Dr. Carlton Goodlett; civil rights activist Unita Blackwell Wright; Dr. Nathan Hare, publisher of The Black Scholar, and his wife Julia; and South African black exile Tsietshi Mshinini, all participated in the church's educational lecture series.

The series began in 1975, along with a film series. Both continued after Jim left for Guyana in 1977. The first speaker was A. E. Cohn, a Jewish investigator who broke up Nazi spy rings during World War II. "We have still been having many interesting speakers here at church," Annie wrote early in 1977:

We heard the sister of Dr. Allende and also one of the ministers of finance in Chile. They were both very good and told us of all

the prison doings. They both were imprisoned when the fascist leadership took over. They said that anyone who does anything contrary or says anything about the present government disappears -- the officials deny that the people even existed and everyone knows that they have been kidnapped and murdered.

The congregation saw films like Joe Hill and The Pawnbroker. They viewed a slide show of the Soweto, South Africa, demonstration. Two slide presentations described Gulf Oil's domination of the Dominican Republic economy, and the corporation's support of South Africa.

In addition to supporting black, Chilean refugee, and anti-apartheid movements, the Temple effectively blocked the extradition of American Indian Movement leader Dennis Banks. The pressure the church put on California governor Jerry Brown persuaded him to refuse to return Banks to South Dakota. The church also put up \$20,000 bail to free Banks' wife, Kamook, from an Oregon jail. In March 1976, Dennis had a reunion with Kamook at Peoples Temple and met his four-month-old daughter for the first time. She had been born in prison.

Another time the church delivered food and clothing to fifty Indians occupying Alcatraz Island in 1976.

Peoples Temple gave thousands of dollars to a variety of political and humanitarian causes. It made donations to the Julian Bond Poverty Law Center; the American Cancer Society; KQED-TV; and Bread for the World. It contributed to Jo Ann Little's defense when she went on trial for killing a prison guard. In November 1975, it gave \$1500 to cover the entire deficit of the Telegraph Avenue Neighborhood Center, a community center, and pledged continuing monthly payments. In January 1976, the Temple gave \$6000 to a San Francisco senior citizens group to continue its escort service. The same month it gave \$500 to the family of a slain highway patrolman from Fresno. In May, it bailed out a San Francisco animal shelter called Pets Unlimited. Los Angeles Times reporter William Farr, jailed for refusing to reveal a news source, received a \$4000 donation for his defense fund.

Salvation seemed tied directly to political action. Working in local politics, therefore, merely channeled people's concern for justice. The church wasn't a monolith. It was individuals who put in long hours, made phone calls, walked precincts, marched in

rallies, and gave the church what power it had.

It was with their strength that Jim Jones built his base of power and goodwill within the city of San Francisco. He could rely on several hundred people to be where he wanted them to be, whether it was at a demonstration, a political rally, or the voting booth. In a runoff election for San Francisco mayor in 1975, George Moscone defeated John Barbagelata by some 4000 votes. Most San Franciscans believe it was Peoples Temple legwork in getting voters to the polls that put Moscone over the top.

If political action were one route to salvation, humanitarian work was another. The Temple's service programs helped not only church members, but the poor ghetto community in which it was located.

A large cafeteria served three meals a day. Anyone could take advantage of the day care program. Senior citizens received regular blood pressure tests. A thousand people were inoculated for swine flu. Temple medical staff frequently tested for sickle cell anemia in the community.

The back page of the May 1976 issue of Peoples Forum gives a good idea of the scope of the church's interests and projects.

The Temple offers free legal services, medical health examinations, and emphasizes preventative medicine to its congregants. Its comprehensive health program, administered under the auspices of a Physician, Registered Nurse Practitioners and Physical Therapists, offers diathermy and ultrasound treatments for needy people of the community parish.

Highly ethical, honest reliable church persons (though not rigid or biased) with excellent references, can be contacted for employment by writing to [Peoples Temple].

Available personnel include: nurse's aides, domestic workers (live-in or commute), tutors, teachers, painters, handy-men, yard workers, basement and garage cleaners...

Urgent Support Needed For These Worthy Charities and Services

Suicide Prevention, Inc...

Bay Area Urban League...

California Epilepsy Society...

Catholic Social Services, Shelter Care...
Chinatown Child Development Center...
Friends Outside (for families of prisoners)...
Hadassah...
Recreation Center for the Handicapped...
Florence Crittenton Services...
S.F. Council of Churches Day Center for Older
Adults...
Westside Community Mental Health Center, Inc...

We caught a glimpse of the effect Peoples Temple had on one individual in an unusual way. Sometime between May and November of 1978, John received an emergency call one evening from a woman who was rooming at the home of a parishioner. Her problem, he suspected, involved alcohol. John wrote later:

She spoke of a pastor who had helped her daughter in a crisis. The pastor and the church had helped her family hold their lives together. I asked if the pastor's name was Jim Jones. She was startled by my question.

As we talked and she learned that I knew Jim Jones, her mood changed. I did not tell her of our family involvement... I have never seen any depressed person's outlook change so markedly and so quickly. She said to her friend in the room, 'I'm going to be well... You don't understand this, because you don't know Jim Jones... I'm going to be well... Jim Jones has sent this pastor... I'm going to be well...'

Jim, and Temple leaders, encouraged the belief in his magic. One way was to engineer miraculous healings using dramatic props like chicken livers. According to Mike Prokes, however, Jim could have earned a legitimate living if he'd held healings seven days a week. Jim had real healing power, and people lined up by the hundreds to be touched by him. Jim described his early healing experiences in some autobiographical notes.

I'd just call people out and they'd get healed of everything. Much like I do now, with help, but then I didn't have no help. Really. Nothing. Just close my eyes ... and call... For years and years it was me, and

my gift, and whatever I could take down.
Until Patty [Cartmell] came along...

People pass growths and then by sleight of hand I started doing it -- and that would trigger others to get healed. It was a kind of catalyst process, to build faith. But I never had anybody help me. Not even Marcie...

So I can't explain it. I can heal, I know that. But how it works, shit, I don't know... I'd fill the goddamn places. Places would be packed... One woman climbed through a window to be healed. Crippled woman.

The fake healings drew people to the church, exploiting the poor and the despairing. A few knew of the fraud, but most did not. Annie seemed to believe in them, at least at first. She described one that occurred shortly after she joined the church.

Last Sunday at the church, this man passed out or died because his tongue was hanging out of his mouth and his eyes were all weird just like when you're dead. The nurses couldn't get his pulse and they couldn't find him breathing either so they took him up to Jim Jones and he meditated for the man for 12 minutes. Finally the man regained consciousness and got his normal body functions back but had not breathed or had a heartbeat for 12 minutes. The doctors couldn't believe it.

Testimonials naturally followed the healings. We read a few that somewhat exaggerated Jim's powers.

Jim has done so many miracles for me I don't know what to tell first. He healed me of diarrhea which I had for three years. He healed me of a heart condition and he has kept me from being totally blind. He also kept my daughter from being killed by a madman. I thank Jim for all the things he has done for me.

This is some of the miracles Jim Jones done for me and my peoples. First of all I wants to say he healed my mind because I thought I didn't have anything to live for. I was so depressed and thought everyone was

against me and came into my life. Then he healed me of a tumor on my brains which [would] have killed me in 24 hours. Dr. said it was my nerves. Then he healed me of cancer of both breasts, cancer of the stomach, kidneys and bladder trouble and heart condition. He healed my blinded eyes which was a miracle in itself. And some that I can't remember...

The diary of one Temple member, which the U.S. Army found in Jonestown, notes a new assignment in the summer of 1977, after critical articles came out about Peoples Temple. The writer, an older woman, observed that she had to type up testimonials people had written in long-hand. The FBI, which houses the Jonestown documents, had a declaration Annie made August 5, 1977, which we assume the unknown writer typed.

Jim Jones told Patricia Cartmell and I to please be very careful driving home from San Francisco back to Redwood Valley. Faith Kice rode with us. The road was wet and as we neared San Rafael on 101, a car was coming onto the freeway from a ramp into our lane -- the right lane. There was another car in the lane next to us on the left. We were joking and listening to the radio and I saw the car coming into our lane. I said, "Patricia, watch out for that car!" She put on the power brakes, skidded and swerved into the car next to us on the left which pushed us over into the middle barrier, then after hitting this, the car went into the middle lane and was spinning rapidly. There were cars on the freeway behind us traveling at high speeds around 60-70 MPH, which should have been hitting us. As we were spinning, it was as if the cars were further behind us yet coming towards us, I yelled Jim's name twice and the car stopped and a few drove around us at about 5 MPH...

I know that because I called on Jim Jones that the three of us were saved from death or terrible injuries because we should have been smashed from all sides...

Carolyn and Annie related several other incidents to us describing times Jim had saved their lives. A call

from Jim during a coughing spell prevented Annie from choking to death. Jim's warning spared Carolyn's life on a foggy road.

Fortunately, no one viewed Jim's powers of healing and prophecy as substitutes for practical medical care or seatbelts. On the contrary, the Temple educated its members in good nutrition, provided regular medical check-ups for the seniors, encouraged people to exercise by offering fitness programs, and severely punished people who endangered the health or safety of others. "This is bran from the PT vitamin stand," a small note-card read. "Helps your socialist bowels." The Rev. Cecil Williams, pastor of Glide United Methodist Church, told The San Francisco Chronicle that Jim "never talked about the healings. I do know that he always told his people they should go to a doctor as well."

The diary writer noted that Jim told her to take cold showers. Since she didn't have a shower, she tried cold baths, but lamented she couldn't stand it. She went to a doctor at Kaiser Medical Center to treat her bur-sitis and backaches.

The Temple ran a statement in The Oakland Tribune to clarify its position on spiritual healing.

Having witnessed wonderful healings and/or remissions too numerous to mention, we affirm that it is only in total conjunction and cooperation with medical science that spiritual healing is valid in our ministry.

We believe that no one individual or group can offer a panacea in the realm of spiritual healing, so we are adamant in the position that medical science must not be abandoned in looking toward spiritual healing for one's physical and mental well-being.

Annie made a similar comment at the conclusion of her letter on faith healing:

The most important part of the Church is the humanitarianism. (People are always struck by the metaphysical part because it's so unusual and incomprehensible.) What the church is working towards is peace and brotherhood and justice for all...

We found it hard to criticize the good things we saw Peoples Temple doing. Although the zeal Carolyn and

Annie exhibited bothered us, we couldn't condemn them for their choice.

As a result, we participated in the church's activities more than most other families. John and Barbara saw Carolyn and Annie several times a year, more often than they saw me. Their visits frequently coincided with Temple programs or holidays, or family celebrations.

In November 1975, Barbara wrote of a visit she and John had at the Temple's Los Angeles church over Thanksgiving.

We met a number of Peoples Temple members and there was much hugging and kissing on the part of all of us as they are very loving and very happy that we are even interested. Jim received the Humanitarian Award of the year from the L.A. black newspaper [Los Angeles Herald] and then Dad said a few words and the executive of the Southern California Disciples [of Christ] said a few words. Both were excellent and appropriate and appreciated by all present. Then we went to the dining room where Carolyn had arranged a table full of people from Ukiah, both black and white whom she thought we would enjoy, and of course they were delightful and we had a fine time and a delicious meal.

John and Barbara experienced a real feeling of community and love at Temple celebrations. We approved and supported those projects and programs we saw for ourselves. We shared some, not all, the political and ethical beliefs of Temple members. So it was not surprising that Barbara wrote in 1973, "The whole endeavor is a wonderful experiment in living and theoretically and realistically our whole society should be doing likewise."

There was a side to Peoples Temple we never knew, however. There were two churches, and two congregations. There was a public institution, working for the collective good of humankind. We knew that one. And there was a private club that delved into the fears and hopes of individuals. There was a vast congregation of working people who shared the religion and ideology of caring for one another. And a minority -- the Planning Commission -- ran the church for their own ends.

Much of what went on inside the Temple is a matter

of interpretation. We are outsiders, trying to understand what happened inside. The dark side of the Temple -- and we call it dark simply because we don't understand it and wouldn't choose it -- has not been explained by the believers. They're the only ones who could recall the context in which things happened.

The diary the Army found, for example, puts the much publicized discipline of the Temple in a new perspective. The writer began one entry by saying that "commendations were given" at the July 23, 1975 Wednesday night service in San Francisco. She then listed the people who were "brought up" before the group and noted their infractions.

Chris Cordell was questioned concerning money which was stolen from the Bogue home... He admitted he took one dollar...

Marvin Wideman was brought up. He has been increasingly rebellious...

Julene Wideman admitted she was upset at Council for disapproving her daughter's coming back home... The counselors criticized her for her attitude. Evelyn, her daughter, said her mother was too easy on the children...

Another report was received that Marvin Wideman threatened another child. Jim said to Julene: If he doesn't change after tonight's discipline, he is to hit the road...

Mark Sly and a new boy, Rory Macon ... took his mother's car ... to the white police to complain about the mother; she had scolded him about his grades...

Sylvia James' companion, Reggie Upshaw, resented her pregnancy because she had a nice child by a former relationship. The doctors told her she shouldn't bear the baby or she'd die. He beat her. He beat up on her before.

Those who committed these and still more serious crimes -- ones which could result in arrest -- faced spankings or boxing matches. It was the group which reported the misdemeanors and demanded punishment, while Jim usually fixed the actual sentence. Diary entries from another meeting show the intensity of group involvement in disciplinary proceedings.

John Gardiner was on the floor for call-

ing Kirtas Smith a crippled bitch... His mother, Ruby Carroll, cried because he is so bad. He was penalized with 120 whacks. One woman said, "Put him on the road." It was explained that we can't because he is not of age. John screamed as he took 70 whacks; at that point Jim commuted his sentence...

Lorenzo Lindsay was called up. He had started to hit his mother. He had refused to come to church. He took dope. He pulled a knife on his brother. He had been in jail on a rape charge... Jim tried to make him understand what punishment he would undergo if he persisted in his offensive behavior. He acted very cocky. Jim had him fight someone his own age, Eric Upshaw, with gloves. He didn't put up a good fight, was beaten. The congregation was permitted to yell at him for striking a woman...

Glenn Hennington was on the floor for driving without a license for six months. He got a ticket. He had to fight a girl who knocked him out, which exhilarated the feminine portion of the audience...

Like the Puritans, who used stocks and dunking stools, Peoples Temple members used public humiliation and corporal punishment to control behavior. Members saw value in this. Even an outspoken critic of Peoples Temple like Jeannie Mills felt that drinking, smoking and stealing were "generally acceptable reasons" for beatings.

Historically, this discipline is neither extreme nor unusual. Practices within Peoples Temple, wrote University of Missouri sociologist John R. Hall in the book In Gods We Trust "may well seem restrained" when compared to those of 17th century Puritans. Any group that works to develop a collective consciousness whether religious, like the Puritans, or secular, like Chinese peasant organizations after the 1948 revolution, uses public confession, humiliation and absolution to re-educate its followers. According to Hall,

successful communal groups in the nineteenth-century United States often drew on mechanisms of mutual criticism, mortification, modification of conventional dyadic sexual mores, and other devices in order to decrease

the individual's ties to the outside or to personal relationships within the group and thus to increase the individual's commitment to the collectivity as a whole.

This is precisely what Peoples Temple tried to do. Taking racists, deviants, addicts, emotionally disturbed individuals and ordinary people, the church tried to resocialize them into a cooperative society. The analogy would be to mix residents of Harlem, Sutton Place, Brooklyn Heights and Queens together without having a police force to maintain law and order.

Certainly the church considered it in that light. In a December 1976 issue of Peoples Forum, an editorial admitted:

Of course we have structure -- encounter, counseling, spiritual guidance. You don't take people out of a turbulent, hostile environment and set them straight without some discipline or structure. If we had not made tremendous efforts to require good citizenship and provided opportunities for education, jobs, and recreation, many young people we have taken off the streets would be back there now, doubling and perhaps tripling the crime rate in many areas of the city.

A major part of the re-education process consisted of criticism, rather than physical punishment. Again, Peoples Temple followed a long tradition common to other groups trying to forge a new society. The colonies of Oneida, New York and Amana, Iowa used "mutual criticism" sessions successfully, according to Robert Hine in Utopian Colonies. William Hinton described the confession and criticism sessions that took place in a Chinese village in the late 1940s. Although the Temple's sessions delved into all kinds of attitudes and behaviors, like the long drawn-out meetings of Long Bow Village, catharsis emphasized sex. For example, in 1970, Carolyn described one catharsis session in which her former husband Larry Layton

openly confessed before we were divorced or anything had happened with Jim that he was homosexual and he said at that time in a meeting to reconcile our differences before the whole board that he would like to relate to Jim as a female would to a male. (Jim,

of course, in the male role). Many others outside the group and a few inside the group have admitted the same feelings. It seems many men are just desiring a passive female role these days. Many times our board has had to help new members of both sexes through these hang-ups and then only by Jim and us making it absolutely clear as he did with Karen [Tow Layton] that nothing will ever be reciprocated by Jim on this level.

We suspect Larry made his confession for Jim's benefit. While members felt obliged to confess to a variety of sexual practices -- child molestation, sodomy, oral sex -- homosexuality, above all else, provided endless material for discussion and analysis. The only session which the unknown diary writer describes involves it:

In a catharsis session, Tommy Moore and Derrin Purifoy who had been told to stay apart, were on the floor for stealing items from the Purifoy commune. They used them to outfit a hideout which they used for sex experimentation. The boys were slow to confess what they had been doing and even slower to admit that they took turns being on top. Jim took a casual attitude toward the sexual behavior which he said was natural, but was severe about the stealing...

Annie wrote that "the dudes around are real creepy and I think they're a bunch of queers anyway." Another time, she complained to Barbara that she didn't like the way one of her girlfriends was "pawing" her, an absurd accusation.

Eight members, later called traitors because they quit Peoples Temple, complained that the emphasis on sex hurt the socialist cause. In an undated letter addressed to Jim, they said: "For the past six years all staff have concern [sic] themselves with -- have been the castrating of people, calling them homosexual, sex, sex, sex. What about socialism? Why isn't it top priority...? All the Planning Commission does is call each other homosexual, asking if each other suck cock..."

The catharsis sessions may have had a purpose originally, before they degenerated into perverse one-upmanship. Annie wrote her understanding of their function:

It's the only place I ever saw that people aren't phony and really come face-to-face with their hangups and problems. It's really refreshing because then you don't have to deal with people through blocks they put up. If they have molested children, they say they did, but they don't any more. Or, if they have had homosexual experiences, they say so... and that makes one less block to communicate through. No one really cares what you have done anyway. As long as you're doing good, it doesn't matter. The main part is working for change in our society, but you can't work effectively or as Jesus said, "You have to take the cinder out of your own eye before you can change others"...

Somewhere along the line, catharsis changed. The fact that the group rewarded confession meant the greater the outrage, the greater the absolution, or sense of belonging. Additionally, members of the Temple Planning Commission escalated the art of confession because they had more at stake. Those same people, however -- ex-members and critical defectors alike -- claim they fabricated their confessions. Thus, we feel the most outrageous ones were creative, rather than true.

Jim, and the Planning Commission, required written as well as oral confessions. Some were ridiculous: "I killed President Kennedy and I also killed his brother. (signed) Elmer Mertle."

Another:

I am a communist revolutionary. I hate the United States. I plan to overthrow the government. I plan to kill the president as soon as I can. I will use guns and explosives as necessary. Fuck anybody who doesn't like it. -- Deanna Mertle

Other confessions were merely pathetic.

I, Anthony R---, stole from Mr. and Mrs. S--- some food on Friday evening, February 21, 1975. Later I was discovered and I asked Paul F--- to spank me.

I am very sorry to have stole the food. It was a crime. I deserve to be disciplined and to be asked to leave the church. (signed) Anthony R---, March 1, 1975.

Testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on the death of Representative Leo J. Ryan explained, "As a symbol of their trust in [Jones], followers were required to sign statements admitting homosexuality, theft, and other self-incriminating acts; often as not Peoples Temple members would also sign blank pages which could be filled in later. Depending on Jones' need or objective, such documents were frequently used in attempts to defame defectors."

The only time we found a confession used was in a letter on Peoples Temple letterhead to members of Congress calling two ex-followers Trotskyites. We haven't uncovered any lawsuits against Peoples Temple based upon anything said in a confession, although Steven Katsaris sued the Temple for libel because his daughter Maria claimed he molested her.

"The confessions were never used," said a Temple member who was in San Francisco at the time of the suicides. "I was very imaginative with my confessions. The only people who thought they were important were the people who wanted to leave." She explained that the confessions were supposed to intimidate dissidents.

For a time, they worked. They must have worked. For many years, most of the news that came out about Peoples Temple was good. It focused on the church's humanitarian projects. At least one journalist, however, developed an early and abiding suspicion and hatred for the church. Lester Kinsolving lost his job as religion editor of The San Francisco Examiner in 1972 due, in part, to Peoples Temple. Temple followers picketed the Examiner's offices after Kinsolving wrote a series of critical articles about the church and Jim Jones.

The Reverend Kinsolving neither forgave nor forgot. He carried his grudge beyond 1978, spilling some of his venom on us.

It began in 1975, when he thought he could nail something illegal on the Temple. The church mailed a promotional package to 200 religious news editors. The editor of Christianity Today, a respected religious magazine, gave Kinsolving a copy of the material. Sent in envelopes bearing John's letterhead, it included endorsements from a variety of religious leaders. John had written one, praising the work of Peoples Temple.

I have known the Rev. James Jones and the work of Peoples Temple for a number of years. I have been impressed with the quality of community life of the church, and of their service to the communities in which



Children are given the opportunity to work and play in pleasant outdoor settings. They even find that work projects can be fun!

**VIEW OF METHODIST
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT:**

“Peoples Temple is a caring community of people of all races and classes. They bear the mark of compassion and justice — compassion for the hungry and jobless, lonely and disturbed, and also for the earth and her offspring.”

. . . Dr. John Moore, District Superintendent of the United Methodist Church for Oakland and the East Bay, California.

they reside. Not only do they provide for the care of their own members, but they offer their services to people who are unrelated to their church.

They provide legal and health services, and nutritional education. Community agencies, including the police, frequently refer young people to them. Innumerable young men and women, caught in the web of drug abuse, have come to live meaningful and useful lives, free from drugs, through their involvement in Peoples Temple.

In my judgment, other churches could learn from Peoples Temple. Their concern and care for their members provide the qualities of family life which have been lost in so many churches. Their concern for the poor, the aged, the handicapped, and their direct response to the needs of these people is a model for other churches.

I write, because the media pick up and publicize the unusual and spectacular. I would hope that the media would find the humanizing influence of Peoples Temple, as expressed day after day in unspectacular ways, to be worthy of telling. The persistent hunger of the human spirit is a part of those who read the papers and watch T.V. Stories which speak of this hunger and how one body responds to it are newsworthy.

John was furious when he learned that Peoples Temple had used his logo in an unauthorized promotional mailing. Carolyn took responsibility for the "mistake", but we feel she probably covered up for Jim. Kinsolving thought he could tie John to Peoples Temple. Perhaps, he seemed to think, the church was blackmailing John.

In May 1975, Kinsolving came up the walk of our house in Berkeley. He did not identify himself, but simply began by asking John if he approved of the use of his name and office -- he was then a District Superintendent in the United Methodist Church -- to promote Peoples Temple. John recognized him. After thirty minutes of hostile interrogation, John asked Kinsolving to leave. After he'd gone, John discovered Kinsolving had left his briefcase. John assumed he would return for it.

The next day, John mentioned to Carolyn that Lester Kinsolving had interviewed him and that he'd left his briefcase. The day after that, Tim Stoen, the Tem-

ple's principal attorney, called and said it was imperative that John and Barbara come immediately to Peoples Temple in San Francisco. "We drove to San Francisco," John later wrote of the incident,

parked in front of the church, and went with some people to a room upstairs. The people I remember being present in addition to the two of us were Carolyn and Annie, Jim Jones, Gene Chaikin, Sharon Amos and Tim Stoen. There may have been another, but I do not remember anyone else.

We were told that Lester was not only doing a story about Peoples Temple, but that he was going to write about us. They said, perhaps Jim, that Lester was going to write implying homosexual activity on my part while at Glide [United Methodist Church in San Francisco], and that Mom had an affair with someone in Davis. Jim did ask us if there was any truth in these allegations. We said "No!" and no more was said of these allegations. (Subsequently [a secretary at Glide Memorial Church] told me that Lester had come to Glide asking questions about me. She said that she told him since I was just across the Bay, he could easily ask me the questions).

The conversation then turned to the briefcase and what to do with it. It was suggested that I could throw it in the bay, or that I could leave it near the front door and they could arrange for someone to "steal" it. They did not use the word "steal" as I recall. They asked me what I intended to do with it. I said that I had planned to take it to the United Airlines counter in Oakland, or to the Berkeley Police Department. There was a United Airlines tag with Lester's name attached to the briefcase. They said that Lester would charge that items had been taken from the briefcase, and that he had done this previously. They tried to persuade me to either let them pick it up, or to throw it away. They argued that it was important to get rid of it and deny I had ever seen the briefcase. Annie pled with me to do this. Tim Stoen tried to persuade me. I remember thinking that here was an attorney, an offi-

cer of the court, urging me to do what I presumed was illegal.

Sharon Amos asked me: "If you had been in Nazi Germany and the Gestapo came to your door asking for information as to the whereabouts of some Jews, and if you knew where they were, would you inform on them or reveal their hiding?" I responded that I hoped that I would not inform, but that I did not feel that Peoples Temple's controversy with Lester was analogous...

We went home. First thing I put the briefcase in my car, went to the office, met Paul Williamson, a pastor, and drove with him to the Oakland airport, and gave the briefcase to the United Airlines agent at the counter. I have the receipt. I am convinced that no one other than myself touched the briefcase while it was in my possession. It is possible, but I think unlikely, that Peoples Temple got to the briefcase while it was in the possession of United Airlines.

To forestall any articles or publicity, Tim Stoen and Mike Prokes filed a libel suit against Kinsolving. An affidavit John made of Kinsolving's interrogation helped get the case into court, according to Gene Chaikin, another lawyer in the church. Chaikin claimed that Kinsolving had said derogatory things about Peoples Temple in other situations.

John noted that:

I was aware that the suit was intended to make it more difficult for Lester to publish his stories about Peoples Temple. I was so angry with Lester after the interview, and so convinced that he had no desire to write anything objective about Peoples Temple (he was at war with Peoples Temple) that I certainly was not going to help him publish his garbage.

Jim and Stoen said they had sources of information in various newspaper offices in the state and through these sources they were aware of Lester's publication plans.

The question could someday be asked why I made a verbatim account of my interview with Lester and not of the Friday morning session in Peoples Temple. It was clear that

Lester was hostile towards me as well as towards Peoples Temple. Whereas I obviously differed with Peoples Temple in handling the briefcase, I did not regard Peoples Temple as hostile towards me. Furthermore, I knew that if my verbatim account were ever subpoenaed, Tim Stoen would have to deal with my allegation of what he said in that session.

Four years later, in January 1979, the FBI asked John about his meeting with Lester Kinsolving. The FBI agent said an "unidentified source" stated that John had collaborated with Peoples Temple to steal the contents of the briefcase. Kinsolving published several articles after the suicides in which he charged that Peoples Temple's lawsuit against him was based on papers and tapes stolen from his briefcase. One particular article made it clear, however, that Kinsolving knew this wasn't true. John thought Kinsolving had reported the alleged theft to the Sacramento police. Two years later, Kinsolving made his accusations public.

Kinsolving's campaign against the church grew into a vendetta against John Moore. The suicides gave him a wonderful opportunity to excoriate, not Peoples Temple, but John and his involvement with Peoples Temple. One headline read: "Methodist and Disciples try to cover Jones' tracks". Another: "Jim Jones and a Methodist tragedy". In one column he quoted part of John's 1975 statement praising Peoples Temple. Another reveals the character of Kinsolving better than anything else:

On Friday Nov. 24, just after news of an additional 200 bodies being discovered in Jonestown, I telephoned the Rev. Mr. Moore, who is now minister of Reno's First Methodist Church.

I had hoped to ask him if he cares to retract his glowing testimonial to the Rev. Jim Jones and the alleged good works of Peoples Temple. I had also hoped to see if Moore might have come to realize how he and the Methodist Church could have helped to expose Jones -- rather than strengthening him, by threatening to sue those few who were exposing him.

The Rev. Mr. Moore asked who is calling, and when I identified myself, he said:

'I don't have anything to say to you,

Lester, so let's forget it.'
Then he hung up.

We learned the hard way how cruel the press could be. Kinsolving's coverage of the Temple, both before and after November 18, 1978, typified many of the articles written about the group in 1977 and later. Bad press followed the church from Indianapolis to Ukiah to San Francisco.

Before then, however, many positive articles on various Temple programs and demonstrations appeared. At one time, The Sacramento Bee identified the Temple as the largest Protestant congregation in Northern California. By February 1977, the church's size and influence aroused the interest of numerous reporters, as Carolyn wrote:

Last week 19 reporters came by wanting to do stories on us and especially Jim and he just can't deal with all this and carry on his other work too. [Disciples of Christ executives] Karl Irwin, Lynn Hodges and several others are going to write a letter to the media mentioning that we would prefer that no one come for stories since it is keeping us from doing the work we really want to do. Many of those we have helped off drugs and into a "normalized" lifestyle are bothered by all the "intrusion" of press people into our program for visits...

A few months later, New West Magazine published the reports of critical ex-members. Those most vocal were white, with the exception of Jim Cobb, an articulate young dental student. Many had been out of the church for several years: Deanna and Elmer Mertle, who changed their names to Jeannie and Al Mills, left the Temple October 16, 1975; Grace Stoen left July 4, 1976; Mickey Touchette, Terri and Jim Cobb, and Wayne Pietila left in 1973.

Every church, every religion, every cause has "defectors". People who are dissatisfied, disaffected, or simply burned out, leave. The people who left Peoples Temple quit for many reasons: too much work, wrong philosophy, boring sermons, not enough money. Unlike other church members, however, ex-followers of Peoples Temple also left claiming they had been beaten, humiliated, and robbed.

The August 1, 1977 issue of New West came out amidst much fanfare. The editors claimed their San Francisco offices had been burglarized. A file on Peoples

Temple had been examined, they said. However, police investigators found no evidence of a break-in. Meanwhile, The San Francisco Chronicle ran a series of articles on Peoples Temple by one of the authors of the New West articles, Marshall Kilduff. The Examiner printed similar articles by Tim Reiterman. Kilduff wrote a book shortly after the suicides based in large part on the stories he wrote in 1977. Reiterman's book, Raven, came out in 1982.

Pre-publication rumors that the New West article was going to do a hatchet job on the Temple were sufficient to send Jim Jones to agricultural project in Guyana that June. The media barrage, which lasted more than a month, coupled with a child custody case and the advice of Jim's attorney, Charles Garry, kept Jim in Guyana. The articles, radio and television reports also accelerated the mass emigration of Peoples Temple members.

Yet the worst the New West authors could say about Peoples Temple, in that first article which so devastated Jim, was that:

Based on what these people [ex-members] told us, life inside Peoples Temple was a mixture of Spartan regimentation, fear, and self-imposed humiliation.

While members of the group undoubtedly glorified what happened inside the Temple, and ignored -- or rationalized -- the things they didn't like, ex-members of the group exaggerated what actually happened. The truth lies somewhere between these two extremes.

"There are always some problems of interpretation associated with accepting 'atrocious tales' told by defectors from groups," wrote University of Nevada-Reno sociology professor James Richardson in a paper on Peoples Temple titled "A Corrective Critique and Comparison."

There is the possibility that defectors are involved in either conscious or unconscious self-serving behavior when they recount 'how terrible it was' in such and such a group.

Since most of the critical articles don't reveal how ex-members justified their behavior as members, or their reasons for leaving, we don't know what their motives were for going to the press. For example, Grace Stoen was the head counselor. She told New West she passed along to Jim the names of people to be disciplined. The article didn't go into how she felt about what she did

or whether her function contributed to her decision to leave the Temple. Instead, Grace Stoen and the others who "spoke out" merely described various incidents.

Ultimately it becomes a matter of interpretation. "We were going to more and more meetings," Grace, the dissenter, told reporters. "If anyone was getting too much sleep -- say, six hours a night -- they were in trouble." Annie, the believer, described the same thing this way:

The train is going by our house right now. We live right near the railroad tracks. In fact, they are right behind us. They don't ever wake me up in the night, though. I am usually so tired. I average about four hours of sleep a night. It's not quite enough but I'm hoping it will be soon. I feel good all day when I get just six hours.

With the emigration of Jim Jones and several hundred Temple members during the summer of 1977, the workload Grace Stoen described lessened. That didn't make everyone happy, however. In her diary, the older woman noted:

I feel rather bored (a rare feeling for me) and discovered that Wanda felt the same. She attributed the feeling to the short meetings and the lack of jobs to do which used to make demands on our time.

The San Francisco Examiner printed ex-member Neva Sly's complaint about the way the Temple disbursed funds to individuals who had gone "communal", that is, who were financially dependent on the church. "If I needed clothes," she said, "I had to provide an itemized statement of the items I needed and how much they cost."

The diary writer mentioned several occasions on which she submitted her "needs list". On September 27, 1977, she did note a concern:

When I turned in my needs list, on which I had put down \$30 for underwear for Guyana, I had a discussion with Vernell Henderson, who complained that people were asking for too much money and that requests would have to be cut back... I felt aggrieved that apparently I would be denied what others had received.

But the next day she wrote:

In my needs envelope, I received all the money for which I had asked, \$30 for clothing and \$11 for a Muni fast pass.

If we don't look at how believers reported what happened in Peoples Temple, defectors' accounts are inexplicable. Why would anyone want to stay in a place as terrible as they describe? The answer must be that it wasn't that terrible, or that the benefits outweighed the difficulties. An example from Annie illustrates this. "I just moved to Santa Rosa a couple of days ago," she wrote as she began her nursing studies.

The dorms are really neat. All they are, are duplexes that the church bought. Ours will have seven girls in it. The garage is all fixed up and has all of the beds in it. There are bunk beds. Then there's the kitchen and living room and three bedrooms which are converted into study rooms with each person having his or her own special desk with partitions kind of like at the library. It's really neat...

It costs \$750 a year to live in these dorms. That pays for food, room and books so that is pretty good. We have to pay for our own personal articles.



Peoples Temple "dorm" in Santa Rosa, California.

The dorms I visited in Santa Rosa were crowded, by middle class standards. Wooden bunkbeds arranged in the garage slept about eight people. Each student had her own personal study area, and shared the living and dining rooms. Annie's dorm ate meals communally with the boys' dorm in the adjacent duplex. They took turns cooking and cleaning. The dorms were located in the poor section of Santa Rosa, perhaps to avoid zoning restrictions on the number of occupants.

Our family paid for Annie's tuition, room and board, since we could afford it. Other Temple members didn't have the money, and the church subsidized them.

Practically all of the students down at the dorms now ... wouldn't have had the chance to even go to college because they did not have the money and because so many had done so poorly in elementary school. But anybody that can't pay, the church pays for.

So it goes back and forth. For one side, there is another. It is difficult for people to accept this. The suicides color everything that happened before. When I told House Foreign Affairs Committee investigators that I questioned the accuracy of one ex-member's affidavit, they replied, "Well, she's alive, isn't she?" As though survival imparted integrity.

Ex-members have never told the whole story. They fail to remember anything positive. They don't mention how the church helped them, or why they got involved.

Their credibility suffers further, as far as we're concerned, from the fact that they took their complaints to the press rather than to the police or other authorities. For example, some defectors charged the Temple engaged in a form of child abuse. The "blue-eyed monster" gave children electroshock treatment if they didn't smile at Jones, according to ex-follower Anna Mobley at a meeting of Temple defectors after November 18. Yet officials in the California State Department of Social Services agree that they never heard anything about it. One said that "if she had received complaints of child abuse, she would have called responsible officials in the county to investigate and take appropriate action."

We have been unable to find many criminal charges lodged against Peoples Temple. Considering the extent of publicity surrounding various accusations, we wonder why. Although defectors reported two "strange suicides" to New West, and although Phil Kerns described what he felt

were nine suspicious deaths in his book, Peoples Temple, Peoples Tomb, we found that ex-members filed only one criminal complaint. This complaint led the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office in the summer of 1978 to investigate an alleged extortion plot involving Jim Jones and Jim McElvane, head of the Los Angeles branch of Peoples Temple.

Many ex-members filed civil, rather than criminal, complaints. These resulted in lawsuits in which they tried to recover money or property they had donated to the church. Additionally, several suits were filed in child custody disputes. Most of the cases were still pending at the time of the suicides.

The New West article, and a follow-up story on two people who died, did renew investigations into the deaths. The Mendocino County District Attorney quashed one rumor when he announced that the state's Attorney General had investigated the death of Maxine Harpe twice. "The official report in each case," he noted subsequent to the expose, "has indicated insufficient evidence that any criminal wrongdoing had taken place." Stories about Harpe had circulated since her death by hanging on March 28, 1970. In 1972, a Baptist minister in Ukiah asked the California Attorney General to look into her death. It was Lester Kinsolving's account of Rev. Taylor's complaint which eventually cost him his job on the Examiner.

John William Head was another suicide victim. He died October 19, 1975. Contradictory evidence in the report of his death, as well as the New West story, encouraged the Los Angeles coroner's office to re-open the investigation. The second probe cleared up the questions, and in October 1977, a new verdict again ruled the death as suicide.

Another allegation surfaced in November 1977, several months after the New West story. The family of Robert Houston, Jr., told Examiner reporters of his death on October 5, 1976. A switchman in the Southern Pacific railyards, Houston died in a train accident. His family believed it wasn't an accident, because Houston told them he wanted to leave the church. No evidence ever came out to support their belief. However, it was the Houston family, constituents of Leo Ryan, who encouraged the Congressman to pursue Peoples Temple.

Many people left the church during the years it was in California. In her diary, the unknown woman names several, and ponders their reasons for leaving. Only one or two of those she mentions went to the press with horror stories. Most simply packed up and left.

I talked with Edith Cordell... We talked about people who had left the Temple, in particular Pat Hess, who left some time ago, taking her two girls with her. She had occupied a leadership position. No details were given to the congregation.

Other people she described in the catharsis sessions must have left as well: their names didn't appear on the list of the Jonestown dead.

These people didn't interest the press. How could they? They were finished with Peoples Temple, unlike the well-publicized critics. The critics made the accusations, and New West and the Examiner and the Chronicle tried the Temple.

"Accused in the U.S.A. are assumed innocent until their guilt is proved in a court of law," Dr. Carlton Goodlett reminded readers in his paper, The Sun-Reporter. The longtime supporter editorialized:

If there are those who feel aggrieved, as indicated by their alleged statements of the interviewees in the New West article, we urge these persons to charge the institution and the man with crimes, and let them face the accused in a court of law!

"Hot story, but where's the smoking gun?" Chronicle columnist Herb Caen asked. Caen didn't find any concrete evidence of wrongdoing. "So far, lots of smoke, but no gun," he concluded.

Nevertheless, the New West stories had far-reaching impact. For one thing, it sped up the departure to Guyana. For another, it shook up the San Francisco power structure. Mayor George Moscone felt it necessary to declare publicly:

If anyone in San Francisco or anywhere, and that includes the authors of the article and political leaders who express concern about the matter, have any evidence that the Rev. Jones has broken the law, then it is his or her absolute obligation and duty to bring that to the attention of the appropriate law enforcement officials...

[The article] is a series of allegations with absolutely no hard evidence that the Rev. Jones has violated any laws, either local, state or federal... The Mayor's

office does not and will not conduct any investigation... I see no reason to take any action in light of the allegations which carry with them no proof that any laws have been broken.

On November 20, 1978, two days after the suicides, San Francisco District Attorney Joseph Freitas announced for the first time that his office had conducted a six-week investigation of Peoples Temple in 1977. His office interviewed more than 70 people. Robert Graham, chief of the D.A.'s special prosecuting unit, said they found no evidence of criminal activity. "We put thousands of hours into the damn thing and came up with nothing," Graham said.

CHAPTER SIX

JIM JONES AND
THE POLITICS OF PEOPLES TEMPLE

Nobody gives a shit as long
as you don't become political.

-- Jim Jones

There is no God. There can be no God.

That was the starting point for Jim Jones. He had experienced personal tragedy, and keenly felt the suffering of others. Unable to understand the pain of living, he concluded that God does not exist. How could God allow, or even condone, the hunger of children, the desperation of poverty? Overwhelmed by the world's evil, Jim proclaimed his own disbelief to the congregation in Redwood Valley:

Why are there hungry children if there is a god?
What's your god ever done? Two out of three
babies in the world are hungry...
He never heard your prayers
He never gave you food
He never gave you a bed
He never gave you a home
The only happiness you ever found was with me.

Jim tried to rationalize the inconsistencies between reality and the teachings of the Bible. "God is no respecter of persons," he told his followers, indicating that all are equal in God's sight. Yet his own life, and the lives of his followers, mocked the Scriptures. There could be only one explanation for the Bible to be true: reincarnation.

Now if it wasn't for reincarnation, then with someone being crippled and someone being poor and someone being rich and someone being a have-not and someone being a have, the scripture could never say that God was no respecter of persons because we know in one lifetime, some people don't get a fair shake. But if you live five, ten or fifteen lives, maybe you've been a king yesterday, and now you're a common servant because you did not learn... Then you can see at least some shaping up of equality. Without it you might as well shut God off.

Ambivalence tore at Jim. He had no tolerance for ambiguity. By the time John and Barbara saw a Temple performance in San Francisco of "A Raisin in the Sun", conviction replaced uncertainty. In the original play by Lorraine Hansberry, the daughter tells Mama, "There is no God." Mama replies, "In this house, there is God." This is Mama's belief throughout the play. In the Peoples Temple version, Mama says, "There is no God."

Nothing in Jim Jones' life could contradict that assertion. He was born May 13, 1931, in a small town near Lynn, Indiana, where he grew up. "I didn't have any love given to me," he confided to a few of his closest followers in 1977 as he reflected on his childhood.

I didn't know what the hell love was...
I was ready to kill by the end of the third grade. I mean, I was so fucking aggressive and hostile, I was ready to kill. Nobody gave me any love, any understanding.

He then described an incident which had haunted him over the years.

In those days a parent was supposed to go with a child to school functions. If your parent didn't go, you were an outcast, that's all. I was a fairly good singer. There was some kind of school performance and everyone's fucking parent was there but mine. I'm standing there. Alone. Always alone. Everybody else'd have their families, their cousins, their aunts and uncles. Not Jones.

Jim's account of his own life mixes fact and fiction. His anecdotes reveal a man consumed by self-pity and anger, a man alienated from his community.

Jim saw himself as a "big, bad mean motherfucker." One person who knew him as a child called Jim the town's "Dennis the Menace". Jim's teachers angered him, his parents ignored him, his father infuriated him, racists incensed him. He spent his youth in a constant rage.

He seemed to enjoy being the town's bad boy. He claimed he threw a stapler at one teacher; kicked another "in the balls"; stole exams; "screwed" a girl when he was in the third grade; ran away to Logansport, halfway across the state; "damn near killed" a rich kid. In reality, however, he turned his anger on himself, rather than against the world. Recognizing this, he said:

I was deeply, deeply alienated as a child. I was considered the trash of the neighborhood. I fell into the category of white trash because my parents were ostensibly light skinned... The fact that I sought approval so damn much and couldn't get it enabled me to work through that need at a very young age. Finally I decided to be true to my own conscience because the frustrations of trying to be accepted, meet the norms, and still not being accepted, going to all the churches and still not being accepted, relieved me at an early age of a lot of the pressures that a lot of people still have to deal with.

He came from a poor family. His father, James Thurman Jones, was gassed in World War One. He couldn't, or wouldn't, work. Jim's very few words about his father imply a conspicuous void: his father wasn't around, mentally or emotionally. His mother, Lynetta, supported the three of them. In a small town like Lynn, they provided some juicy gossip. "One time they even accused her of having an affair with a filthy old vagabond, Salina Hutcherson," Jim told his followers shortly after Lynetta died.

He was so ugly and dirty, nobody on earth wanted him. They wanted him run out of town. Mom would go by and give him baths -- he was old enough to be her grandfather -- bring him things, take him for walks. She purposely stayed all night with him once, just so they'd tell that rumor about her.

At the same time he praised his mother, he damned her and the life she'd given him. "The fact that she's dead," Jim began his eulogy, "doesn't change that I resent her for bringing me into the world."

Jim carried that feeling to Jonestown and November 18. On that day, he admitted to visiting reporters that, "The only thing I want now is to have never been born. I feel more so every day. I'm not worried about my image anymore. I want to have never been born."

Sensitivity to others, rather than self-centeredness, gave Jim that desire. "That's the biggest thing that obsesses me about being human," he observed. "To be

able to cope with loving people and know you can't love them in terms of fulfilling their needs." He couldn't turn off his caring when it became a burden. "You can never fully meet people's needs... So everything is pain to me."

That pain made him welcome release. Death was familiar, and even kind for someone as sensitive as Jim had been. For a while, in the beginning, it shocked and hurt him. Memories of friends who died filled his recollections. One, a teacher who treated him warmly, died of cancer. Another, a friend named Tuffy, drowned. "People were glad Tuffy was dead," Jim remembered. "Because Tuffy and me, we may not have been respectable, but we could run the streets."

The execution of the Rosenbergs in 1953 affected him as profoundly as the deaths of his friends. Already weak with an illness, he was devastated by the executions.

I really don't know why I lived. I thought, 'It's futile.' An inhuman system that kills people based on a bunch of scrap paper. Just because they had Communist affiliation. No more had given atomic 'secrets' than I had. I hated that system. I wept when I got out of that coma. I wished I had died. I wept until those goddamn sheets were just soaked. So someplace along the line I quit crying. Don't cry anymore.

In May 1959, his adopted daughter Stephanie died in an auto accident. The death itself was tragic. The funeral, outrageous. His wife Marceline reported the event in a biographical sketch many years later.

The cemeteries were segregated and our daughter was Korean. Blacks and other Third World people were buried in the lowlands, where water often stood, inches deep. Jim was told that he and I could have our child buried in the 'white section'. He replied, 'I cannot bury our child anyplace where any member of my church cannot be buried.' And so, I can picture, these many years later, our five-year-old being lowered into a grave, half filled with water, in a swamp land. It was a painful memory, but one which I would not erase, nor do I regret it for one moment.

The incident shocked Jim. "It was cruel, cruel," he repeated.

That fucking vault, the water half-filling it. I pulled Marceline back because I knew there was no use to stand there and watch that. There was no way they were ever gonna get that water out of that mess. The whole graveyard was standing in water.

The tragedy continued to eat away at him. When he told John and Barbara about Stephanie's death, he asked them, "Where is God in this kind of a world?"

Death and suffering created Jones' atheism. It grew directly from his inability to reconcile the world's injustice with the concept of a just God. God would never allow suffering, therefore God does not exist.

But atheism alone did not lead to Jonestown. In his novel, The Plague, Albert Camus formulates a plan of action which atheists, or non-believers, must take in the face of human suffering. For people like Doctor Rieux and Jim Jones, it should be "a struggle with all our might against death." Camus summarized this a little later in the book:

The essential thing was to save the greatest possible number of persons from dying and being doomed to unending separation. And to do this, there was only one resource: to fight the plague.

For a long time, Jim fought the plague. He rejected the system that allowed injustice to continue, and tried to resist its evils. In 1953, when he was 22, he began a pastorate at a Methodist church in Indianapolis. There he found a congregation unwilling to accept black members. Consequently he left the established church and started his own, the Community Unity Church. Marceline related the story in her biography of Jim.

Jim was made an associate pastor of a large, all-white church in Indianapolis. The pastor was near retirement, and Jim was to succeed him. Jim went door-to-door to invite blacks to attend the church. But when several blacks came, he noticed that they were being seated in the back rows only. He asked that I escort them to the platform. Right after the service, an emergency church



Jim Jones with children of many races, from a photograph.

board meeting was called. The board offered Jim, as an alternative, to build a church that he could pastor ... for blacks only. Jim walked away from the church on the spot, saying that 'any church where I pastor will be opened to all people.'

Marceline noted another occasion on which Jim took a stand against racism. Other individuals who lived in Indianapolis at the time confirm the account:

In the early 1960s, Jim was very ill and was to be admitted as a patient to the Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. At that

time he was Director of the Mayor's Commission on Human Rights. His physician was black, and when it became time to assign Jim a room, the admitting clerk asked him if he was "colored or white". Jim, who was badly in need of medical attention, was incensed, and refused to go to bed until the hospital was integrated. Black friends who were patients at that time told of being moved in order to integrate the wards. It took several hours, but Jim did not lay down till it was done, although he was in much pain.

The community in which Jim lived had recognized his decade-long commitment to racial equality in the early 1960s, and appointed him to the Indianapolis Human Rights Commission. Civil rights struggles had spread northward from the South. By then, Jim and Marceline had adopted several children of different races. The appointment to the commission made Jim and his family visible targets. People spat at Marceline and called the Jones family "nigger-lovers."

It's not clear if pressures associated with his appointment to the Human Rights Commission, demands from his growing church, or a desire to seek new areas of service prompted Jim to move to Brazil. Whatever the reason, he took his family to live there from 1962 to 1963. By his own account, he worked in Bello Horizonte. Jim told his followers he ran two orphanages there. "I was feeding, getting the food and other supplies to them," he said. "People would line up at my door for food, we had a food line a block long."

He returned to the United States shortly after President John Kennedy was slain, and shortly before a right-wing coup toppled the moderately liberal government of Joao Goulart in Brazil. Back in Indianapolis, he opened the Peoples Temple Full Gospel Church. In 1964, the Disciples of Christ ordained Jim a minister in the denomination. The next year, Jim persuaded many in his congregation to move west with him, to California.

"Why did we move to California?" Jones asked himself.

I figured it was the furthest point I could go from Indiana before I fell off into the ocean. There was hope, but there certainly wasn't a blind Pollyannaishness. I'd heard there was more acceptance there. Cali-

fornia was supposed to be more liberal.
So we had to go.

Other members, including Carolyn, say he fled to California to avoid the coming nuclear holocaust. According to Esquire Magazine, the area near Ukiah, California would be one of the safest in case of atomic attack.

Up until this point, Jim seemed to fight against creation as he found it. We don't know what happened to make him stop fighting. Perhaps the drugs he took to keep up with a backbreaking schedule played a role. Perhaps exhaustion and fatigue wore him down. The alienation and anger which had fueled his work thus far, turned upon his work, and against himself.

"By nature I'm a depressed person," he conceded to a few of his associates.

I've lived with depression for many, many, many years. The problem I find is the simple clinical thing of keeping my body functioning amidst all the tension.

That problem alone may explain Jim Jones. It certainly accounts for his attitude towards his own death. Countless times he told his followers he wanted to die:

I wanted to die, I guess...

You care for people, you die, you die. So hell, death isn't a problem for me anymore...

I'd often stressed publicly that I wished I'd never been born...

The last orgasm I'd like to have is death if I could take you all with me.

Once Jim accepted death, and sought it, his fight against the plague ended. The young idealist who worked so long and so hard in Indianapolis had changed. Jim's ever-present alienation took charge of his life. As a result, he could justify almost anything. The fraudulent healings brought in people to hear the real gospel. Punishment taught people humility.

Death was no problem anymore. Jim had confronted the ultimate defeat, and decided it wasn't so terrible. In consequence, he became a kind of existential hero. Like Kurtz in Apocalypse Now, or Meursault in The Stranger, Jim Jones had the absolute power that comes with no longer caring. He could do anything. He was god. He told his congregation this, although for a time he

qualified his assertion. "If there is a God," he declared one Sunday morning, "or one who is decent and just and righteous, then I am the only one you'll ever see who is like that."

At another service, Jim rhythmically chanted:

I am peace
I am justice
I am equality
I am freedom
I am god.

Later on, in San Francisco, Jim grew more candid about his divinity. Audio tapes in the FBI's possession reveal this as Jim speaks to his congregation:

I have put on Christ, you see. I have followed after the example of Christ. When you see me ... it's no longer Jim Jones here. I'm crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ that lives here. Now Christ is in this body...

You will not get Christ's blessing in Jim Jones' blessing until you walk like Jim Jones, until you talk like Jim Jones, until you act like Jim Jones, until you look like Jim Jones. How long will I be with you until you understand that I am no longer a man, but a Principle. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Light. No one can come to the Father but through me.

One might mistake the tone of Jim's language. It mimics the biblical, and repetitious, style of hellfire preachers. Yet the message was unmistakable, even for the devout.

Had Jim ever been a Christian? In one sermon, he told members that he realized as a young boy, "I'm the only God there is." His childhood, and his father's absence, may have provoked that feeling. Another time, Jim poignantly described the father he never had:

When your God has failed you, I'll still be
with you.

I will never leave you
I will never forsake you
I will never let you down
Not once.

Still later, he recounted another incident characterizing his atheism. He and his mother had gotten into an argument about God.

And she said, 'I love you, but you don't say anything about the Lord anymore.'

I said, 'Fuck the Lord.' I don't remember, we ended up in some goddamn scrap and she threw a glass at me. I said, 'You get awfully worked up over the Lord.'

Yet in another reflective statement, Jim acknowledged that Christianity had an attraction for him.

Duality, a part of me emotionally is caught up with the Christian tradition. I am more comfortable in the warmth of a Pentecostal setting, and that is why I saw that kind of a lifestyle, because it was in that setting of freedom of emotion that I felt my first acceptance.

He continued by saying he found that same spirit in communist rallies he attended.

One biblical passage, which the Temple printed on stationery and pamphlets, encompassed Jim's Christian doctrine. Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and help the sick comprised the moral imperatives in his life.

'For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me,
I was naked and you clothed me,
I was sick and you visited me,
I was in prison and you came to me.'

Then the righteous will answer him,
'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee,
or thirsty and give thee drink?
And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome
thee,
or naked and clothe thee?
And when did we see thee sick or in prison and
visit thee?'

And the King will answer them,
'Truly, I say to you,
as you did it to one of the least of these my
brethren,

you did it to me.'

(Matthew 25: 35-40)

While Jim accepted the social and ethical mandates of the New Testament, he rejected the rest of the Bible. "If that Jesus can't save you from the hell you're in, how's he going to save you after you're dead?" he asked one Sunday. Another time he said he respected Jesus, "who was an early revolutionary," but then spent the rest of the sermon pointing out inconsistencies in the gospels about Him.

The hypocrisy of the church angered Jim the most. "Church people are the only ones who will kill you thinking they do God a service." The preacher always led the lynch mob, he said. After all, "who crucified Christ? Church people." In her notes, the Peoples Temple diarist recalled a time when Jim contemptuously held up my father as a typical "church person".

Jim spoke of how cowardly preachers are, using as an example Carolyn Layton's dad, a United Methodist superintendent. He was afraid to stand up against the CIA; they came after him. (I believe this took place during the recent Kinsolving move against the Temple.) [parentheses in original]

We're not sure what Jim meant exactly, since Kinsolving backed down after John threatened him with a lawsuit. Jim undoubtedly felt John should have agreed to give Temple members Kinsolving's briefcase.

Carolyn once confided to me that John and Barbara would never die for what they believed in. Implicit in her statement, and in Jim's, was that commitment does not exist unless one is prepared to die for it. One must expect to suffer. One must test faith by a willingness to die.

Jim promoted this idea, not only because of his own love of death, but because an apocalyptic vision possessed him. He believed the world would end soon in Armageddon. Whether by nuclear war or fascist takeover, the end would bring terrible suffering. Death was imminent. On November 17, 1978, the night Leo Ryan visited Jonestown, a young woman performed a song called "1981":

You will stand in line
With your passport to sign
And the government says no to your kind

You will walk down the street
No friends you will meet
All your friends that you've known
Are gone and locked in Santa Rita

America was not what you thought it would be
We have seen, we have seen all her lies

Your family has died
For America and its lies
All your life, all your life
You have been deprived

Yes in the fall of the year
In 1981.

Signs of the coming apocalypse had already arrived. "Jim on the podium told us that Turkey, the heartland of the anti-communist alliance, has been lost to the United States," said the Temple member's journal. "Nuclear war is made certain." Threats like this fill her journal:

Chairs had been removed from the platform for the presentation of a serious play which Jim had asked for... The play showed the coming of Fascism to America. Blacks and liberals were behind barbed wire, and the Ku Klux Klan patrolled the concentration camp... Jim spoke on the rise of the K.K.K. threat... No one with any minority blood will be safe.

At another service, the congregation heard a tape of an earlier sermon on the methods of torture used by the CIA.

Torture appeared high on Jim's agenda. Annie's letters frequently referred to speakers who discussed it.

One was with a group of Chileans and he spoke about what was going on in Chile and the torturing. He himself had been tortured -- his family tortured and murdered in front of him and he was castrated. Then a 21-year-old from South Africa came and spoke about the torture of blacks and oppression by the South African white regime. He was white and had been drafted into the army and saw all this so he left the country. Now if he ever goes back, he will be tried for treason and murdered. He said his life had already been threatened here in the U.S.

Peoples Forum, the monthly newspaper published by Peoples Temple, highlighted the atrocity stories. The October 1977 issue carried articles on "the disappeared" in Chile, genocide against Native Americans, "open race war" at Camp Pendleton Marine barracks, the rise of Nazism in California prisons, extermination of Amer-Indians in Ecuador, and the murder of children in South Africa. The articles graphically emphasized beatings, torture and murder.

The ever-present threat of rape, castration, and torture did not abate with the move to Jonestown. There Jim told members that the Guyanese hated them and would beat and murder any who escaped. At the end, Jim convinced his followers that they would be tortured and killed separately if they didn't die together. "You'll see people land out there," he warned them as they took the cyanide.

They'll torture some of our children here.
They'll torture our people. They'll torture
our seniors. We cannot have this...

Are you going to separate yourself from
whoever shot the Congressman...?

VOICES: No, no, no.

As long as people lived, Jim exploited their fears and manipulated their sense of belonging. "Are you going to separate yourselves...?"

Jim also controlled Temple members by preying on their feelings of guilt. No one escaped. Everyone wrote letters confessing their sins: elitism, racism, liberalism. Notecards printed and sold by the Temple featured emaciated women and children begging for food. One picture made Jim ask, "Why should I live in comfort while she is starving?" A letter Annie wrote in 1973, shortly after she joined the Temple, shows how quickly Jim cultivated her fear and guilt:

I don't believe anyone can enjoy life
or really be happy with so much pain and
suffering in the world. They would have to
be totally unfeeling if they did. It's not
fair for me to have more 'things' than some-
one else, or more money to spend on personal
pleasures than others.

Americans are such gluttons. We eat so
much more than we need while two out of three
people in the world are starving. We put all
of these poisons into our systems like meat

and other unhealthy food. Then everyone wonders why so many people have cancer today. I can't believe how unconcerned about the state of our country and the world that people are. Here each one of our checks that we write is photographed, it is impossible to take \$5,000 or more over the state border without telling why, slowly our freedom of the press is being taken away, Nixon says our congress is irresponsible, people were arrested for bringing food to people who were protesting at Wounded Knee, Billy Graham goes to South Africa and says how wonderful it is there and all kinds of other things are happening. Anyway things are going to get worse and worse unless people join together and make them better. I want to be in on changing the world to be a better place and I would give my life for it.

Despite Jim's cynicism, despite his confused and crazy beliefs -- his perverted Christianity, his manipulative social gospel -- in spite of everything, he transcended mere charlatanism. People could see his good works. When he talked about helping the sick, people knew his church ran a medical clinic which offered free testing for sickle cell anemia. When he talked about helping the poor, people knew his church -- with its soup kitchens and day care centers -- operated out of the heart of a black ghetto in San Francisco. Church members, white and black, lived in the area, in the same housing as everyone else. Even Jim lived in the ghetto. When he talked about prisoners, people knew he'd helped men and women stay out of jail, and had assisted those who landed in prison. And when he reminded them of what he'd done for them -- "I gave you a bed, I gave you a home, I gave you food" -- he spoke the truth. On the last day, during the suicides, one man commented to a dissenter:

You're only standing here because he was here in the first place... Your life has been extended to the day that you're standing there because of him.

"The members of Peoples Temple responded to Jim Jones because he had a program for their lives," wrote analysts in the 1979 issue of Socialist Review. The program could be characterized as Christian or socialist.

Either way, it was tangible and real. "In the 1970s, in this angry but largely apolitical nation, that is not a small thing."

"He made Jesus Christ real for us," one Temple member wrote us after Jonestown. She continued:

Before that, everything I read and tried to grasp was just a myth. But only then did I understand the followers of Jesus Christ. When I became angry with Jim and decided to leave the Temple, I would immediately have a vision of Christ on the cross and everyone deserting him, so on I would trudge.

Jim undoubtedly had charisma. His remarkable force of personality drew many to the Temple. One panelist on the National Public Radio forum on Jonestown noted Jim's manner and power. After listening to excerpts from several sermons, Verda Mae Grossner observed:

Jones had that 'thing'. I don't know where he got it... He had the preacher thing that preachers have. He had the magic of the preacher. You could hear it in the people.

Grossner, a black woman, added, "And we follow the preacher."

Unlike other new religious groups that arose during the 1960s and 1970s, Peoples Temple attracted large numbers of blacks. Jim Jones used an evangelical style in his services. As Verda Mae Grossner remarked, black churchgoers could recognize and appreciate that style. As a result, by the mid-1970s, blacks made up between sixty and eighty percent of the church's membership.

"Most of Jones' parishioners came to him directly from the pews of other religious organizations -- primarily black churches," wrote Reggie Major in the December 1979 issue of Mother Jones Magazine.

There was hardly a black church in the Western Addition -- one of San Francisco's largest black communities -- that had not been hard hit by Peoples Temple. Ministers were in a quandary. Substantial numbers of their parishioners had left to follow a white man who sounded stronger than they did about racism...

Jones captured many of the solid church-

goers and he even began to pull back the disenchanting youth.

According to commentators in Socialist Review, "Jones recruited the base of his congregation in San Francisco from poor black families and single old men and women from the Fillmore and adjoining communities." Post-suicide statistics on the number of senior citizens and children with welfare histories confirmed this to some extent.

But Peoples Temple would not have created the same antagonism that developed in San Francisco, had its members been only the poor. Some of the blacks who came from established churches were middle class and well-educated, with plenty of money for the chrome collection buckets. Tension between the black churches and Peoples Temple grew as they competed for members, and money. The fact that a white man was leading a predominantly black congregation exacerbated the conflict.

In addition to building a large following of blacks, Jim attracted whites who had grown up in a fundamentalist tradition. He appealed to theological liberals as well, by acting out Jesus' social imperative. The Temple's roots lodged deep in the 1960s, a time when all religious institutions experienced serious challenges from both conservative and radical believers. Jones was able to tap both sources of unrest.

Perhaps the most influential group of followers, and one especially vulnerable to Jim's exhortations, consisted of white middle class young people -- like Carolyn and Annie -- who shared a "Herculean conscience". In Jesus and Jim Jones, author Steve Rose proposes the term, and defines it as an "overwhelming desire to do good." The Herculean conscience characterizes

the attitude of a small portion of the American populace, a group of people whose consciousness is formed by an existential awareness of major destructive forces in the world and by a strong desire to do something to combat them... It recoils at the inequities in the world and is battered by the constant rise in the media of apocalyptic data: oil spills, nuclear leaks, famine, torture, and reminders of individual madness.

Jim developed the Herculean conscience in all his members. Those who had grown up in privileged surroundings, however, were particularly susceptible to his

manipulation. By being "haves", they felt more keenly the injustice of their privilege. About two dozen young whites from relatively affluent San Mateo County, for example, found their way into Peoples Temple. Most acquired leadership positions within the church. Most died in Jonestown.

Finally, Jim appealed to a small minority of people whose aims were primarily political rather than spiritual. "Jones declared from the authority of the pulpit that struggle -- political struggle -- was the essence of caring Christianity," wrote Reggie Major, "the flesh and blood of a living ministry." A few joined Peoples Temple with only political struggle in mind. Church doctrine echoed their own goals. In fact, fundamentalists, liberals and political activists could all accept the truth of the New Testament. University of Chicago professor of humanities Jonathan Smith, speaking on the National Public Radio call-in about Peoples Temple, observed: "We really have to get used to the fact that in most of the world, Marxism and religion are very comfortable with one another." This certainly was true of Peoples Temple.

Jim promoted political action. Over the years his preaching acquired a more overtly political tone, and abandoned Christianity. But assessing Jim's socialism -- or Marxism, or communism -- is just as difficult as analyzing his Christianity. His connections with Republicans, Democrats, radicals, and with communist countries, defy a rational or principled position. Jim's beliefs also differed from his more doctrinaire followers and from the majority of Temple members.

Jim called himself a Communist. His will, dated October 1977, left everything to the Communist Party, USA, if no family members survived him. Ironically, the CPUSA didn't care as much for Jim Jones. At one time, several Temple members met with a group of Communist Party members to see about forming an alliance. The party members broke off negotiations in disgust: they couldn't stomach the worship of Jim Jones, or the faith healing.

Jim said he admired Josef Stalin and Mao Tse-Tung. He claimed he worked for the CPUSA during the McCarthy era. Carolyn told us that the church was Marxist and that we had to "take that into consideration when associating with us."

You know that [Jim] is an avowed Marxist-Leninist -- that has never been a secret. He has made this community possible and has given meaning to far too many lives to even be able to mention... You know where I have

stood for years now, and my politics have never been a secret... So at this point I certainly don't want any questions on decisions I have made. In fact, in the 20th century, it seems obvious that one chooses a 'refined' technological fascism or a democratic socialism in this world... 60% of the world is hungry and it will take some sort of communism to solve the problem.

The evidence from Jonestown shows that people were taught some kind of Marxist thought. Carolyn wrote to say that she was busy

studying everything from Third World politics, Caribbean politics and socialist concepts, general theory, plus socialist economic concepts which are of course very applicable to the farm. We do a lot of planning -- production goals, etc. Obviously, the more planning we do the better productivity we get on the farm. As you know, I have always wanted to teach these subjects and this is the first time I have ever been able to teach what I really wanted to teach.

A notebook found in Jonestown by a San Francisco Examiner reporter shows a spelling quiz with radical overtones:

1. Tim Stoen has hire "mercenaires" to come over here and destroy us.
2. Guyana has an "alience" with the Soviet Union.
3. Yemen has offered "sancturary" to the Red Brigade.
4. Albania is a "non-aleign" country.
5. Dad wants us to use "stradgy" when we are in a crisis.
6. We are jungle "Guerillas".
7. Malcolm X was a "revisionist".

Interest in leftist countries and movements outside the United States existed even before Peoples Temple moved to Guyana, and continued among members who remained in San Francisco. In January 1978, stateside Temple staff sent a letter and information packet to the leaders of Third World and socialist countries, from Albania to Zambia. They revised Temple stationery, deleting the note of affiliation with the Disciples of

Christ and a quote from Matthew 25:35-40. San Francisco Temple members also attended USA-USSR friendship meetings and rallies featuring Communist Party activist Angela Davis, while their comrades in the jungle studied Russian and Marxist thought.

Temple members in Guyana quickly discovered that their socialist haven was not a pure model of communism. They began to look for another homeland. The draft of a "Dear Comrade" letter revealed the fears they had about their adopted country.

The situation in Guyana is obviously very unstable right now. Things seem to be a hodge-podge with no lines clearly drawn, no real government, and no alliances, beliefs or otherwise, in the community (Unless, of course, you see some lines clearly drawn or know of an imminent revolution -- in which case we will hold out some way until something hits the fan). However, we do not see this hardly as even a likely possibility.

As anxiety over a U.S. conspiracy against the Temple grew, church leaders suspected that the Guyana government would submit to American pressure and force concessions out of Peoples Temple. They dreaded expulsion of the entire community.

Consequently, Temple members made frequent visits to the Embassies of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, North Korea, and Cuba. The FBI gathered volumes of internal reports typed by members that described the meetings. These documents include papers on potential areas of resettlement, and statements on dealing with various socialist governments. One memo to Jim notes the kind of policy question that arose in negotiating with the Soviets:

Remember they consider themselves socialists on the way to communism but admit they haven't reached communism yet. We should think out whether we should in any way admit we are in transition.

By October 1978, Temple members in Georgetown met almost weekly with Feodor Timofeyev at the Soviet Embassy. Their notes reveal an urgent and repeated request for an Embassy doctor to travel to Jonestown for an examination of Jim. Additionally, they discussed possible emigration to the Soviet Union, although neither

side showed much optimism over the prospects. Nevertheless, the focus in Jonestown shifted to the U.S.S.R., and Timofeyev and the doctor came to Jonestown.

Before the visitors arrived, Jim told his followers to put up pictures of Marx "and that other old fool." We presume he referred to Friedrich Engels. At the evening's entertainment, he sang a rather silly ditty:

We are communists today and we're glad,
We are communists today and we're glad,
We are communists today,
We are communists today,
We are communists today and we're glad.

The visit was not an unmitigated success, as a deletion from the first draft of a "Dear Comrade" letter indicated:

We know the Soviet Union is on a consistent path of principle, [even though we were visited by some comrades from the U.S.S.R. who displayed male chauvinism and too much concern for jewelry and material things. But we understand that this is only a phase. Some people may feel they need this sort of thing] even after the years of struggle and all the hell you went through in WWII with 22 million people dead and the homeland ravaged. [portion deleted]

We don't believe Jim ever intended to move the group to the Soviet Union, where he would have to relinquish his absolute power. As an American Embassy staff member asked us, "Can you imagine the Soviets putting up with Jim Jones?" Certainly the Cubans whom Temple leaders contacted were critical of Jim. Alfriedo Ferreira, administrator of the Cuban Embassy, complained that the leaders "tend to praise Jim Jones more than we center our spotlight on the collective," according to notes written by a Temple member named Tony. Another Cuban Embassy official, Daniel Salas, admitted to his visitors that he had reservations about the Temple's approach to socialism. Deborah Touchette summarized his comments in her notes:

One should not engage in such a closed range approach to a political environment... This is not exactly the way the society should be changed. We should not just in-

clude ourselves. We should try to get involved with the real contradictions that are in society.

The Cubans appeared less likely than the Soviets to take in Peoples Temple. One said there'd been no precedent for it. Although the Temple frequently discussed migration to Cuba and the Soviet Union -- and Jim alternately used the proposed move as a promise and a threat -- few members understood the ramifications of relocation. Jim's craving for idolization, his strict personal control of the political direction of the organization, and his peculiar metaphysical beliefs, probably would have split Peoples Temple if the group tried to move to another socialist country. Although "the membership included large numbers of people who perceived themselves as socialists or social activists," according to the Socialist Review, there were "equally large numbers for whom 'socialism' meant little beyond the policies of the Temple."

For a long time, the socialism of the congregation was more practical than theoretical. More accurately, the Temple was collectivist rather than socialist. Members pooled their incomes, shared their resources. It was a private involvement which excluded government. The Temple progressively grew more communal: people lived together in San Francisco in about 70 houses and church dorms, and began to work directly for the church, rather than for outside employers. Jonestown, of course, was the most communal setting for Peoples Temple. There all members worked in support of the organization, either directly for its maintenance, or for goods to sell for its survival.

It was hard work to produce bananas, plantains, pineapples and cutlass beans in the clay soil. Tons of rice were imported, as was other food, since the community was not entirely self-sufficient. Because it took so much labor to get so little out of the land, the group planned to switch to light industrial manufacturing. Artwork, toys and jewelry made by commune members were sold in Georgetown. The tools for the conversion to shoe-making, furniture-making, and brick-making were sitting on the docks on November 18.

Jonestown was shifting from primary goods production -- that is, agriculture -- to manufactured goods. It was a fundamental development that might have marked a distinct turn to the left.

But such a thoughtful redirection of Jonestown enterprises fell outside the scope of Jim's primitive

communism. The most socialistic statement we ever heard him make was when he told his church followers:

There shouldn't be any rich
There shouldn't be any poor
There shouldn't be any private property...
They robbed the people to get it.

Certainly Annie's socialism reflected Jim's simplistic notions:

What the church is working towards is peace and brotherhood and justice for all. This can never exist under the capitalistic rule. Capitalism and Christianity are on practically opposite poles. We believe in a type of Christian Socialism. Socialism is probably the closest to the Christian ethics of all political systems. So we are working to have socialism in this country (which I have doubts that it could be done) and we are worried that the time is right and ripe, that fascism could easily occur.

"It's a scary thing," Jim told The Berkeley Barb in February 1977, "that fascism in Germany grew from a core of 2000 extremists which The New York Times dismissed in 1923 as 'comic opera buffoons'. There are at least that many Nazis in America today," he said, repeating what he and his congregation had heard in the film, California Reich.

Press censorship, like attacks on blacks and minorities, confirmed his belief that fascism was rising. Judges and courts attacked First Amendment freedoms and jailed reporters. As a result, the church waged a campaign against press censorship. The money and support the church gave to press associations and individual reporters weren't merely an attempt to buy off critics. Jim and his followers saw them as another front in the war against fascism.

Anti-fascism is not socialism, or even communism, however. The fact is, Jim wasn't a Marxist, nor was he a communist, despite his own avowals. His socialistic vision was idealistic, utopian. It was neither scientific nor materialistic. He exhibited little class consciousness, nor did he seem to advocate collective organizing, two principles essential to traditional Marxist practice. He once told a group in San Francisco, "I'd prefer to be in a union hall tonight, but the unions are

all sold out to big business." Not surprisingly, the church never endorsed any labor movements. Few members seemed to involve themselves in unions where they worked.

According to David Moberg in In These Times, Jim failed to ally himself with other leftist groups in San Francisco. Instead, he worked with liberal politicians. Earlier, he worked for conservatives. Moberg felt Jim's isolationalism was a repudiation of other leftist groups.

In fact, the major stumbling block to any organized leftist position within the church was Jim Jones. Above all else, he was an opportunist. Pragmatically, he saw that it was important to have powerful political friends, whether Republican or Democratic in America, or the People's National Congress in Guyana. Jim's inconsistency protected the church and its activities, and built up his own personal power. He wasn't principled. He was, for a time anyway, survival-oriented.

"The end justifies the means," he announced one day during a sermon, "but the means must lead to a noble end. You cannot use people." This statement of philosophy explains many of the contradictions that permeate Jim's actions.

For example, how does a racially-integrated group of individuals survive in conservative Mendocino County? According to Marge Boynton, former chairman of the Mendocino County Republican Party, Peoples Temple provided legwork for Republican candidates. Boynton claimed Jim "said Mr. [Richard] Nixon was a fine man." She added that his followers "were very solidly for Nixon" in 1972.

The reason comes from a 1972 report in FBI files from two informants who attended a Temple service. They say that Jim advocated voting for Nixon because he had opened up Red China. At the same time, however, Annie was writing me that:

This election is probably more important than any other election in history. The American people have a choice of going in one direction or another. If McGovern is elected, the country obviously won't get better overnight and lots of things McGovern would probably do I might disagree with. But the country would be in much better shape than with Nixon. I don't have to convince you of that. I don't want to sound paranoid. I think any of my fears have a good basis. I think it's just important that the American people not be asleep and think everything is chipper like all the Republican creeps at the con-

vention made it seem. Anyway, as I said before, time will tell what Nixon has up his sleeve. There's a good chance that we aren't as well off as we think we are.

The contradiction between what Jim and Annie were saying really reflected a change in Jim's public persona. He didn't want to appear conservative or Republican to potential converts in San Francisco. He didn't want to seem quite as "straight" as he'd been in Redwood Valley. His fundamental opposition to racial and economic oppression continued. But the face he presented to the public was different.

In San Francisco, Jim and the Temple could become more vocal, more strident. They quickly became active in city politics. Carolyn attended a meeting of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and

was horrified to hear the Supervisors find all sorts of rationalizations as to why they couldn't provide full staffing for a psychiatric unit at [San Francisco] General Hospital for prisoners who have problems... Maybe district elections for supervisors will help things out... I would like to see their mental health after spending a week in a strip cell at the [San Francisco] City Jail. I wanted to recommend it but restrained myself.

At the meeting, Supervisor John Barbagelata "made some very insensitive remarks about prisoners." Those remarks may have cost him his race against Mayor George Moscone, since the church threw its support to the incumbent. Most observers feel Temple legwork put Moscone over the top.

The liberal Democratic Party machine in San Francisco was a natural ally. Working within the party gave Jim a lot of power. However, one woman active in the political organization told us that Jim was impossible to work with. Local Democrats despaired of his headstrong actions.

Nevertheless, politicians in the city and the state, as well as national leaders, noted Jones' strength and rewarded his favors. In November 1976, Mayor Moscone appointed Jim, along with a United Methodist minister, to the city Housing Authority Commission, the agency which ran San Francisco's housing projects. People were complaining at the time that the Authority wasn't making necessary repairs. In addition, the list of people who needed subsidized housing was long.



INTRODUCTORY MANUAL FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

Housing Authority brochure written by Carolyn Layton.
Annie Moore designed the cover.

Jim couldn't draw salary in his appointed position. He could, however, give the political plums to Temple favorites. One of the first things he did was to get three Temple members on as Housing Authority staff. Carolyn was one of them.

While she worked at the housing office, Carolyn wrote a handbook for new employees, explaining what the Authority did. It was the first time anyone had done this. In a letter to John and Barbara, she wrote:

My job is quite involved and the functions are diverse. One of the major things I will be doing is writing procedures for various departments and basically making suggestions for re-organization of various aspects of the authority. It definitely needs this as well as a lot of restructuring. The whole thing should appeal to my organizational personality as I do enjoy organizing things.

Jim and some other commissioners helped organize public housing security patrols from among tenants. The security force hired by the city did not adequately protect the residents of the projects. The new tenant patrols improved the situation because of their greater sense of building responsibility. As a result, they antagonized the hired security forces.

Less than a year after Jim was appointed commissioner, local politicians feted him at a banquet. Carolyn said "the banquet for Jim was beautiful," and continued:

We had every spectrum of the political arena there, from Willie Brown and Moscone and [Lt. Governor Mervyn] Dymally to a John Bircher, and surprisingly enough, everyone went home extremely happy with the whole thing. Our music and entertainment livened up the thing and it wasn't like the typical dry dinner. We did the whole thing ourselves, 5,000 to 7,000 there and in two other buildings and all -- so it was quite an undertaking.

Newspapers reported letters congratulating the Temple from a variety of Democratic leaders at the local, state and national levels. But after the suicides, Democrats repudiated their ties to Jim or denied them



Jim Jones receiving "Humanitarian of the Year" Award, 1975.
L. to R., Marceline Jones, unknown, Barbara Moore,
John Moore, Jim Jones, unknown.

entirely. Then-HEW Secretary Joseph Califano was most vociferous in his denials, explaining to reporters that, "I have stated repeatedly that I do not remember ever having written a letter to Jones." He went on:

A thorough check of the files at HEW and at my law firm has revealed no such letter... I am convinced this matter is a hoax. No evidence exists to support the allegation that I ever wrote to Mr. Jones.

While Joseph Califano apparently had no ties with Jim, other Democrats did. "Jim met with Carter and Mondale as they passed through San Francisco," wrote Carolyn in the fall of 1976.

Though we are not thrilled with either Carter or Ford, I guess Carter is the lesser of the 'two evils', though we were appalled that he didn't resign from his Baptist Church. Perhaps that is what won him the South unfortunately.

Guyana Prime Minister Forbes Burnham said his government had allowed Peoples Temple in on references from Mayor Moscone, Vice President Walter Mondale, and Mrs. Rosalynn Carter. At a February 11, 1979 press conference, Burnham told reporters

that when Deputy Prime Minister [Ptolemy]

Reid met ... Mondale in Washington at the Panama Treaties signing ceremonies in September 1977, the vice president had asked Reid 'How's Jim?', thus indicating a personal interest in the Peoples Temple leader.

Jim's political stature grew in San Francisco. But within the Temple, racism and sexism tarnished his actions. While espousing racial equality and brotherhood, for example, Jim built an internal power structure that was racist. Marshall Kilduff and Ron Javers observed:

Surrounding him were perhaps a dozen to 20 inner-circle advisers, a majority of them white women. Beneath this second level was a third, the Planning Commission, composed of some 100 church principals. Within this last group was an elite circle of about a dozen "secretaries" and "counselors". Although the church was 70 to 80 percent black, probably two-thirds of the upper echelon leaders were white.

This is a disturbing conflict between Jim's philosophy and practice, yet one of which he seemed unaware. Perhaps he had been unable to overcome a racist upbringing. His father, while not a member of the Ku Klux Klan, agreed with Klan philosophy, according to Jim. Jim tried to fight society's racism in his own family by adopting children of different races. Nevertheless, he chose whites as his leaders.

Neither Annie nor Carolyn noted this contradiction to us. But a letter to Jim from eight "defectors" reveals that some considered it a problem:

You say that the revolutionary focal point at present is in the black people. There is no potential in the white population according to you. Yet, where is the black leadership, where is the black staff and black attitude? Alice Inghram and Joyci Clark? What kind of awareness do they have about socialism? No we didn't forget Archie Ijames. He's like the above two, out of date... There's no black people with any discontent for today's evilness that will listen or follow any one of them. Black people are being tapped for money, practically nothing else. John Brown doesn't know what

socialism is, all he's used for is to take offerings.

On what grounds is staff chosen? Does it mean anything or warrant respect and comradeship if a black person proves loyal to Peoples Temple as long as 7, 8, 9, 10 years? There are black Peoples Temple members who have proven themselves through the years. Still they participate in Peoples Temple from the same capacity as when they joined. On the other hand there are those who become members of staff after 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 meetings. Mike Prokes, Ann Moore, Terri Buford, Gene Chaikin, etc. are examples. How much do they know about socialism...?

How is it justified that new white people achieve such staff positions? New white upper middle class put in charge of a socialist movement. New white upper middle class folk seem to be trusted and treated better than black people who have proven their loyalty through the years. There's never been one black person who's come into Peoples Temple and put on staff right away.

The same kinds of paradoxes existed in Jim's sexual teachings and practices. On the one hand, people in the group experienced some degree of sexual freedom, and "companions" replaced married couples. On the other hand, Jim arranged marriages, and then separated mates.

"There can be nothing going on in the bedroom until mankind is liberated," he shouted at his congregation. Sex dissipated energy. Whatever you gave to your lover took away from your commitment to the cause.

A double standard prevailed, however. Jim took on many lovers. In fact, he boasted of his stamina and his ability to please both men and women. "I have been reported to be a good lover," he announced one Sunday morning. It seems likely that he had sex with most of the women, and possibly many of the men, in his leadership group.

At the same time, Carolyn was faithful to Jim, and in his own way, he was faithful to her. She shared his bed and supported him as a wife. He gave her major responsibilities within the organization and frequently treated her to gifts and trips. He claims he offered to marry her. Terri Buford, another Temple leader, confirmed this story, and indicated that Carolyn was Jim's principal companion.

Certainly he treated his wife Marceline badly. The

story he related of his decision to marry Marceline demonstrated a monumental insensitivity. The Temple diarist recorded it:

He had become engaged to Marceline because she was the mayor's daughter, and he wanted to tie him in with socialism, although he felt a strong attraction to a beautiful black woman. 'I could have been led by my heart or by my ass. Most of you let yourselves be led by your ass. But I had a commitment to Marceline. She had suffered a great deal. Even white middle class people suffer. And I did what was right for socialism because she has made a good mother for you.'

Sex in Peoples Temple was not a private affair. Jim discussed his own sex life and analyzed that of others. During one hysterical "white night" in Jonestown, Jim confronted two lovers. He viciously berated them both.

If you don't give a damn about him, why do you give pussy to him... You better tell me, 'cause we got ways of knowing...

I've had to crawl into bed with men... I've had to go to bed with women I hated...

We ought to cut the pricks off so we could have fried sausage at night. We'd be better off.

Ultimately, this abusive sexuality made some followers question Jim and his commitment to socialism. Even insiders could see the contradictions between teachings and practice. The group of eight who left the church felt the emphasis on sex diverted attention from socialism.

The eight of us believe in historical materialism. We feel that you came to the people giving them the greatest reason to live, the greatest reason to die, the greatest reason to fight -- socialism. (We have another name for it.) However, you can't do it all, you can't move unless your followers realize the necessity to shape history themselves. This again is where staff has failed. They are to the most part white egotistical people maintaining a hierarchy. Not allowing

you to take the reins and go ahead full steam. Holding you back saying it's not true, having to be fucked, degrading people -- especially if they have a little knowledge about Socialism. All this leads us to the conclusion the staff is chicken shit. There's a point where you have to be cautious and compromise, yet, there's a limit.

At first glance, Peoples Temple rarely appeared cautious in public. It openly befriended Communist Party member Angela Davis, Black Panther Party leader Huey Newton, and co-founder of the American Indian Movement Dennis Banks. Its newspaper, Peoples Forum, carried articles on national and international radical movements. At the same time, however, the church rewarded only moderately liberal causes with money and volunteers. Legal defense for jailed reporters, support for Democratic candidates and donations to acceptable charities enhanced the church's reputation in liberal circles.

Highly visible, the church caught the attention of conservatives as well. The church was most active during the 1970s, a time when the Nixon Administration encouraged spying and infiltration of anti-establishment groups. Although its actions could hardly be called radical, Peoples Temple could not escape scrutiny in that climate.

As early as 1972, someone was watching Peoples Temple. Mike Prokes claimed in a statement he made before shooting himself to death in March 1979, that he worked as a paid informant on Temple activities for several months. Hired by a "Gary Jackson" for an unidentified organization, Prokes made reports until he became convinced of Jim's sincerity and of the positive value of Peoples Temple.

Some felt Prokes "totally fabricated his allegation," because Jim still maintained control over Prokes' mind. Others felt his charges, and his death, were supposed to spur the alleged hit squad into action. We don't know that any official investigation ever looked into Prokes' allegation.

In November 1976, Temple members caught two men eavesdropping from a parked car on a lecture by Unita Blackwell Wright, mayor of Meyersville, Mississippi and a civil rights activist. They tracked one of the men down and found that Thomas Dawsey was an electronics expert from Biloxi, Mississippi. He worked for a "communications team" under the direction of U.S. Senator John Stennis (D-Miss.).

John Hanrahan, whom we hired to investigate government involvement in Peoples Temple, interviewed Dawsey in 1980. Dawsey said he and another engineer, Leon Joly, were working at March Air Force Base when they decided to go for a ride in San Francisco. Neither had been there before, and they got lost among the hills. Dawsey said he and Joly noticed a warehouse-type building next door to the Kentucky Fried Chicken where they stopped. He had never heard of Peoples Temple at that time, but later learned that the "warehouse" was the church. He claimed he wasn't spying on it. He just happened to be there.

The Staff Investigative Group of the House Foreign Affairs Committee dismissed the incident as coincidence. But aides to Ryan's successor, Congressman Bill Royer, believe that Dawsey was in fact spying for Senator Stennis. He got caught and quit, they feel, adding that it was a "one-shot" effort for the Senator. One Congressional staff worker said it was "a tribute to Jones' surveillance capability", because Peoples Temple was able to trace Dawsey.

Spying didn't stop with the change in administrations. In October 1977, American Indian Movement leader Dennis Banks reported that a man tried to negotiate a deal on the Indian leader's extradition charges. According to Banks, David Conn claimed he was working with the Treasury Department and IRS. "Conn showed up with a folder of papers," Banks said of the May 1977 meeting.

Conn did not talk about my extradition problem. He read material that was disparaging to Jim Jones. He went on for some time. Finally I interrupted Conn. I asked him what all this stuff about Jim Jones had to do with my extradition. Conn asked me, 'Well, you took money from the church, didn't you?' He said that my association with Peoples Temple could reflect very badly on my extradition. He then asked me to make a public denunciation of Jim Jones. He assured me that if I made such a denunciation, the rulings in my extradition would go in my favor.

"Conn was an elder in the Disciples of Christ," according to Tim Cahill in an issue of Rolling Stone Magazine. Cahill continued, giving one explanation for Conn's interest in Peoples Temple.

In the early Seventies, Conn heard strange rumors about Jones: guns at the Redwood Valley Temple, beatings, fear in

those who left the Peoples Temple. [Conn's son-in-law George] Klineman interviewed Temple defectors and took the information to one of his sources in the Treasury Department, which encompasses the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Klineman had simply asked his source if he knew anything about a northern California religious organization that was arming itself.

Conn urged Dennis Banks to meet with a Treasury agent. Banks refused to do so unless accompanied by his attorney, Dennis Roberts. "Conn insisted that I had to do it alone," said Banks.

Jim used all of the incidents of which he was aware to increase the sense of persecution among Temple members. The firebombing of the church in 1973 and attacks from Nazis and Black Muslims helped keep the Temple in constant turmoil. Evidence of spying affirmed the importance of the Temple in everyone's eyes. And it affirmed the power, and danger, of Jim Jones.

Irony, paradox and mystery distinguished Jim Jones, the man and his politics. His contradictory teachings and practices resist easy categorization. He was too complex to be dismissed as simply a madman -- although that he became.

Jim Jones' personality complicated the church he founded. As a result, Peoples Temple was neither totally secular nor completely sacred. It combined the elements of a religious order and a political cadre. Any analysis of Peoples Temple which fails to examine both dimensions cannot explain its many paradoxes.

Many writers have compared Peoples Temple with the Unification Church, Hare Krishna, the Church of Scientology, and even Charles Manson's group. "Nearly all commentaries ... treat the Peoples Temple as just one of a large number of new religious groups that have developed in our society in recent years," wrote James Richardson. He added that they tend "to assume that Peoples Temple was like these other groups in important ways."

John R. Hall noted in the book In Gods We Trust that, "The news media have sought to account for Jonestown largely by looking for parallels in history. Yet we have not been terribly enlightened by the examples they have found." News columnist Garry Wills was one of the few journalists able to see beyond the superficial similarities between various "cults". Ten days after the suicides, he wrote:

✓ The events in Guyana had less to do with the long-range pattern of American religion than the aftershock of a very specific period, the 1960s.

Jones and his followers were paranoid and apocalyptic. That is not the mark of America's standard cults, which tend to a sappy optimism. So far from thinking the world is out to get them, our favorite cultists think the world will give them success for a smile and a tip of the hat to God.

The doctrine of Peoples Temple bewildered and confused most analysts. Conservatives immediately focused on the political side of the Temple. Interest in the Soviet Union, trips to Cuba, Marxist literature were all signs of socialist thought and, worse, socialist practice. "Jones' 'church' was an almost perfect example of the left's collectivist search for secular utopia that is the leading heresy of the age," wrote M. Stanton Evans, an editor of the National Review. Newspaper columnist Michael Novak added his belief that Jonestown was evil because it was socialist: "Jonestown was a lesson in socialist extremism. It was a cult of suffocation of the individual, even unto death."

Leftist writers, on the other hand, saw Jonestown as "the most die-hard anti-communist vision of a socialist future," according to David Moberg in the December 6, 1978 issue of In These Times. "Jones' quasi-socialism will ruin the name of socialism in this town and make things worse, if possible," said San Francisco organizer Joann Molloy. Leading leftist theorist Irwin Silber added:

The inherent contradiction in Jonestown, as inevitably it must be in any utopian community, was in the discrepancy between its conscious vision of itself and its social reality. From the beginning, Jones was apparently aware that any tolerance of disaffection among his followers could undermine the psychological spider web he had spun.

Neither the left nor the right wanted to claim Peoples Temple, because with it came the suicides. Although Jonestown's final day denied everything members had worked for and believed in, that same end was central to the ideology of Jim Jones. His atheism, his alienation, his love of death could lead nowhere else.

CHAPTER SEVEN

JONESTOWN, U.S.A.

1974 - 1978

Old people were happy there...
They were living the good life
... Lots of attractive women,
and tough men ... And babies.
Lots of children.

-- C.A. "Skip" Roberts
Guyana Assistant Police
Commissioner (Crime)

As long as we continue to think of Peoples Temple as a cult, the significance of Jonestown will be lost. Labeling Peoples Temple a cult makes its actions irrelevant and meaningless.

Although the dictionary defines a cult as a "particular system of religious worship," the word has developed negative connotations since the 1960s. "It is always a word to refer to a group you disapprove of," says theologian Harvey Cox. Robert S. Elwood, Jr., a professor at the University of Southern California, goes farther, and advocates abandoning the word "cult" altogether.

Since these words have become almost always pejorative in popular usage, it might be better to avoid them when attempting fair discourse, just as one would not use certain outmoded terms for racial groups in contemporary writing on race relations. Any religious group has the right to be judged for what it is in itself, not because it fits into a category about which one had preformed opinions.

Not only is "cult" a disparaging word, it really doesn't adequately describe Peoples Temple, or Jonestown. A more accurate description of the people and organization would be "utopianist". Jonestown, in fact, fits into a long tradition of utopian communities spawned in America. "The belief that men could remake their institutions by 'reasonable choice' has been central to American ideology," wrote Robert Fogarty. The 19th and 20th century utopias he includes in his book American Utopias share a remarkable number of similarities with Jonestown.

First and foremost, the settlers in Jonestown had a vision. The small band of pioneers knew how it would all fit together: the houses, the paths, the workshops, the fields where they would grow their food. At night,

with no electricity, no radios, few books, they could either talk or sleep. According to Charlie Touchette, they talked about the future. When they slept, they dreamed about the paradise they were creating.

U.S. Ambassador to Guyana Maxwell Krebs felt the group's strong commitment on his March 1975 visit. Nine months after the project began, Krebs found two buildings constructed and about two dozen young men, mostly in their twenties.

The atmosphere was quite relaxed and informal. We talked freely with several of the 'pioneers' about their living conditions (uncomfortable), work (tough), aspirations (high), etc. My impression was of a highly motivated, mainly self-disciplined group, and of an operation which had a good chance of at least initial success.

A year later, Deputy Chief of Mission Wade Matthews observed the same high commitment when he appeared at the project unannounced. He wrote on his May 1976 visit:

I found what appeared to be a frontier-type, active new agricultural settlement with perhaps half a dozen rustic buildings and metal-roofed open-sided sheds. My recollection is that there were 100 or more acres cleared at that time with clearing proceeding on more and with various crops, notably cassava, planted and seemingly growing well. The mission had a dozen or so tractors and other pieces of mechanized agricultural equipment, the people talked as though they were enthusiastic about their work, and, from outward appearances, seemed happy enough. The group at that time was about 2/3 white and 1/3 black (I vaguely recall a couple of apparent Orientals). There were a number of children who acted normally and who accompanied my own children down to a large and well-built cage to see their chimpanzee which had been brought from California.

Over one hundred years earlier, a visitor to a Shaker community described a similar kind of settlement. Charles Lane wrote in 1843:

Some of these buildings are small and old; some are large and new. Many active laborers are in the fields and gardens, and improvements are carried on with vigor; but there is much to be done, by reason of the original rudeness of this spot.

Like the Shakers, the Jonestown settlers practiced a stringent discipline. Already working twelve hours a day, all but two members of the group of thirty men voted to work past dark, stretching their day from six A.M. to 10 P.M.

At the time of Matthews' visit, the pioneers had worked two years on the 3,852 acres they leased from the Government of Guyana. The formal 25-year lease, signed February 25, 1976, actually covered a period beginning April 10, 1974. It established the rent -- 25¢ Guyana (about 10¢ U.S.) an acre, less 852 acres of uncultivable land, for the first five years. The lease also required Peoples Temple to "cultivate and beneficially occupy" at least one-fifth of the area within the first two years. It obligated the church to submit a written report to the Commissioner of Lands every five years, stating the total acreage under cultivation; the conditions of acreage not under cultivation; and the amount of livestock reared. The government specified other conditions under which the project was to abide, including the provision that boundary lines be kept clear and open. The government retained all mineral rights. Finally, the lease stipulated that "any officer of the government authorised on that behalf by the Commissioner shall be entitled to enter upon the land" to check cultivation, stock, boundaries and fences.

Government officials frequently visited the project as a result. "We are having another delegation of visitors today which is commonplace here," Carolyn wrote in November 1977. "We are the local attraction as far as the model farm we have. So we will take them on the tour and show them the various 'attractions'."

A tape made in the broadcast room at Jonestown features comments by three staff members and one student from the nearby Burnham Agricultural Institute. Two remarked that they had visited the community before. Other visitors included dentists and optometrists, the government veterinarian, an official from the Ministry of Culture, and one of the nation's highest ministers. "Last Sunday, the Foreign Minister Fred Wills came out here in a helicopter and landed right on the project," Carolyn wrote in January 1978.

He was thrilled with the place, toured everything and beamed at everyone, played our organ while everyone sang, then hugged the seniors... He cried when he saw our medical facilities and when he went back to town, he immediately called our house there and raved about the place and said he would be telling everybody.

Two months later, she described a visit by government education officials:

Our baby-school, pre-school, and primary and high school were all licensed this last week and will be officially licensed by the government quite soon. The inspectors were very impressed and the nursery inspector said she wanted her husband, a school headmaster, to come, but said she would never get him to leave if he saw the place. They spent one whole day observing and asking questions.

Although Peoples Temple ran into more government control by going to Guyana than it found in the U.S., the major attraction of the location came from the settlement's isolation. Located in the dense jungle of Guyana's Northwest District, few roads led into, or out of, the community. Immigrants to Jonestown usually traveled by boat from Georgetown along the coast, and up the Kaituma River to Port Kaituma, the nearest village to Jonestown. They covered the final six or seven miles of the journey by tractor-drawn trailer. Occasionally immigrants, and more often visitors, flew to the landing fields at Port Kaituma, or to Matthews Ridge thirty miles away.

Jonestown's remoteness links it with earlier utopias. Most American utopias withdrew from society. Few existed in cities. The early utopianists generally left the urban areas for isolated countryside where they could be left alone to establish a new society.

As long as Peoples Temple was centered in San Francisco, church members participated in the outside world. The move to Guyana symbolized withdrawal, a rejection of the world. "Though all colonists had not failed economically or socially," wrote Robert V. Hine of 19th and early 20th century California utopias,

they had uniformly lost faith in the ends which external society had set. In this sense utopian colonies could be regarded

as protests against the establishment of frequently unattainable goals.

Certainly the Temple could not soon realize its goals of ending poverty and racism, but Jonestown's isolation allowed the group to develop an alternative society free from outside harassment.

The project's location had significance for Guyana as well. Guyana and Venezuela had fought over the land in the Northwest District throughout the last century. Professor Gordon Lewis of the Institute for Caribbean Studies, University of Puerto Rico, wrote:

In that sense, the commune can be seen as a deliberately planned ploy on the part of the Georgetown government to establish their claim to the area by planned settlement, not unlike the motives behind the Israeli organization of settlements in the disputed West Bank area. Whether they knew it or not, then, the Jonestown communers became an element in the attempted solution of all those problems.

The Guyana government attempted to establish other claims in the same territory by setting up Papaya, its own agricultural project 40 miles from Jonestown, as well as running a vocational training program in agriculture at Arakaka, midway between Jonestown and Matthews Ridge.

Diplomacy and expansionism were not the only reasons Guyana welcomed Peoples Temple. In his monograph on Jonestown, Professor Lewis observed that "there existed between the two sides a whole set of common beliefs and purposes. It is hardly surprising, then, that both sides welcomed their concordat in enthusiastic terms."

Initial contact between the two began in 1973 through the Guyana Honorary Consul in Los Angeles. Jones represented Peoples Temple as a socialist, minority group that was seeking asylum from the United States government. "What Jones offered seemed to fit into almost every imperative of the Guyanese society," Lewis wrote. "Almost every major ideological, racial, economic, and even diplomatic concern of the new independent nation was somehow addressed by Jonestown."

Up until the mid-1970s, the Peoples Temple population in Guyana never exceeded one hundred. House by house, the pioneers built a community for members from the States to move into. In early 1977, the trickle of immigrants began.

We always thought Annie and Carolyn made just a temporary move to Guyana, an extended vacation. In January 1977, Annie described Kimo's latest visit to South America and discussed his suntan. That April, Barbara wrote, "Carolyn, J.J. [Kimo] and Jim [Jones] are in South America this week. Annie is working her usual night shift (in SF)." Two weeks later, she repeated Carolyn's explanation for Jim's stay in Guyana.

Carolyn is still in South America. People in San Francisco think the Mafia may have made threatening phone calls to Tony Ubalde (Methodist), Jim, and other clergy on the Housing Commission. Anyway, threats to one's life are pretty hard to take. So Jim really got tired and felt that a vacation in Guyana was a good move at this particular time. His mother and his sons and their wives, etc. also are there. The commission was really trying to clean up what is an impossible housing dilemma in S.F. The building trades there are pretty corrupt.

Although Jim had moved to Guyana, Barbara still hoped that Carolyn and Ann might leave the church. "Annie and Carolyn are looking for their own house or apartment and plan to move out of the church one of these days," she added in the same letter.

It was wishful thinking. Annie wrote on May 3 that she heard from "Carolyn and the folks by radio contact. They are doing well and relaxing in beautiful Guyana. I would like to visit them sometime so maybe I will be able to." The next letter John and Barbara got from Annie bore a Guyana postmark.

I am writing from the most beautiful, friendly place in the world. (At least, as far as I have ever been.) I would have written sooner but I have been too busy having a good time here. Sorry I didn't tell you I was coming but it was all of a sudden. The clothes you bought me have come in handy here. I can honestly say I never knew I would be using them this soon. I was given the chance to come so I came. I am working in some of the clinics here and getting some good experience in tropical medicine.

We live in a nice big house on the outskirts of Georgetown, so there is lots of

open space around us and a cultural center park with exhibitions and stuff across the road from us. They play steel drums...

The building out on our farm is going well and is busy. Somehow I ended up here and Carolyn back there [in the U.S.]. I guess we will switch again sometime but I hope not too soon for my sake. I love it here.

To me she wrote:

I am working in some clinics here and learning about tropical medicine. The nurses and doctors here sure are nice compared to many I have known in the past. They are so kind and concerned for the patients (just like how in theory they are supposed to be). I do other stuff besides nursing also -- like cleaning fish. I did this on this man's boat on the Demerara River with a bunch of people. It was hard work (2000 lbs worth) but I enjoyed it and felt a great accomplishment afterwards. Have you heard of Demerara Rum? It is famous, isn't it? Well, it comes from here -- Guyana.

For a long time, we didn't fully understand the nature of the move to Guyana. We had heard about the agricultural project for several years. We assumed it was a kind of missionary program which trained local people in various skills. It wasn't. Instead, it was a new home for everyone in Peoples Temple, and that included Carolyn, Annie and Kimo.

Reality didn't set in for us until the New West article appeared. Even then, we still believed Guyana was a temporary haven. Barbara wrote:

It looks as though Carolyn, little Kimo and Annie will stay on in Guyana for a spell longer. The article in New West magazine was pretty bad, I guess, and one can see the long arm of [the CIA] extending all the way back from Washington, D.C. Actually the article in the Examiner wasn't that bad or even damaging. The mayor and Willie Brown refuse to make any damaging statements regarding Jim or Peoples Temple as the facts and good works



Maria Katsaris and toucan,
Jonestown, 1978.

speak for themselves. At times I know that Jim has made some outrageous statements that could be misconstrued by someone in basic disagreement. But then some of Dad's statements and meanings could be misconstrued and quoted out of context also.

Carolyn, Annie, and Kimo had already lived in Guyana for a few months when the New West article came out.

The August 1977 articles attacking Peoples Temple merely united the community and strengthened members' resolve and commitment. Carolyn wondered "when they are going to get tired of us as subject matter for the news. But," she continued,

we are going right along with our program. As I mentioned on the phone, the whole pack of lies is politically motivated and I fear a new wave of McCarthyism.

... It's a shame you never saw our program in full operation in San Francisco. It was really impressive. Too impressive, I'm afraid. The absurdity of saying you can stage the behavior of 200 children!!

Annie wrote a similar letter that August:

I know that you would like us to be back ... when Becky will be there but right now I would rather be here, with all of the chaos that has been going on with all of the news articles. Right now they are really attacking us merely because of our political views and especially because we obtained too much political power within San Francisco. All of the stories about us are lies in order to discredit all the good projects we have done. I know you didn't believe them anyway

so I don't really have to explain. The people who wrote the articles used to be some of our worst problems regarding child molesting and other abusive problems. They are in with some of the worst right-wingers in the area in trying to ruin us. All I can say is I have never seen such atrocious lies in my life.

Sharon Amos, a Temple member whom Carolyn had brought to the house in Berkeley several times, asked John and Barbara to write Prime Minister Burnham to offset some of the bad publicity that was filtering down to Guyana. In a note to them, Sharon observed that, "In regards to anything you might miss, at this time there is not much new under the sun (or I should say 'under the press') except for scurrilous and scandalous attacks. It sells more than 'good'." In another note she sent the next day, she wrote:

Lynetta Jones (Jim's mother) wrote me a letter from Guyana. She is a marvelous writer and I quote this part of her letter.

'Must close now and may Beelzebub take



Sharon Amos and head of Jonestown chickery, 1978.

our critics and deprive them of progeny -- for many generations.

'To predict that foul play was afoot and demand that a coroner exhume the corpse of a suicide [John Head] because he attended a meeting at Peoples Temple just prior to his demise -- is just about as far out as they can get? -- unless, of course, one reflects upon their contention that flesh and blood having leaped from a seventh floor showed no marks. Can it be that they believe a corpse falling seven stories would not bruise? These birds are indeed in the throes of a destructive sickness.'

She has a decidedly Mark Twainian touch, don't you think?

The Temple's relationship with the U.S. press epitomizes the antagonism that has traditionally existed between utopias and the media. "Manifested in its newspapers," wrote Hine,

the surrounding society often chided and misrepresented the experiments, seized upon the mistakes and emphasized the inadequacies of co-operation.

Sometimes the media exaggerated, and even lied about the unusual communities of idealists. Socialist utopianist Upton Sinclair bluntly described his experience with reporters covering Helicon Hall:

It was generally taken for granted among the newspapermen of New York that the purpose for which I had started this colony was to have plenty of mistresses handy. They wrote us up on that basis -- not in plain words, for that would have been libel -- but by innuendo easily understood... Reporters came in disguises and went off and wrote false reports; others came as guests, and went off and ridiculed us because we had beans for lunch.

Because we had already decided to trust Carolyn and Annie, John and Barbara responded to their need for support. John wrote to Forbes Burnham. Barbara wrote Annie about the public support the Disciples of Christ state leaders were giving Peoples Temple. In a letter to me, however, she added:

The healing aspect ... has been somewhat fraudulent in Peoples Temple. But I'm going to be very positive about it all when I write to Annie.

The article in New West was a real smear attempt and as Dad says, anyone who attracts large groups is subject to vilification.

The bad press in America didn't seem to faze government officials in Guyana. On the contrary, their interest in the agricultural project grew, and their visits continued. In early August, Peoples Temple gave a special exhibit to the Guyana Parliament, at the request of the government, "in order to show the kinds of things we do on the farm," Carolyn wrote. That same month a church member

adopted a beautiful four-year-old AmerIndian Black baby and he is doing well. The wife of the Ambassador to the UN (Guyanese) brought him to us. She said our children were so happy she knew he'd like it here. Also, she would have kept him herself if she could.

Then, also, we had 50 students visit, the Minister of Education (to work cooperatively on education), and many other guests. Almost every day someone comes to visit.

Advance publicity about the New West article accelerated the resettlement of members in Jonestown. The fifty houses which the planners in Jonestown built to accommodate four persons each, soon grew crowded with eight, sixteen and twenty per house. And the immigrants still came, often fifty a day. Charlie Touchette says the original settlers wanted to halt the influx and deal with the problems 200, 300, or 500 newcomers posed before letting more people come. Instead, several hundred more descended. A sawmill strike prevented the group from getting the lumber it needed to build the 164 houses it had planned.

Despite the crowded conditions, morale was high. "There is no possible way for this project to succeed apart from high morale," John wrote after his visit to Jonestown in May 1978.

No one is paid anything. Everyone eats the same food and sleeps in comparable quarters. Everyone is expected to work. Workers were in the fields early in the morning. They do a lot of work with manual labor, even

while they are bringing in some labor saving devices. There is no way they could have done what they have done apart from hard work on the part of many men and women.

The hard work paid off. Peoples Temple members could finally move to "the promised land", as many seniors called it. And for those seniors, it truly was paradise. The climate, the houses, even the countryside were not very different from homes they'd left in the rural South half a century before. The fear and loneliness that accompany old age in this country did not exist in Jonestown. The seniors lived in dorms decorated with the names of heroines like Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman. John observed that:

In Jonestown the elderly receive superior medical care. They work and contribute to the community life as they are able. One woman was out hoeing her own little garden. Others had picket fences around their houses. I know of no retirement home which provides better food and health care and a more wholesome environment. They are part of a community with babies and children as well as of young people and adults. This fact is a two way street, benefiting the young as well as the old. When I saw the woman hoeing, I thought of Micah's words: '...they shall sit every one under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid...' The fears that are a part of city life are gone.

"Nursing staff should be especially kind to our seniors," advised Jim over the loudspeakers sometime in October 1978. "You must smile. It is a fearful thing -- you must be warm when you pick their body up -- it is a fearful thing to be sick." He also told the community not to have "any of the gates broken, or the walkways, so seniors could fall and have a hip broke."

For the young adults, a small house shared with ten or 15 others meant a step up from living in the city. No one needed to hustle a living. The usual status symbols -- cars, money, clothes -- had no meaning in Jonestown. The community provided everything in return for faith and hard work.

In addition, the community provided opportunities, as John discovered.



New arrivals to Jonestown look forward to living in the "promised land", 1978.

A man from an urban area is in charge of the piggery. Another man with no experience is in charge of the chickery. In both instances they have been successful and are learning. Young people who have never had opportunities to learn skills or trades are being given those opportunities now.

The members of Peoples Temple who moved to Jonestown weren't merely escaping the problems of urban life. They were going to something. John saw this on the trip to Jonestown.

I had a feeling that everybody was somebody. 'We who were nobody are now God's people.' Being somebody is more than corporate identity. People in the project give the feeling that they are somebody, not simply because they identify with the project, but in their own right. One woman has the house of her dreams. Other older people tend their own gardens, sing and entertain. While we were in Georgetown, an older woman with a speech impediment, perhaps from a stroke, was eagerly waiting to go to Jonestown. She

flew in with us. That night during the entertainment she was keeping time to the music with her cane and swaying. A boy of nine or ten flew in with us. He had been in Georgetown while his artificial leg was lengthened. We met his brother in Jonestown. He is bent with a disfigured spine. In the States he knew the ridicule of playmates. Here there's a different sensitivity. An accountant is using his experience in the business affairs of the church. A lawyer is teaching. Young adults who've come through the drug scene are engaged in significant work.

Carolyn described it differently:

It is interesting that with a simpler life style, people have more time for deep thinking and analysis than they do in a fast-paced urban setting, and one can really feel like one is building something for a change.

In The Story of Utopias, Lewis Mumford says that, "Almost every utopia is an implicit criticism of the civilization that served as its background." But Mumford adds that it is more than just a reaction.

Likewise it is an attempt to uncover potentialities that the existing institutions either ignored or buried beneath an ancient crust of custom and habit.

Carolyn's comments reflect Mumford's assessment. And the reality of Jonestown shows that some people did get the chance to develop their talents in ways they could not in the U.S. Certainly Jonestown encompassed a critique of U.S. society as well as a model, although imperfect, of a society without classes, and without racism and sexism.

For these reasons, the leaders in Jonestown stressed education. Education would help people change. They could learn, become better informed -- about the world and the new way of living -- and thus erase class and race distinctions.

Education also crossed age lines. Older people studied Russian and political theory. One man asked Charles Garry during his visit to Jonestown what he thought about the "labor theory of value".

Jim regularly read, and interpreted, world news to the community. On one occasion he told them:

For Sunday be sure to play the news in the library ... preparing for what may be a test tomorrow evening. Then the language class, then after that we'll have our news, and our language, and then we'll have a musical program for the head of the [Guyana] cultural center.

In another directive he announced:

All departments should talk about the news. I don't want to walk into departments or other people in Public Relations hearing chit-chat. I want you to be in dialogue, talking about the news.

And then he added, "Talking in Russian to each other, practicing. We should be above brainwashing."

Education in Jonestown could be called brainwashing or indoctrination or re-education or re-socialization, depending on one's viewpoint. The community required new ways of looking at the world and at each other. It began with the children.

Jim wanted the children to learn cooperative living early. "Ask if there are any children who are not being treated fairly," he ordered the community. "I don't want children to have more than others. I want them to be taught to share."

School-age children didn't work unless planting or harvest time took them from their classes for a few days. Carolyn felt that just being out of the city was an education in itself. "One of the remarkable beauties of this kind of lifestyle," she wrote in February 1978, "is the educational value for the children. They are so well informed on the natural order of things grown here and they learn all kinds of things about the bush."

Carolyn, the teacher, developed materials for the school.

I am teaching political science in our high school. I do a lot of teaching of political philosophy which I have always wanted to do as you may recall. This is the first time I have ever been able to teach what I really have wanted. Also I help administrate the high school and train younger teachers.

It is a challenge in the middle of the jungle, but with even less in the way of supplies it is so much nicer to be able to teach what you want the way you want that it is worth the minor inconveniences.

The community established a pre-school, an elementary and a high school. The people also built a baby nursery with a play porch "which is really darling," Carolyn said.

Jonestown also built up a library of 8000 volumes which Kimo enjoyed visiting. "So we went last night," Carolyn wrote in July 1978.

He said he wanted to read about Charlie Brown and proceeded to go to the librarian and check out his book on Charlie Brown and how Snoopy was naughty and had to go to Peppermint Patty's for some discipline for doggies. I read the story to him first and then he read it to me backwards. He then returned the book and checked out a second one to read. It isn't just anywhere that a three-year-old can go to the library, right to the kids' section and pick out his book, turn in the card and sit down to read.

Some Guyanese Education Ministry officials did not approve of the private school in Jonestown competing with the government schools in the area. Inspections and accreditation proceedings, however, legitimized the project's school and made it "public", at least in the eyes of the law. The school was accredited by the time John and Barbara visited in May 1978.

All utopian societies face the challenge of taking people from the old world and educating them in the ways of the new. In addition to traditional, or non-traditional schooling, the community tries to break old habits through public criticism.

The communities at Oneida, New York and Amana, Iowa used "mutual criticism" to change people. Those sessions may well have resembled "catharsis" at Peoples Temple. As Dr. John R. Hall wrote in an essay in In Gods We Trust,

every sectarian action has its benevolent interpretation and legitimation within the sect... Thus, from inside the sect, various practices of 'confession,' 'mutual criticism', or 'catharsis sessions' seem necessary to

prevent deviant views from taking hold within the group.

People cling to old ways, despite re-education. At Jonestown, people still cussed, drank, smoked, made love, made mistakes, just as they always had. People complained about each other at community meetings. One night in Jonestown, a man said he was tired of speeches. He suggested that everyone who wanted to stay up until three in the morning come out and work with him the next day. "Write it down," he griped, "and put it on your grave."

The complaints, the griping and the criticism characterize most utopias. At Icaria, Kaweah, Llano and Altruria, dissent marred regular business meetings. The minute books and newspapers of these groups "related interminable sessions airing personal disputes, questioning minor administrative decisions, or seeking individual dispensations." One of the many self-criticism letters found in Jonestown reveals exactly these kinds of problems.

When I got here, I really hated working in the fields in the hot sun and sometimes getting soaked from the rain. When I put in for a job change, it was denied, although it was not explained to me why. Since then I have not put in for a job change because I've adjusted to the field work and enjoy being out in the open.

The pastoral life didn't satisfy everyone. The absence of privacy, and the constant contact with people quickly grew old for those less committed to the cause. The dorms and houses at Jonestown served only as places to sleep. Life was lived communally -- in the fields, in the school, in the pavilion. "The members were not socially developed sufficiently to maintain such close relations," an anonymous diarist wrote of a Fourierist "Phalanx" in 1870. It could have been written of Jonestown.

The individuals who were disturbed, or criminal, or simply lost also hindered social development at Jonestown. Those types of people seek structure, and find their way into every utopian colony. When Robert Owen offered what amounted to free room and board for the colonists at New Harmony, Indiana, one observer noted that:

It is certain that there was a proportion of needy and idle persons, who crowded in

to avail themselves of Mr. Owen's liberal offer; and that they did their share of work more in the line of destruction than construction.

The needy at Jonestown included seniors and children. With almost 200 Social Security recipients, and close to 300 children under age eighteen, over 500 people were dependent upon the rest of the group. This meant that less than half of the Jonestown residents supported the entire community. Although the dependents were not destructive, they drained the community's resources.

Yet the people of Jonestown took care of each other. The strong supported the weak. This came from the people's strong commitment to what they called socialism.

As with other aspects of Jonestown, the community's economic structure had counterparts in earlier utopias. In 1894, for example, a group of Christian socialists established Altruria near Santa Rosa, California. The account Morrison Swift wrote of the commune parallels descriptions of Peoples Temple, which flourished for a time in nearby Redwood Valley before migrating to Guyana.

Altruria was a picturesque and attractive demonstration of society without classes. It had no servant order and no superior caste of idlers, and the gratitude one felt at escaping these trials grew with each day's residence...

Each member presented his entire property to the community and signed a contract to take away only such as the association would allow him, if he saw fit at any time thereafter to withdraw. Some of the members possessed no wealth to contribute, while others brought in several thousand dollars each...

It was proposed to increase the common income by developing a number of industries, such as seed-growing, fruit-preserving, and job-printing, and by receiving visitors to board at the house.

The task of becoming self-sufficient troubled all utopias. Some failed sooner than others, overwhelmed by the task. Adin Ballou, founder of the Hopedale Utopia, described its failure in this regard.

We labored all the while under great disadvantages, having to provide for our

own material subsistence as well as for our distinctive social reform enterprise...

I, as the leader in this undertaking, ought to have been wise enough to postpone practical operations till there had been accumulated a common fund sufficient to give a comfortable home and fairly remunerative employment to those whose might be enlisted under the banner of our new social state. But I was in too much haste to see the realization of my theories and plans. My hope was too large and my economic judgment too small.

Jonestown too had to become self-sufficient before the money supporting the group ran out. In the beginning, the settlers concentrated on agriculture as a way to provide their own food and as a way to make money. Planting, cultivating, harvesting, preparing, buying and selling consumed most of the time of the major part of Jonestown's workforce. The entire community worked in the fields when necessary, as Carolyn wrote:

School is suspended a few days for planting -- eddoes and sweet potatoes. The garden is now producing much greens, okra, cucumber, etc. But we have a lot of planting to do to produce all of our starches (mostly what is called "ground provisions" which is sweet and bitter cassava, eddoes, sweet potato). Also, of course we grow a lot of cutlass beans and eggplant -- both grow well in this area.

Most of the food John and Barbara ate in Jonestown had been grown or raised at the project. But John noticed:

They are not producing enough rice or potatoes for their use. Cassava is a tuber which is used for flour for bread, and I suspect hot-cakes, as well as for feed for the animals. They are still working on dry farming for rice. (Guyana is a rice exporting nation.) Starting with 12 seeds of the winged bean, which is 38% protein, they hope to plant eight or ten acres this fall. They produce their own eggs and frying and stewing chickens as well as pork.

"We also grow a lot of bananas, plantains and pineapple," wrote Carolyn. She described the community's plans for feeding itself.

For protein we use chickens and eggs which we raise, pork from our piggery and fish which are in abundant supply... Our cutlass beans also supply protein. Rice is an item we purchase which of course is indigenous to Guyana though not to our area, though we are growing some varieties. We are also experimenting growing rabbits for protein, since they are prolific and good protein, but just started on this.

We are going to get a few cows for milk, too. Livestock must be treated carefully in the tropics, though one can succeed with the right varieties, but must be cautious to prevent certain diseases and funguses. We are also experimenting growing coffee (HURRAY!) and spices.

We will probably grow citrus for a cash crop but as you may know it takes five years to produce. Citrus grows well in the tropics though the outside skin is not orange in color since there are no frosts. However, the inside is orange and sweet. I expect we will have good results in the long run with citrus. Well, enough of the agriculture report. You must get the picture of a very busy community.

When a commune member announced a year later to the people of Jonestown that they had 21 head of cattle, everyone applauded. The livestock report included the news that a two-acre holding pen was being constructed for the new piglets. When the young man in charge of the piggery observed that fourteen hogs in the 200-pound range were ready for slaughter, the assembly murmured approvingly.

"We had food a'plenty," said 73-year-old Madeline Brooks upon her return to the U.S. after the suicides. "A lot of people are not satisfied with whatever you give them, but we had plenty of food." An unidentified field worker told a different story, however, in a letter of self-criticism to Jim. She complained about a double standard.

The last thing that I dislike is that

I pass by the kitchen during dinnertime and see people with a nice plate. Then when the field workers get in line, there is a limit, meaning a teaspoon of vegetables and maybe two spoons of rice.

In addition to raising hogs and rabbits for meat, Jonestown employed a nutritionist to research protein content of various vegetables the settlers grew. They wanted to discover ways to use the plants considered inedible. The AmerIndians shared their wisdom about indigenous foods and herbs as well. An herb garden, smoke-house and pit for underground cold-cool storage promised some variety to the diet of rice and vegetables. Temple member John Harris reported on the progress of the herb researchers.

We hope to have in the near future what is known as kind of a bush lettuce, we don't know any other name for it, but it tastes like lettuce and it resembles lettuce. At any rate, we're trying and with a little help, we're going to have quite a bit of food in one form or another.

The cooks and nutritionist had to come up with three meals a day for over a thousand people. In addition to buying rice, the group purchased a thousand chickens every three weeks. The cooks worked in a central kitchen and cooked on wood stoves. An enterprising teenager built a duct from the stoves to the big, industrial-size clothes dryer, using heat from the stoves to dry laundry.

Commune members eyed cassava as a potential cash crop. The production of bauxite -- crucial to Guyana's economy -- requires cassava starch. A cassava factory in Port Kaituma promised a ready market for Temple cassava. But at ten cents a ton, the price was too low. A tape-recorded discussion between Temple members and Guyana agriculturalists shows exactly how low. Russ Moton, a Temple agronomist, said they'd heard of a new type of cassava that would produce in six months. "We were laughing," he said, "because it was going to be producing anywhere between 15- to 20-thousand pounds of cassava per acre... Maybe 2000 pounds would be an average yield per acre [for Jonestown]." The Guyanese said 800 to 1200 pounds per acre was a good yield.

Another idea for cash crops came from Ron Talley, who suggested cultivating a spice farm. Jim Jones expressed enthusiasm for the plan, and paraphrased Talley's written evaluation for the community.

If we can grow enough for marketing ... we could afford to put a lot of fertilizer and shell into the ground and build up the shell in the soil because we would be working on something worth a lot of money when sold... If we stick to a bigger garden citrus, bananas and papaya, and put that together, we can also do spices, he feels. We could buy the rest of the food cheaper than we grow it.

In spite of the immense amount of labor the community put into making things grow, the farm could not feed everyone. "The land is worthless for agriculture," Charlie Touchette told us. "The Guyana government should forget about farming there."

The people of Jonestown soon realized they couldn't live off the land, even if the government didn't. For that reason, Peoples Temple turned to manufacturing. At the time of the suicides, it had a machine shop and a lumber mill. Members made furniture and toys which were sold in Georgetown stores. Annie sold her artwork in the city, as did other Jonestown artisans.

Ron Talley saw the Temple's food storage system as another potential money-maker. "I don't think bricks or soap is going to be bringing us the income that will make it worthwhile," he wrote to Jim, alluding to other manufacturing schemes already underway. Talley recommended taking the vacuum storage plan to Georgetown to see if someone there could promote it. He also planned some kind of large scale bulk storage operation "that could put us on the map and bring us large contracts with high margins of profit for this cooperative."

Dolls also shared profit potential, especially since weaker community members like seniors could be put into doll production. Jim emphasized the importance of dolls:

We can't let anything until the thirty-first [October 31, 1978] get in the way of making those dolls, those stuffed toys. Santos and Sons, the largest department store in Guyana, has promised to buy every one we make, and that's quite a bit. We ought to see \$33,000 net profit at the rate we're going by October 31. And we need every penny we can get.

In addition to working six or six and a half long

days a week to survive, the people of Jonestown were expected to maintain the community. The constant influx of visitors meant that Jonestown had to look "spic and span", as Jim put it. Special problems also needed attention. "We can't have any eyesores," he admonished prior to a visit from the Guyana Minister of Culture. "We are known for our cleanliness and our high standards of concern."

Another time he asked everyone "to clean up everything, everything," for the delegation from the Soviet Embassy. "Every supervisor, I hold you responsible for your department. Have no bathroom that smells, and I'm asking complete and immediate clean-up."

The community's cleanliness impressed the Temple's attorney, Charles Garry, during his visit there. "I saw sanitation there," he told The San Francisco Sun Reporter, "that I had not seen in any part of the world except Switzerland. You can eat off the ground."

It wasn't all work in Jonestown. Laughter, good times, and even joy come through on the Jonestown tapes, and from letters we received.

Kimo was an endless source of amusement. I had been with him only three or four times before he was moved to Guyana. John and Barbara took care of him his first year. After Carolyn and Ann moved to San Francisco, they became resident weekend babysitters. John and Barbara especially missed him once he left the U.S. We read of his adventures in every letter.

Kimo went into the bush with [Jim's son] Stephan today. He was thrilled at the adventure. He is a character plus. Has a huge vocabulary and is a very rough, sturdy young fellow. Tanned and healthy. He rode one of our horses the other day with [Jim's son] Lew. He cried because he had to get off finally and was very unreasonable about it. He loves animals and even bugs. The other day he picked up a beetle and told me he was putting it on the grass so it would not get hurt.

Sharon Amos also wrote, detailing some of the funnier moments:

Kimo is his cute little outrageous self as usual -- very assertive. He has a big thing about heavy machine operation and claims he can drive a back-hoe, a fantasy of course...

Annie's sense of humour (British spelling) is as hilarious as usual. She sleeps on the bunk above mine and tried to embarrass me publicly by greeting me when I came into the nurse's office by saying, "Oh, Sharon, I do hope you don't mind my sleeping on top of you."

Also, she will occasionally stuff her boobs with oranges and go right on doing her nurse's tasks with a perfectly straight face.

Carolyn's letters also revealed the lighter side of living in the jungle. In October 1977, as she grew acquainted with the new home, she wrote:

From the land clearing we have two darling pet sloths. In case you aren't familiar with sloths, they are funny furry tree creatures who move v-e-r-y--s-l-o-w-l-y. They have cute smiles and this variety is very peaceful though the two-toed sloths are quite cantankerous I am told. They just hang most of the time.

A few months later, she described more of the wildlife.

There is a rather funny flying beetle here who is totally harmless but gets confused with light and 'dive bombs' like a moth with light. These poor creatures get all confused and lost. We do have an anteater here with an identity crisis -- he doesn't like ants but would rather have baby bottles. Anteaters are extremely affectionate and tame, very intelligent and cute. I never realized what they were like. This one lives in our warehouse and follows its mummy, a lady named Beverly, all around. He is quite a character. They do not bite but have tongues almost a foot long. We also have a toucan named Lenny who is brilliant -- he tries to turn off the radio and is generally a very sociable pest.

While Jonestown lacked the glitter of city night life, it had plenty of things to keep people entertained. A library full of books, a video recorder -- "so we can see the very best movies, plus even Sanford and Son occasionally" -- a film projector and regular movies, a band, and lots of talented people provided many diver-

sions. On one tape, Jim noted that, "There will be that time from four to six [when] children will be having films that will be suitable for them."

Annie said they saw movies fairly often, including Lady Sings the Blues, Andromeda Strain, and "as usual, more political ones like The Parallax View." When John and Barbara visited, they saw The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter and a film on the status of women in the Soviet Union. Their first evening at the project, they listened to the band, laughed "as a 75-year-old woman did her 'Moms Mabley' routine, and a preacher the same age sang and danced. A twelve-year-old boy sang a solo. A Guyanan from that region brought his flute, played and sang. It was good entertainment."

Annie described some of the other entertainments.

We have a big dance every Sunday night and I went to this latest one. It was quite an experience. Seniors and teenagers were dancing together and it was indeed interesting and fun. Everyone was dancing, including myself and I never enjoyed myself so much.

One of my new projects is with a few of our musicians plus some of the Guyanese. They are showing us how to make steel drums from the metal garbage containers. It is a very interesting procedure plus I am learning a lot more about music and a new instrument.

In her next letter, she expanded upon some of the "acts" they saw.

We have our entertainment committee all rehearsed as they are going into town for a presentation at Guyana's main auditorium for a large festival. You should see the presentation... We have our own ... 'Committee', musical talent and the rest... We have dancers, one of whom does a dance with a baby green boa constrictor, who is seven feet long. She does an exceptional job with the snake, especially after only a short period of practice.

The regular Saturday night gatherings brought together everyone in Jonestown, from youngest to oldest.

Most recreational activities were communal, from music practice to sports. The community had a basketball

team it was proud of -- one that played against a Guyanese team the day before the suicides.

At the end of his book, The Story of Utopias, Lewis Mumford summarizes the elements common to the utopias he studied. He found that community ownership of land, work as "a common function" -- "no one is let off from some sort of labor of body or mind because of any inherited privileges or dignities" -- and a scientific approach to improve "the perpetuation of the species" characterized all of them. "Taken together," he concluded, "there is a powerful impulse towards creating a good environment for the good life."

Skip Roberts, the Assistant Police Commissioner for Crime, observed this about Jonestown when he told us, "They were living the good life." John and Barbara "came away from the Peoples Temple Agricultural Project with a feeling for its energy and enthusiasm ... and an understanding of the fascination and high sense of adventure it holds for its residents."

"Why are those people so happy?" asked Charles Garry after his visit in 1977.

They are learning a new social order.
They are learning an answer to a better life.
When I returned to the States, I told my
partners in the office that I had seen para-
dise. From what I saw there, I would say
that the society that is being built in
Jonestown is a credit to humanity.

The members of Peoples Temple tried to create a paradise on earth. Their ideals were lofty: a place free of racism, sexism, poverty and unemployment. Their utopia failed, but not because their ideals were flawed.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SPECIAL CARE

Warning to Rose McKnight about
faking being sick: Don't ever
do it again.

-- Instructions from Jim
Jones to the Medical
Department

The people of Jonestown were most proud of their medical facilities. The health care in that community eventually surpassed anything available in the Northwest District of Guyana. Thousands of pages of documents indicate that medical concerns obsessed the group, especially Jim Jones. They always had.

In San Francisco, the Temple had provided some care for senior citizens, which included exercise and blood pressure testing. During the week, Jim Jones encouraged people to seek professional health care. But on Sundays the emphasis switched to faith healing. Written testimonials spoke of Jim's powers.

Here is some of what you have done for me. You call me out and give me a hip socket and you also raise me from the dead five times and you also heal me of a cancer two times.

Father, I thank you for protection on my job. Thank you for sending the bless cloth. I had an awful pain in my neck but when I touched it with my prayer cloth it went away.

An examination room staffed by trained professionals, including Annie, existed side-by-side with the phony healings. This all changed with the move to Guyana.

We have uncovered no evidence of any faith healing services in Guyana. Jim left the suitcase full of chicken parts in San Francisco. Instead, extensive labor power and money for equipment poured into the Jonestown clinic. The facility boasted of a respirator and an X-ray machine. It also maintained a large staff of over 60 persons, according to a staff evaluation form.

Our family physician, Dr. Robert Flaherty, found the size of the staff incredible. It was far greater than the staff at Bozeman's Medical Associates, which

serves 5000 to 6000 people. Even treating neighboring Guyanese does not account for the high number of medical personnel who seemed to keep very busy. Annie described some of her responsibilities at the center in October 1977.

I am busy as usual with my supervising of the nursing department. We have one of the best medical departments known. We have medical staff health care workers (similar to nurse's aides) who take a special course in medical information, more advanced than usual. Anyway, these health care workers check on a certain type of people daily to see if they are ill or whatever. This way we can keep a close eye on everyone.

The medical center workforce included administrators and secretaries, nurse practitioners, clinical specialists in gynecology, dentistry and physical therapy, treatment nurses, night nurses, X-ray and lab technicians, senior center helpers, pharmacy and bond workers, a podiatrist and one doctor. "The fact that there was only a single doctor was not a big problem for a community that size," said Dr. Flaherty. "They had enough support staff to meet a variety of needs." An administrator for the clinic described the duties of each medical worker and then observed, "I don't know how we can change the structure of the staff without losing out on important things that have to be done." The group even maintained a fulltime beautician to do the seniors' hair.

The clinic did offer help to the Guyanese, but it is unclear how much or how often. "Larry [Schacht, the Temple doctor] has been busy as usual, seeing patients and going into Port Kaituma regularly to take care of the medical problems there," said Annie. "Many of the Guyanese frequent the medical clinic here regularly so we have a large clientele." According to her, Jonestown held a free clinic two days a week. A tape in the FBI's archives provides one testimonial from a Guyanese.

Yesterday afternoon, it was a very grievous afternoon for me. My only son, Bob, two and a half years old ... took a ... seed and pushed it right through into his nose... I decided I must have to seek medical attention immediately...

We took the child into the other vehicle that came for us. Right away into

the hospital the doctor start with his operation with the help of his staff... It took about nearly two and a half hours before they got the seed out. The doctor have did his best... I was so grateful, and I must be so thankful and even the words I wanted to use to them for their kind cooperation that you have give me I cannot find to put it here.

In instructions he gave to the Medical Department, Jim Jones added a cynical, but illuminating note about treating the Guyanese. "Our medical care has paid off (they don't steal from us anymore)."

Jim's instructions, which number 67 for that particular day, reveal the number of sanitation problems the community faced. Tropical illness was a particular problem.

5. People with ringworm and sores are to take a shower before treatment...
7. Do not empty urine cans nor urinate on the ground...
9. We have to kill the fly population...
24. What's being done about rodents?
25. Are we sanitary in the chickery?...
29. Right now people with feet problems come first with socks...
34. Malaria is all over. It's just across the road. What are people on salt-free diets doing to get protection? Check this out, make sure they are getting medication...
41. Bob Rankin is to help drain water out of the rice pavilion...

In a taped commentary, Jim discussed the problem of water. Tests in the town well revealed no evidence of staph, strep, typhoid, paratyphoid or pneumonia, he reported. But they did find some kind of bacteria. Jim summarized a list of precautions to keep the well clean and disease-free.

I suggest we put up a screen to see that nothing gets into the well and dies, and [Marie Rankin] suggests certain kinds of fish. She said bleach is okay as a temporary solution, but not as a long term solution. One of the problems is that a

dead animal could get down in the well. Bleach won't solve it. I recommend putting some kind of fish down in the well that would eat dead things that would fall and that would keep the water cleared on a continuing basis. We should consult Marie Rankin on what kind of fish to use. Also catfish to clean the bottom of the well, snails to clean the sides and fish that eat algae to clean the water. If we don't have polliwogs in the well we should get them. They eat mosquitos.

Community members weren't the only ones concerned about sanitation in Jonestown. A Guyanese public health official told Sharon Amos in a telephone conversation recorded by the Temple that "we have building regulations ... We have to know about garbage disposal, burial sites ... what we call open spaces, recreation for children, that type of thing." Sharon responded by saying they'd had many officials come through and carefully look over every house.

Official: Yeah, but ... they haven't been public health people.

Sharon: We would be very glad to have you come out and we're very anxious to have you come whenever you can. Because that's our wish too, to have it looked at by anyone who wants to.

Sharon had called to ask the official about a burial site in Jonestown. The group had a death and needed "a designated burial ground" away from houses. Sharon suggested a location near the experimental nursery. Eventually the Jonestown cemetery was situated in the jungle itself, away from the community center. The U.S. Army's Jonestown Task Force found five graves at the cemetery. State Department records indicate that six people died before November 18, 1978, although its list does not include Lynetta Jones, Jim's mother.

Along with traditional care and public health concerns, diet played a large role in Jonestown's preoccupation with physical well-being. Jim's medical instructions provide a few details.

16. Iron deficiency is dangerous.
17. Recommend diets to the people, Doctor...
31. We have to have balanced meals.

32. You have to eat all your greens...
46. Unless you are told otherwise, you will nurse your baby...
51. Supervisors: If your child doesn't get their milk, you will go on Public Service.
52. Snackers, eat all your food.
53. All special diets should go through the doctor. High protein diets can cause people with kidney problems trouble.

The community also experimented with non-traditional herbs and remedies. "I have been treating some small burns," wrote Annie.

It is interesting to see the papaya work and help the skin grow back to its old self. It works better than every other medication or treatment that we have.

Papaya had another use as well, which Annie described.

One of our seniors just made a medicine out of papaya juice which clears up an oily, broken out complexion. This will be a real winner if we can manufacture this in quantities and begin to sell it.

"Is there any way you can make some experiments with these [herb] teas so we can try and stop the bedwetters?" one woman asked the supervisor of the herb kitchen at a public meeting. "Yes, we do," John Harris replied.

We have several teas that can be utilized for bedwetting. And it has to be prescribed through the medical office... A number of people have tried them and they do work. One of them is chicken livers -- the inside of the chicken liver -- and it works very well. And we have some other herbs that can also be utilized.

Annie confirmed the herbalists' work in a letter which came in February 1978. She wrote:

Our herbal experiment project is very successful. The irish vine is a plant which we have crushed and put on ringworm and ath-

lete's foot. It works great! We have something for everything. Constipation, diarrhea, headaches, fevers, and boils are just a few of the things we have the remedies for. It's a really rewarding experience and makes me feel good to see our own medication mixtures working and taking care of some of these smaller problems.

Annie's work in Jonestown grew more demanding. She learned more about tropical medicine, and became adept in a variety of new areas:

I have been doing more extensive work lately in the laboratory. Larry has been showing me how to do different types of lab tests and blood smears. I have been looking at cells under the microscope and he has found several women who have had to come in for biopsies or whatever because of strange cell combinations and structures. Many were never diagnosed as having cancer or suspicious type problems but here they have been found because of Larry's thoroughness...

I am also in charge of teaching wound care to the treatment nurses, all of whom must learn to debride. Two of the nurses I have taught do a much better job at debridement than I do and they are also teaching others debridement. We don't have that many wounds that need debriding but when they do -- it needs to be done correctly.

A concern for all aspects of health permeated the whole group. It came from the top -- with Jim's recommendation that "snackers are not to get anything without approval of the snack committee, which will meet once a week" -- and it came from the bottom. Close to one-tenth of the entire population worked in some kind of health-related job. This created a gossip problem which Jim addressed.

Important information about anybody's medical chart will be in serious consultation in the People's Forum. This is not a gossip center. We have people who could not take many aggravations... I better not see one bit of a patient's history ever talked about... I want to see no gossip ever...

I'm going to put gossips in the public service works.

The medical workers were constantly being evaluated by their peers and by their supervisors. Evaluations from September 30, 1978 cover attitudes, performance and ability.

Administrators:

- Phyllis Bloom - Not enough follow-up on Mary Black's situation.
- Sandra Evans - Is getting on people when late. Good follow-up. People given 2 hours extra work when late.
- Sylvia Sly - O.K.
- Mike Simon - Needs a lot of work on organization of the cleaning and maintenance of the Medical Dept. Needs to confront people for lack of follow-up. Has bad communication with Rennie Kice. Has good potential, does good follow-up on inventory count.

Notes from June 6, 1978 indicate that "Larry [Schacht] complains about the nurses' inability to follow thru." The notes continue and reveal other problems people experienced working in the medical center.

Cheryl thinks if there were less meetings she would be able to follow thru more. She thinks 2-4 everyday is too much time. One meeting questioned Jim's statement that nurses were putting down others, because they had a degree. Another meeting was to schedule everyone a day in the fields. Everyone has opportunity of choosing their day, thank you.

The evaluations reveal that Jonestown's only doctor seemed to be growing disenchanted with his work.

Continues to be moody -- very enthused about class. Excellent teacher. Hasn't checked Miguel de Pina in S.C.U. [Special Care Unit] even after confrontation for not making rounds in S.C.U.

Jonestown dealt with behavioral problems in the Special Care Unit. A staff of about six kept disruptive, or dangerous, residents and political dissidents heavily sedated in Special Care. Occasionally seriously ill stayed there also. If Larry Schacht were not making his rounds there, it might have meant he was unhappy with what was happening.

Larry Schacht was the Temple's big success story. According to Annie, he had been on drugs when the church saved him, helped him through medical school, and set up a practice in Guyana -- even though that meant leaving San Francisco before finishing his internship. The Guyana government gave him a temporary license, but none of the medical staff working in Jonestown were ever legally licensed by Guyana.

Larry, the one who reportedly mixed the vat of poison on November 18, has alternately been described as a sadist and a saint. Annie's letters provide another view of Larry.

I am now one of the staff supervisors plus am in charge of wound care and help Larry in his office while examining people. He has taught me how to suture wounds and cuts, and I've had my share of it so I know how to stitch people now...

Larry has really been working hard. He did a really delicate surgery removing a piece of metal embedded in the cornea of one young man's eye. One of the other nurses and I helped him do it at 3:30 in the morning.

Dr. Larry also delivered several babies. He delivered twins by Caesarian section, guided through the operation via shortwave radio to a doctor in Maryland.

"We are not encouraging a lot of pregnancies at this time," wrote Annie in 1977, "until the farm is more developed, but many came here already pregnant." The next spring, she described several of the births in which she assisted -- three in one week. "We have, so far, seven more babies to go, I believe, so we are really becoming part of 'production' here in Jonestown."

We were never quite sure what Annie's relationship with Larry was. At first, it seemed to be romantic. Annie joked about shacking up with a Guyanese man if Larry didn't arrive soon. But Larry was supposed to be Maria Katsaris' fiance as well. Annie and Larry never spoke of marriage. In the fall of 1977, however, Annie asked John

and Barbara for some money to adopt a child with him.

If you can, could you send \$400.00 so we could adopt another small child? Larry and I were thinking of adopting one but we first need the money to do it with. The children here are so precious. This way you could be double grandparents.

John and Barbara had reservations about the adoption. The main one was the stability of Annie's relationship with Larry. Annie responded:

I don't understand what the problem is with my adopting a child with Larry but I would not plan to adopt or produce any baby without having a daddy-figure who would be responsible for the child. Larry is very responsible and you will never find a more skillful, conscientious doctor. He is an artist and musician and you can tell how artistic he is by the way he sews people up -- there is rarely a scar. But I guess you will have to meet him sometime to make your own evaluation. (December 6, 1977)

John and Barbara would not give \$400 for the adoption. However, they did give some Christmas presents, of cash, to Carolyn, Annie and myself. Annie wrote back:

I wanted to thank you for the \$200 and Carolyn said thank you for hers also. Larry also wanted me to stick in a word for him to thank you for the financial help. Normally he could be making a lot of money in the States but as he says -- he would much rather devote his time to medicine and serving the needs of people here by volunteering his time. When you come he can give you both physical exams -- he does the most thorough job I have ever seen.

Anyway the money will really help a lot in the adoption. I do think I am old enough and capable enough to decide whether or not to stick with someone in order to make an adoption. I wouldn't want a child to be fatherless. I just wanted to let you know this.

Larry eventually married a woman who worked in the clinic. Together they adopted two children. And Annie found a companion, Sebastian, a young black man.

It is hard to understand how anyone as dedicated to healing as Larry was could also participate in the evil of Jonestown. But that is the paradox of the tragedy: many good people -- fine and caring -- also performed the dirty work. This included keeping dissent, and dissenters, under control.

Problem people were handled in the Special Care Unit. According to Dale Parks, a defector who left with Leo Ryan on November 18, the S.C.U. consisted of eight beds somewhat removed from the main facility. "If a person wanted to leave Jonestown or if there was a break of rules," he said, "one was taken to the extended care unit. The people were given drugs to keep them under control."

Jim Jones used Special Care as a threat. "To Sue, concerning stealing food from garbage cans: You will have to go into intensive care -- we can't have this." And another: "The following people will go into confinement in S.C.U. if they don't change their attitudes"; then he listed the names of five young men.

It's clear that behavior and attitude problems dominated special care cases. Breaking the rules simply led to more work. "Violation of nursery rules will bring some warnings that lead to Public Services." Violence and a non-cooperative spirit appeared to be more serious crimes that required drastic measures. For example, Jim noted the instance of a woman infatuated with his son Stephan.

Barb Walker is to be kept in "No Capacity". She has threatened to kill everyone that kept her away from Stephan. Keep her under control in the infirmary.

Dissent could also lead to Special Care. Dale Parks gave no indication of how many people this involved, although the number of beds shows there could not have been many. Charles Garry believes that at least one Temple leader, Eugene Chaikin, had been committed to Special Care for falling out with Jim. Chaikin, himself a lawyer, had been a moderating influence within the leadership. He wrote a memo criticizing Garry, and suggested that he return to San Francisco to brief another lawyer. Garry believes Chaikin wanted to leave Jonestown, and that was the only way he could do it. In November 1978, Garry tried to see Chaikin four times,

and never did. Another Temple attorney, Mark Lane, later told Garry that Chaikin had been drugged.

The Special Care staff used major tranquilizers to keep patients sedated. Medical records show the bond -- or medical supply house -- contained vast quantities of psychotropic drugs. These included pentobarbital and phenobarbital, mellaril, thorazine, stelazine, seconal, librium and valium. Dr. Flaherty concludes from the records that there were more than enough drugs to incapacitate all 900 residents of Jonestown. However, he added, "If everyone were drugged with the major tranquilizers, they could not have maintained a high level of productivity." Major tranquilizers would have made normal people -- non-psychotic -- incapable of doing any work. And yet the people of Jonestown had accomplished a great deal. They worked hard all the time. And when they didn't work, when they had their half-days off, Jim Jones exhorted them to work some more.

A possibility exists, however, that everyone might have been drugged at some point or another. Jim ordered that "all people except bed-wetters and handicapped and toddlers must get rid of their pee-cans. All pee-cans must be registered." There may have been a simple explanation for this -- sanitation -- or a more sinister one -- a dissident could have smuggled out a urine sample to show that people were being drugged.

Certainly everyone in Jonestown knew what "special care" meant. Many must have known drugs were being used on some people. Annie did. She assumed responsibility for the pharmaceutical bond in Jonestown.

I am becoming quite an expert in pharmacology, working in the medical supply house. I never thought I would be doing so much pharmacy stuff.

The records she kept in the bond were "meticulous", according to Dr. Flaherty. Clearly dated, they indicate the amounts received and issued, the dosage, and the balance on hand.

As Jim's personal nurse, she also knew of his drug dependency. Dr. Carlton Goodlett, Jim's physician in San Francisco, said that Jim was "frying his brain" with drugs, after he saw him in Jonestown. The small refrigerator in Jim's cabin was well-stocked with drugs.

Jim's autopsy report revealed toxic levels of pentobarbital. And yet, because he had become an addict, the drug was not what killed him.

The tissue levels of pentobarbital are within the toxic range, and in some cases of drug overdose, have been sufficient to cause death. The liver and kidney pentobarbital levels are within the generally accepted lethal range. The drug level within the brain is not within the generally accepted lethal range, and brain levels are the most important as far as vital functions are concerned. The cause of death is not thought to be pentobarbital intoxication because: (1) the brain level is low, as stated above (2) tolerance can be developed to barbiturates over a period of time and (3) the lethal level of a drug varies from individual to individual.

The autopsy failed to reveal any fatal illness, contrary to reports of cancer, blood disease, and heart problems that circulated after November 18. "No anatomic evidence of antemortem disease is found."

The major tranquilizers, most of them manufactured by American drug companies, came via other South American countries. Carolyn's passport indicates several trips to Venezuela. According to Joe Mazor, a Bay Area private investigator, Temple leader Karen Tow Layton also traveled frequently to Venezuela to purchase drugs for the clinic.

The more ordinary medical supplies came through with visitors. Charles Garry brought several duffel bags into Guyana that contained Band-Aids, Kotex, Latex rubber gloves, potassium, Lawton instruments, dissector sponges, Q-tips, and baby vitamins.

After the suicides, the large quantity of drugs discovered made many speculate as to their use and purpose. Some explained the drugs by saying that Jonestown was a mind-control experiment. But Dale Parks says there was "no way" that many drugs were used. Dr. Flaherty notes that it would have been easy enough to eliminate people in Special Care, but he doubts that that happened. "Patients were re-integrated into the community after treatment," he said.

But Dr. Flaherty also wondered why the drug records were so detailed. If Jonestown were indeed a mind-control experiment, then the "controllers" would want to maintain records. A simpler explanation, however, is that the people involved in health care in Jonestown were all trained professionals. They knew how to do their jobs -- no matter how perverted at times -- and they did them well.

Some people believed that the only way you could keep people in Jonestown was to drug them. Members of the Concerned Relatives group working against the Temple and Jim Jones rationalized the behavior of their children in the church by claiming they were drugged. How else could these outsiders understand the rejection they experienced from their children? These relatives were convinced their children were held against their will, either with drugs or bondage. It was their pressure which encouraged a Congressman to travel to Guyana to investigate.

CHAPTER NINE

TIM STOEN, 1977

The king said, 'Bring me a sword.' So a sword was brought before the king. And the king said, 'Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other.' Then the woman whose son was alive said to the king, because her heart yearned for her son, 'Oh, my lord, give her the living child and by no means slay it.' But the other said, 'It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it.' Then the king answered and said, 'Give the living child to the first woman, and by no means slay it; she is its mother.' And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to render justice.

-- I Kings 3: 16-28

The fight between Jim Jones and disillusioned ex-member Tim Stoen was not over custody of a child, although that was the ostensible reason for the dispute. It was, instead, a power struggle between two men and two ideologies.

Tim Stoen had been a trusted leader in Peoples Temple. An ardent supporter, as well as legal advisor to the church, he left the Temple, joined his wife in a custody suit against Jim Jones, and organized other ex-members and relatives of Temple followers. Using John Victor, the child, Tim galvanized the anger and apprehension of the Concerned Relatives organization against Peoples Temple. Jim Jones, also using John Victor, focused church members' animosity and suspicion against critics, especially relatives.

According to Carolyn, Tim joined Peoples Temple in 1969. He became acquainted with Jim when he was Director of the Legal Services Foundation in Ukiah. Jim was on the board of trustees. Shortly after Tim joined the church, by his own account, he asked Jim if he should accept an appointment as Assistant District Attorney for Mendocino County. He took the position in 1970 and held it for six years, until the District Attorney for San Francisco asked him to work on a vote fraud investigation in San Francisco.

It's been charged that Tim's investigation of the 1975 city elections covered up Peoples Temple's involvement in them. Although fifty people were eventually indicted in the case, none belonged to Peoples Temple. The District Attorney's office routinely destroyed voting records for that election in 1978.

In February 1977, Tim abruptly resigned from his position as Assistant District Attorney for San Francisco and moved to Guyana. There he tried to get admittance to the Guyana bar. At some point, he severed his ties with the Temple, but it's not clear when. According to a U.S. Embassy official, Tim left Guyana, and presumably the church, in March. He was still involved in church matters, however, when he convened a legal con-

ference for Temple staff in late April. Members of the legal staff flew from California to Georgetown to discuss legal problems, like potential court-ordered conservatorships declared against hostile Temple members. (Conservatorship, the legal process by which adult children can be declared incompetent, is frequently used by parents of children in "cults" to regain control over rebellious offspring.) Marceline Jones said Tim left Guyana in June. This corresponds to his own claim that he formally severed ties June 12, 1977.

He departed Guyana in secrecy and vanished for several months until he surfaced in England. Temple members, who didn't know Tim had defected, worried that he'd been kidnapped or assassinated during his disappearance. The next they heard of him was in an August 23, 1977 news article. He had announced his intention to sue New West Magazine and The Mendocino Grapevine, a newspaper published in Ukiah, for personal libel. Even after a California court awarded Grace Stoen custody of John Victor, Temple members still believed Tim remained loyal.

But on October 6, a delegation of members met Tim outside San Francisco Superior Court and tried to prevent him from joining his wife inside. The last the group heard from him personally was by letter, dated November 17, 1977, asking Jim to return John Victor by Friday noon, November 25. The very next day, November 18, 1977, the California Superior Court granted physical custody of John Victor to Tim's estranged wife, Grace. The court also awarded joint legal custody to both of them, and ordered Jim Jones to give up John Victor immediately.

Tim's son hadn't interested the lawyer before, according to the Temple. He'd married Grace Grech in January 1970. Twelve years her senior, and already a Temple member, he persuaded the nineteen-year-old to join the church. A year and a half later, on January 25, 1972, Grace gave birth to John Victor Stoen at Santa Rosa Hospital. Two weeks afterwards, Tim signed an affidavit stating that Jim Jones was John's father:

I, Timothy Oliver Stoen, hereby acknowledge that in April 1971, I entreated my beloved pastor, James W. Jones, to sire a child by my wife, Grace Lucy (Grech) Stoen, who had previously, at my insistence, reluctantly but graciously consented thereto. James W. Jones agreed to do so, reluctantly, after I explained that I very much wished to raise a child, but was unable, after extensive attempts, to sire one myself. My reason for

requesting James W. Jones to do this is that I wanted my child to be fathered, if not by me, by the most compassionate, honest and courageous human being the world contains.

The child, John Victor Stoen, was born January 25, 1972. I am privileged beyond words to have the responsibility for caring for him, and I undertake this task humbly with the steadfast hope that said child will become a devoted follower of Jesus Christ and be instrumental in bringing God's kingdom here on earth, as has been his wonderful natural father.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct (February 6, 1972).

Like most of the confessions signed by Peoples Temple members, the affidavit probably was contrived to prove Tim's loyalty to Jim Jones. Tim said that, "Jim asked it as a proof of faith." Grace added, "There was no suggestion that they [the confessions] were truthful."

Even if the affidavit were false, however, it's still possible that Jim was, in fact, John Victor's father. Many remarked on John Victor's likeness to Jim, saying the child was "the spittin' image" of him. But, as Temple lawyer Charles Garry remembers, John Victor also looked like his mother, Grace.

Jim asserted to San Francisco Examiner reporter Tim Reiterman in February 1978 that: "I am the father... I challenge him [Tim Stoen] to take all the blood tests -- all the sophisticated blood tests available -- and compare them to the child and myself. I challenge him to take a polygraph and truth serum."

Reiterman asked Jim why he hadn't made a legal claim to John Victor. Jim replied that he'd followed the advice of his lawyer.

I could have done so earlier, but I did not want to cause embarrassment for a little child. I had assurances from them, their full word, witnessed publicly and privately (that is, from Mr. and Mrs. Stoen) that they would allow my wife and I to continue to rear my child as we have for several years, who looks exactly like a replica of my childhood pictures.

Jim had no need to make a legal claim until Grace

tried to get her son back. When John Victor was 2 1/2, and again when he was 3 1/2, Grace signed over legal guardianship of John to several Peoples Temple members. When Grace left the church permanently on July 4, 1976, she left both her husband and son behind. According to Jim, Grace left John with the church because she didn't want to disrupt his life. "Grace felt the highest act of love for John-John was to leave him there in an environment to which he was accustomed until she got established and got her mind together as to the future."

Church members felt Grace never really cared for her son. Her abandonment of him, they reasoned, proved it. Even Tim wrote a note to Gene Chaikin afterwards saying, "I don't think Grace cares that much for John that she would risk seizing him and incurring the group's added wrath... I have no objection to him going [to Guyana]," he added, "if that's what the group wants. I just don't look forward to John not being in Jim's presence as a model."

Carolyn frequently took care of John Victor. According to one memo, she had to treat his severe diaper rash, because Grace neglected him. Additionally, Grace signed power of attorney, guardianship and even the right of adoption over to Carolyn. Her consent, signed December 5, 1974 in Ukiah, was never witnessed and probably wasn't legal. At that early date, Grace already agreed "to my husband being awarded the custody of said child in divorce proceedings with it understood I shall have reasonable rights of visitation."

Jim felt kinship with John Victor even before Grace left. Her departure merely simplified things. Jim believed that John Victor was the future leader of Peoples Temple, his reincarnation in the flesh. Neither Stephan Jones, nor Jim-Jon (Kimo) Prokes, his two undisputed biological sons and likeliest heirs, held the honor or esteem bestowed upon John Victor. When Grace fled the church, she took some money from John Victor's savings account. Jim berated her:

It's money for his development, you know, the development of a leader. He belongs to the world. He don't belong to any of us. He belongs to the world. You can see it more and more every day... John isn't a dependent type of personality. That's what leaders are made of. He doesn't depend upon you or his daddy. He isn't dependent upon anybody. He's got a lot of strength.

John Victor got special treatment. He was more equal than his roommate Kimo in Jonestown. His bed was in Jim's cabin with Jim's closest family: Carolyn, Annie, and Maria Katsaris. Whether this was out of regard for John Victor, fear that he would be kidnapped, or spite directed at Tim Stoen, we don't know.

In late August 1977, when the Jonestown community received the news that the California Superior Court had awarded Grace Stoen preliminary custody of John Victor, it still didn't know Tim had defected. An undated, unsigned memo to Charles Garry from someone in Peoples Temple noted that:

The Guyanese have told JJ [Jim Jones] that if Tim could only make a showing in Guyana, that Grace would have no rights whatsoever because Tim, being a resident, would have control over the situation. They think that it is important for Tim to show up to settle the matter. Jim was asking if there was any possible way of getting to Tim on this matter... Tim would be able to let Jim adopt the child without interference from Grace.

Grace's petition to the court shows, however, that she had been in touch with Tim several times before actually filing her August 11 declaration. Tim had promised to travel to Guyana to institute legal proceedings if negotiations with Peoples Temple failed to result in John Victor's release.

Grace's San Francisco attorney, Jeffrey Haas, flew to Guyana instead, two weeks after the California Superior Court awarded Grace temporary custody of John Victor. A Guyana court had to make a similar ruling, since the California order had no legality in Guyana. Haas therefore hired Clarence Hughes to represent the Stoens in Guyana.

Hughes, a Georgetown lawyer, was an odd choice. He had defended the ex-wife of the Prime Minister in a messy divorce suit. He was not likely to prevail against the Prime Minister's friends. For a week or two, however, he did succeed in getting favorable rulings on the Stoen case: the court ordered Jim Jones to appear before it, and when Jim refused to accept service of the order, the justice issued an arrest warrant for him, and for John Victor, to obtain custody.

Haas made two trips to Jonestown, on September 6 and 9, to serve the papers on Jim. Both Jim and John

Victor were unavailable -- or hiding -- at the time of Haas' visits. Community members removed the writs that had been nailed to some of the buildings in Jonestown, and returned them to Haas' LandRover.

The U.S. Embassy reported to the State Department on September 19 that the Stoen case had entered the political arena, "impeding its progress." The Embassy was probably referring to the Guyana government's inaction on the arrest warrant. However, the Embassy itself also became involved in the case, although its staff was supposed to act as an impartial mediator between two groups of American citizens.

The Embassy reported to State on Haas' two unsuccessful trips to Jonestown. It also prepared an emergency passport for John Victor, in case he could get out of Jonestown. At least one Embassy employee had already taken sides on the custody issue. Two Temple members found T. Dennis Reece, U.S. Vice Consul, with Jeff Haas at Haas' Georgetown hotel. Reece told Paula Adams and Harriett Tropp that "the U.S. Embassy would not allow this mother to be denied her child."

This was a surprising opinion, since American citizens rarely win custody suits in other countries. Foreign courts usually rule in favor of keeping children within their jurisdictions. "Haas was unrealistic to think a California court order would mean anything in Guyana," Richard McCoy, former Embassy Consul, told us. Unofficially, he added, the Stoens had abandoned John Victor to Peoples Temple.

Temple members believed Haas used money to influence the custody proceedings in Guyana. Karen Tow Layton reported that the group's barrister-at-law, Sir Lionel Luckhoo, told her

that money had passed through the Guyana court to assist the expeditious execution of orders against Jim Jones. He also said that Clarence Hughes, the attorney representing Jeffrey Haas who claims to be representing Grace Stoen stated, 'I hope this goes on forever. I'll be a very rich man.' Sir Lionel said on several occasions that there is 'very big money behind this.' He also said that he was positive that Burch-Smith, who deals with the passing of court orders, was given money. Burch-Smith would not issue court records which Sir Lionel was legally entitled to when Sir Lionel first applied for them.

Sir Lionel believed from the beginning that the Stoen case was political. "I can help you if this is a matter of the law," he explained to Temple members, "but if it is political, there is nothing I can do for you." According to a paper Carolyn wrote, Luckhoo advised the group to refuse service and not to cooperate with the court orders which he insisted were illegal.

A cable from the U.S. Embassy dated October 4, 1977, describes a meeting with Sir Lionel in which he told the U.S.

Consul, McCoy, that the Stoen case was full of legal errors. The judge had mishandled the case, he felt, in an effort to resolve it quickly. He cited the problems, which included the lack of personal service of the summons; the lack of the names of police officers who reportedly saw Jim; and the lack of precedent in the order to arrest John Victor. On October 6, the judge in the case ruled against a motion by the Stoens, and the case was postponed for another month.

Haas' failure to bring back John Victor did not deter Grace Stoen. On the contrary, she escalated her pressure by enlisting vigorous support from her estranged husband.

It's important to remember that no one in Peoples Temple knew where Tim Stoen was at that time. No one in the church knew he'd defected either, until later in September. His disappearance and subsequent emergence as leader of the opposition led Temple members to reassess Tim's past involvement in the church.

One theory they formulated was that Tim had embezzled Temple funds. After all he had instructed others on how to sneak U.S. currency past customs officials. Grace knew of the embezzlement, the hypothesis went, and used her knowledge to blackmail Tim into supporting her efforts to get John Victor. The money would have helped finance what Charles Garry estimates to have been a quarter million dollar effort to obtain custody.

Another theory members developed was that Tim worked as an agent provocateur for a U.S. law enforce-



Kimo Prokes (l.) and
John Victor Stoen.

ment organization. A number of facts supported this idea.

First of all, Tim's personal conservatism made him suspect. Raised a strict fundamentalist, a graduate of Wheaton Bible College in Illinois and Stanford Law School, Tim gave up what he called a "posh" lifestyle -- Porsche, wardrobe, women -- when he joined Peoples Temple. While idealistic about changing the world, his own political beliefs differed from those of Temple leaders. He registered with the Republican Party in 1976. His notes from a trip he made to East Germany in 1958 revealed a strong anti-communist attitude. The notes also echo comments he made about Peoples Temple twenty years later. During the trip, which he made when he was seventeen in connection with Rotary International -- an alleged CIA front -- Tim was arrested. He based his notes on a conversation he had with a fellow prisoner.

I saw things that textbooks and newspapers can't make vivid. I saw what a police state can do to individual human beings...

The restrictions of a communist police state are as bad as you read about. At the newsstands you buy papers of East Germany which serve as propaganda only...

Each week [in East Germany] a person must attend meetings some as often as 2-3 times a week. Meetings can last as long as four hours -- what is discussed is Marxist writings and the virtue of a democratic state. The groups are so arranged that they separate friends and people with common interests. My informer told me that the meetings were not too successful in indoctrination because too many people had been to the West.

He [Stoen's informant] said that if East Berliners had known before the borders were being set up, that 40 percent of them would have left all worldly goods to escape. Less than 10 percent of them still support the regime...

Even in [the] East German army, Saxons had to be brought in from other areas to keep check on the local soldiers because many of the local soldiers had anti-communist sympathies. It was fear alone that made most men carry out orders... The soldiers are told that there are two kinds of Germans, good

and bad -- the good are those who obey communist orders, and the bad are to be shot...

All I can do is anguish about the problem and pray to God that it won't last forever.

Another reason the group eventually believed Tim was an agent provocateur was his dual role as law enforcer -- that is, assistant district attorney -- and Temple legal advisor. He frequently gave unethical, if not illegal, advice. For example, he suggested to John and Barbara that they "lose" Lester Kinsolving's briefcase. As John wrote, "I remember thinking, here is an officer of the court, urging me to do something which I presumed to be illegal."

Terri Buford, who left Jonestown less than a month before the suicides, recalled another incident in which Tim suggested doing something illegal. In an affidavit signed October 10, 1978, she said that Tim gave her a note he'd written and asked her to pass it along to Jim, saying he felt it would be "a good way to handle [Temple ex-member and critic] Jim Cobb."

During the conversation Tim Stoen told me that he would recommend that something be written up as a 'script' that someone could read to Cobb over the telephone. He said this way he could word the 'script' so as to 'scare the shit out of Cobb.' Tim Stoen said that when the call was made, that it should be done, if not by Annie Moore, then by some other unknown voice, and that the caller should call from a pay phone (not located near the church). Tim Stoen said that the call should not last longer than three minutes for the reason that there was a slight possibility that someone might have the call traced. Tim Stoen recommended that the caller wear gloves so that his fingerprints could not be traced. Tim Stoen suggested that the caller say something to make Cobb believe that his life was in danger.

Tim Stoen told me at the time that if Annie Moore could not do it, that I should interview other people to do the same.

The note was never acted upon.

The text of the note, which Tim wrote in 1973, said:

I still think it advisable to proceed. Person who does it should be unknown to subject and should try to disguise voice and speak to the point. Annie Moore probably good.

I don't think that the authorities will go to all the trouble to make a voice print since nothing illegal involved.

It's rare that such a 'natural' opportunity will present itself.

Tim sent another note to Jim Jones around the time he wrote the note about scaring Jim Cobb. A church member had received a bomb threat over the telephone, and taped the conversation. Tim recommended reporting the call to the police, but not playing the tape for them, "because with no beeper, it's against the law. Maybe we should debate the point, however," he added.

According to David Conn, an employee of Standard Oil who contacted Dennis Banks regarding his extradition problems, Tim routinely recorded conversations with Temple members and prominent citizens, such as the Hearsts. Tim supposedly encouraged people in the church to make revolutionary or violent remarks to use against them later. "Every illegal act, every plan for violence was either initiated or approved by Stoen," Terri Buford told reporters after November 18, 1978.

Perhaps none of this is evidence of anything more than zeal and devotion to Jim Jones and Peoples Temple. However, the fact that the chief legal advisor for the Temple was also a law enforcement officer, and personally conservative, made Temple members wonder why he consistently encouraged people to break the law.

For whatever reason -- concern, provocation, opportunism, desperation, paternal caring -- Tim joined forces with his wife Grace. After Jeff Haas' failure to retrieve John Victor from Guyana, the Stoens took their case to the U.S. government. They sent a mailgram to ninety-one Members of Congress, including a California Representative named Leo Ryan, who wrote to the Secretary of State on their behalf in early December 1977.

As a result of pressure on the State Department, the U.S. Embassy actively followed the custody case proceedings. The Embassy reported regularly on the Stoen case to the department. A chronology prepared by State hints at the extent of the Embassy's involvement in the case.

9-22-77

Embassy reports that it has been informed by the Foreign Minister that the GOG [Government of Guyana] has decided to act on court orders issued on September 10 in response to the Embassy note requesting due process (Georgetown 2316 - Log 35)

In other words, the Embassy had complained to the Guyana Foreign Minister that Jim Jones had not been arrested. Additional memos show how deeply the U.S. Consul participated.

9-23-77

Embassy reports that, while not permitted to attend hearings in the Stoen case which are held in camera, the Consul has been available outside the Judge's Chambers during the hearings... (Georgetown 2334 - Log 36)

10-12-77

Embassy reports that judge ruled against motion submitted by the Stoens' local attorneys on October 6 and that the next hearing would be held on November 18... (Georgetown 2528 - Log 41)

12-23-77

Memo from R. Hennemeyer, Consular Affairs, to S. Shelton, ARA, requesting ARA consult with Guyanese Ambassador Laurence E. Mann urging expeditious handling of child custody matters by the GOG, memo notes Ambassador Mann's interest and previous contacts with the People's Temple... (Log 427)

A diplomatic note sent to the government of Guyana on September 16 shows still deeper involvement. The note summarized the facts of the case up to that point, and made a recommendation.

We are concerned that expeditious and unimpeded due process under Guyana judicial procedure be followed. It is significant to note that this case involves only American citizens, all of whom are residents of California. Accordingly, it would seem appropriate that the California court would be the proper authority to decide the custody

question. Indeed, normal procedure in cases such as this would require the recognition of the California decree.

While the Stoens relied on the judicial process and Embassy interest to obtain custody of their child, other relatives of Temple members took different steps. Several hired a private detective to investigate Peoples Temple and report on the condition of relatives in Jonestown.

Joseph A. Mazor first investigated Peoples Temple in late 1976, at the request of a friend on the San Francisco police force, he told The Los Angeles Times in a lengthy interview. He claims New West Magazine referred ex-members to him for help early in 1977. But it wasn't until April 12, 1977 that he applied to the State of California for a private investigator's license. That was unusual, since Mazor was an ex-convict who had been in and out of California prisons since 1963 on bad check charges and parole violations. Before then he'd run into trouble in Illinois and Florida. Nevertheless, Mazor boasted, he was the first and only ex-convict to get licensed by the state.

By August that same year, Mazor said he was working for eighteen families or former Temple members. Grace Stoen hired him to serve papers on Jim Jones. Marvin and Jackie Swinney asked the detective to investigate a property transfer. Howard Oliver retained him to return his sons, Bruce and Bill. Walter Jones paid him to retrieve Vincent Lopez, as did Neva Sly, to return her son, Mark.

Mazor saw Peoples Temple as a potential goldmine. In a conversation taped by Temple plant Carol McCoy, he warned that it would take a lot of money to get her children out of Jonestown. "I'm not going to encourage you or discourage you," he equivocated, "but it's going to cost and there's always a chance you may not get them. I think you stand a good chance, though. About a seventy percent chance." Mazor did not quote any prices to McCoy, but he did mention the possibility of kidnapping her children.

According to Mazor, he recovered several relatives by force. He says he nabbed two kids destined for Jonestown as their mother was packing. He returned the children to their legal guardians, and turned over the mother to other ex-members to be deprogrammed. He also claims he grabbed two teenagers out of a hut in Jonestown, chloroformed them, and escaped through the Venezuelan jungle.

Mazor was the ultimate con-man. He told people what he thought they wanted to hear. He told Carol McCoy,

for example, that there was no school in Jonestown, and that he expected Jim to pack up, take the money, and leave. He told Times reporter Evan Maxwell that the Concerned Relatives lied to him: there was no barbed wire, no armed guards at Jonestown, "nothing like what they had been led to expect." He told Jim Jones -- when he finally met him in September 1978 -- that he, Mazor, was part of a conspiracy plotted by the Concerned Relatives. He told Karen Tow Layton's mother that he had recruited Karen as his spy in Jonestown, and that he'd had an autopsy performed on Karen in Guyana which showed she'd been beaten before her death.

We could not find out whom Mazor supposedly kidnapped from Jonestown. It's unlikely that such a dramatic rescue would have gone unnoticed since most of the "huts" in Jonestown housed several people. Our own visits to Guyana convinced us it would be almost impossible for foreigners to carry two unconscious bodies through the jungles of the Northwest District. We are also convinced it would have been impossible for anyone to perform an autopsy on Karen Tow Layton before the Guyana Defense Force arrived following the suicides.

Mazor made one of his more outlandish statements at a meeting initiated by attorney Mark Lane and author Donald Freed. Mazor, Lane, Freed, and Charles Garry's assistant Pat Richartz got together to discuss a movie contract for the Peoples Temple story. According to Richartz, Paul Jerrico was going to pay \$25,000 each to Garry and Mazor to serve as technical advisors for the film. At the meeting, Mazor told the group he had asked Idi Amin to intercede with the President of Guyana on behalf of the children of Jonestown. His statement provoked the following exchange:

Lane: Did you go to Uganda to talk to him?
Mazor: No.
Lane: That was a good decision. That was wise.
Mazor: He said he called him.
Richartz: Idi Amin said he called the President of Guyana.
Mazor: Whether he did or not, I don't know.
Lane: You appealed to one of the leading humanitarians in the world on behalf of the children.

Mazor's stories are a combination of fact and fantasy. Parts of them are true, but out of context. Other parts are absolutely false. It's impossible to tell for whom he worked or why, although money was one motivating

factor. He said a secret visit he made to Jonestown in September 1977 convinced him that the defectors were not being candid with him.

I began to have second thoughts about the whole thing... Some things really began to bother me... [Most defectors were in the] upper levels of the class system that was Jonestown.

Almost all the defectors had been on the planning commission -- up in the hierarchy. They were almost all white, and were for the most part directly involved in carrying out Jones' wishes. There wasn't a peon among them.

But Pat Richartz says Mazor was never there in 1977. And State Department cables show that Mazor hadn't been to Jonestown before September 1978. He met with Embassy Consul Doug Ellice on September 10, and told him he had been to Guyana before, but not to Jonestown. Ellice suggested that he visit the settlement. He did so, and returned September 14 to tell Ellice that he'd offered to help 35 to 40 people leave. None accepted his offer.

Mazor later swore in a deposition that one of his clients, Grace Stoen, told him that her son had been conceived in the back of a Temple bus -- by Jim Jones.

Everything about Mazor is contradictory. We don't know if he were merely an opportunist, willing to work for whomever would pay him, or if he had ties to American law enforcement. Or if, as Peoples Temple members began to suspect, he worked for Interpol.

Certainly Peoples Temple did not trust Mazor. A letter from Gene Chaikin to Charles Garry dated August 25, 1977 suggested that the group file a complaint with the California Office of Consumer Affairs. Temple members believed Mazor had been the one who was calling the U.S. Embassy from "the Attorney General's office." Chaikin felt they should retaliate by getting the detective's license revoked.

The only thing clear about Mazor is that he became an important link between ex-members, relatives, and the Stoens. He fed them information -- and misinformation -- about Jonestown and about each other. Eventually he fed Jim and other church leaders the same thing about the relatives. He was in Guyana at two crucial times: during Jeff Haas' September 1977 visit, and again in September 1978, two months before the suicides.

Peoples Temple tended to operate in secrecy, as do most new religious groups whose believers feel under attack. People who left the Temple maintained the secrecy because they were afraid. The New West articles released many ex-members from fear by killing some of the secrecy surrounding Peoples Temple. As a result, they began to file lawsuits. Al and Jeannie Mills, for example, sued Peoples Temple August 30, 1977 to recover property they had given to the church. On August 11, Grace Stoen amended her divorce case to regain custody of her son. On October 17, Howard and Beverly Oliver revoked the power of attorney they'd granted certain church members to care for their 18-year-old son Bill; less than a month later, they decided the Temple would not voluntarily return him and asked the courts to order his return. Harry and Rosemary Williams sued Peoples Temple December 9, claiming interest in a property on Lobos Street in San Francisco.

During this time only one criminal complaint against the church was lodged with the police. Ex-members Wade and Mabel Medlock alleged that Jim and other church leaders had extorted the Medlock's property.

The magazine articles, subsequent publicity, a phone call from Joe Mazor, and pressure from the Stoens' lawyer prompted U.S. Embassy Consul McCoy to visit Jonestown on August 30, 1977. He talked with Caroline Looman, decided that she wasn't being held against her will -- as her parents had claimed -- and also checked on the whereabouts and condition of John Victor Stoen. At that time, Leo Broussard, a Jonestown resident, told McCoy he wanted to return to the U.S. McCoy in turn informed Jim Jones of the request. "The Embassy later confirmed that the Peoples Temple assisted Broussard and that he had returned to the U.S.," observed the House Foreign Affairs Committee report on Leo Ryan's death.

Besides the Stoens and the Olivers, other families began to inquire about their relatives in Jonestown. Steven Katsaris traveled to Guyana September 26, 1977 to meet with his 24-year-old daughter, Maria. Maria, who lived in Jim's cabin and took care of John Victor, refused to see him. Katsaris returned to Washington, D.C., where he talked with the military advisor to Vice President Walter Mondale, the State Department's Guyana Desk officer, and several Members of Congress.

He flew to Guyana again in November and after several days' wait finally talked to Maria in the presence of several Temple members and U.S. Consul McCoy. At the meeting, Maria accused her father of making sexual advances when she was a teenager. Her coldness and distance increased Katsaris' anxiety, and his fears, along

with the Stoens', became rallying points for the Concerned Relatives.

In an effort to deal with some of the relatives, Peoples Temple patched several phone calls through the radio from Jonestown to the U.S. Transcripts of the calls reveal a terrible affection and antagonism between the relatives. A phone patch between Sandy Rozyngo in California and her brother Mike in Jonestown shows the dilemma each faced:

- Mike: Listen, there is no need to debate this. I am happy. I am living my own life -- and you live your own life.
- Sandy: OK, Mike, let me at least tell you about some things that are happening here in the U.S. so you will know what is happening... Mike, the Klan is not marching in the streets. Marshall Kilduff is not dead. Whatever you have heard -- it's probably a lie, OK? But life is going on in the U.S. as normal. There are no racists hanging blacks in the parks.
- Mike: Sandy, why don't you live your own life? I am in agriculture and I am enjoying it very much.
- Sandy: ...Why don't you come back and you can go to college and you can do the things that I know you have always wanted to do. I know you wanted to be a doctor more than you wanted to live even... I'm giving you the chance to do what you wanted to do and I know you can be happy doing it. I just don't understand.
- Mike: I am a free moral agent and I came down here because I wanted to. I love you, Sandy.
- Sandy: I love you too, Mike. But please remember, if there is ever anything you need from me, you know what to do -- call me, write a letter, somehow, go to the Consulate down there -- they will help you.

Sandy was just one of many relatives who offered to help their family members to leave Jonestown. Mickey Touchette was another who told her family to call her in San Francisco if they ever wanted to leave. The conver-

sation with her family had an odd tone to it, as though Mickey's relatives in Jonestown were speaking to an audience larger than one individual. Her mother Joyce accused her of engaging in terrorist activities, while her father asked about a check she supposedly forged. An interesting exchange between Mickey and her father occurred towards the end of the discussion.

Mickey: I don't know if that was my father or not talking -- was that Charlie?

Charlie: Mickey, this is your father and I am tired of this nonsense.

Mickey: OK, daddy, call it nonsense, but I know I am telling the truth, and I know that in your heart you know I am telling the truth. I want you to know I am here in San Francisco and I can easily be reached. Call me when you want to get out of Peoples Temple. You don't have to stay there and live that life you are living for the rest of your life. You can get out and be free and be your own person and make your own decisions.

Charlie: Mickey, government people from all over Guyana look at this place and tell us how beautiful it is and what a good job we have done here. You talk like a fool!

Mickey: I'm sorry you think that, daddy, but like I said, when you decide to leave and when you want to leave and when you want to get out of there, come out. We are not going to give up here. Tell Jim Jones that, we are not going to give up. And he can sit back there and he can laugh and laugh and laugh because we in the U.S. are going to continue until our families are returned to us.

Charlie: Mickey, are you going to kidnap us?

Mickey: No, daddy, that is your word. I didn't say that. We'll do it legally, everything will be done legally. And like I said, Jim Jones will not be able to continue ripping up families and controlling peoples' minds the way he does it.

Charlie: Mickey, I am an adult and I have made up my own mind.

Mickey's comments indicate the Concerned Relatives had already begun to organize by December 1977. Their plan, according to Mickey, was to hit Peoples Temple with legal action. Earlier lawsuits might have been coordinated. Future lawsuits most certainly would be.

It's likely that California state action against Jim also resulted from organized pressure. On October 17, the California Attorney General filed notice in Los Angeles Municipal Court that it planned to rescind a 1974 order sealing Jim's arrest record. He was arrested in December 1973 on a misdemeanor lewd conduct charge in Los Angeles. The city attorney moved to dismiss the case at the time because he received no evidence of violation. The judge ordered Jim's record sealed and destroyed. But the 1977 Notice to Vacate Order appended all the records in that case as exhibits.

Charles Garry fought against opening up Jim's arrest record, although the state effectively published it in its initial notice. Garry argued that the judge acted properly in sealing the records. Furthermore, "to unseal the records at this time would be an unreasonable and unconstitutional invasion of Mr. Jones' right to privacy."

The Municipal Court denied the Attorney General's request. On April 28, 1978 an appeal was filed. And on August 4, the Appeals Court for the California Superior Court dismissed the appeal. An order sealing records, it said, was not subject to appeal.

Tim Stoen knew of the arrest, and of the court order. The Los Angeles attorney handling the original case for Jim wrote him briefly on October 31, 1977.

It is most urgent that you contact me as soon as possible. This is in regard to a matter which I handled with Tim Stoen several years ago.

It's possible Tim instigated the Attorney General's action through his contacts as a former Assistant District Attorney.

So with several lawsuits, a criminal complaint, and the revocation of the seal on Jim's arrest records pending, Tim Stoen and the rest of the relatives waited. They would try to do things calmly, legally -- for a time.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCERNED RELATIVES, 1978

The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the householder came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' But he said, 'No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'

-- Matthew 13: 24-30

Tim and Grace Stoen traveled to Guyana in January 1978 to attend a hearing in their custody case. Perhaps they believed their presence would result in a favorable ruling. Their trip marked a turning point, but not in the suit. Instead it signaled the escalation of the conflict between the relatives and the Temple. From now on, both sides would retaliate with bitterness and a lack of caution.

When the Guyana government shortened the Stoens' visas from one month to two weeks, U.S. Consul Richard McCoy voiced his suspicion that Peoples Temple orchestrated this harassment. While the Stoens were in Guyana, the judge in their case reserved decisions on motions and orders. He reported receiving phone calls from people who "sounded American." Again the U.S. Embassy interceded on the Stoens' behalf, sending two diplomatic notes to the government: the first protesting curtailment of the visas; the second protesting "the apparent intervention of the Government of Guyana into the judicial process in the Stoen case." What at first seemed to be a straightforward dispute between two sets of parents had become a sore point in relations between the governments of Guyana and the United States.

McCoy met in February with Guyana Justice Minister Mohamed Shahabuddeen. The minister assured the Consul that the delays in the Stoen case were not excessive. A cable about the meeting says, Shahabuddeen "is considered highly competent and probably would resist political pressures to intervene in this or any other case." At the same meeting, however, McCoy showed the minister a telegram indicating Congressional interest in the outcome of the case.

Many Members of Congress responded to the Stoens' plea for help. Rep. Pete McCloskey (R-Calif.) wrote against what he saw as the "bastardization" of John Victor. Senator Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) wrote to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, asking him to talk to Prime Minister Burnham about the Stoen case. At least eighteen Senators and a dozen Representatives contacted the State

Department. State had to develop several form letters to reply to inquiries which came both from Congress and from Peoples Temple. "While we in the Department of State sympathize very much with Mr. and Mrs. Stoen in their efforts to regain custody of their son," read a letter from the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, "regrettably there is little we can do to be of assistance."

Congressional involvement threatened to upset what the State Department perceived as a legal matter. A Department briefing paper noted that the Stoens "effectively abandoned the child when they left the group." It noted that if the Guyana courts awarded custody to Jim Jones,

Mr. Stoen is certain to demand that the Department intervene with the Government of Guyana to force the return of his child. This demand undoubtedly will be accompanied by strong Congressional pressure on the Department.

The Stoens' lawyer, Jeff Haas, had already told Embassy staff as much after the January hearing. He said the Stoens couldn't lose their case. If they did, he would assume that the Guyana government had interfered with the proceedings.

It is obvious from this conversation that Haas was in effect warning the Embassy that unless his clients win their case, we could expect media and congressional pressure to force the Department and the Embassy into a position of protesting any judicial decision against the Stoens.

Tim and Grace left Guyana on January 18 "for business reasons", according to U.S. Embassy logs. But Tim changed his story and later told California newspapers that he and his wife had been hounded. He said he sent Grace to Trinidad for her own protection. Temple members had surrounded the Stoens at the airport in Georgetown as they were leaving.

The day after the Stoens' departure, Jim Jones told McCoy that he was John Victor's father and could prove it. This was the first time Jim made his paternity claim public, but it wasn't the last. In addition to the interview Jim gave Tim Reiterman of The San Fran-

cisco Examiner a month later, the Temple sent copies of Tim Stoen's paternity affidavit to newspapers and influential people. Herb Caen printed it in his column in The San Francisco Chronicle. John and Barbara received a copy of the affidavit as well, enclosed in a neatly typed letter from "Mrs. B. Smith". Mrs. Smith wrote January 23:

Tim and Grace were estranged. She was suicidal and had threatened to take her own life or run out on Tim and tell fabrications about him and the church. Tim was new to his post as deputy D.A. of Mendocino County and was highly distressed at the kind of act Grace was threatening against herself and against his career. He appealed to Jim to do whatever he could to help his wife -- specifically to relate to her sexually -- to keep her from damaging their lives...

Though precautions were taken, Grace conceived a child. And in her insecurity, she refused to seek any alternatives to bearing the child.

Jim has always been open and honest about John to his family members and to the whole congregation....

About two years ago Grace abandoned John and ran off with a lover. She stole money that belonged to John, \$7000 which Jim had set aside in a trust for John's future education. One woman ... has since stepped forward and confessed that she participated in the theft with Grace... When [Grace] finally returned several months later and asked to see John, she flung the child back into Jim's arms and said: 'Take him, he's yours.' There are numerous witnesses to this event.

Now Grace has decided that she wants the child again, even though she completely authorized, signed statements and all, for John to live with Jim in Guyana.

Mrs. Smith provided the Peoples Temple explanation of the custody case. Tim had asked Jim to sire the child. Grace was an unfit mother who had abandoned her child. Therefore, Jim was legally and morally John Victor's father.

The circulation of Tim's affidavit was more important than Mrs. Smith's letter. It was the first instance

in which Peoples Temple used a confession to discredit an ex-member. The release of the affidavit, coupled with Jim's own confession of involvement, meant war. Jim jeopardized his reputation by admitting guilt. At best, Tim's affidavit reveals a bizarre approach to ministry.

The Stoens strengthened their offensive. Tim went from Guyana to Washington to meet Congressman Ryan. While there, he lobbied at least eight other Congressmen. Most responded by writing letters to Guyana Prime Minister Forbes Burnham and the U.S. State Department. The U.S. Embassy laconically noted on February 9, 1978 that "Department informs Embassy of strong congressional interest in the Stoen case and suggests Embassy may wish to retain local counsel to advise it."

The Temple counter-attacked with its own lobbying team. In February, Marceline Jones, Terri Buford and a few others visited many of the same people Tim had seen. A December 16, 1978 article in The San Francisco Chronicle reported:

Every office visited by the Temple group -- except [California Senator S.I.] Haya-kawa's -- had sent letters to Guyanese officials on behalf of Stoen and opposing Jones only weeks before.

Congressional aides said the active Temple leaders were trying to discredit Stoen... A legislative staff assistant for Congressman [Tim] Wirth met with the Temple delegation in mid-February and said the group seemed 'absolutely' aware of private letters Wirth had sent January 24 to Guyanese Prime Minister Forbes Burnham, Deputy Guyanese Prime Minister Ptolemy Reid, and U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

It seems likely that officials in the Guyana government showed Temple members letters they received from U.S. Representatives, although a Congressional staff office member may have revealed the substance of communications sent to Guyana and the State Department. Whatever the sources of the Temple's information, the church had lobbied the California delegation as strenuously as had Tim.

The Concerned Relatives spent the next month drafting their next offensive. On April 11, they delivered an "Accusation of Human Rights Violations by Rev. James Warren Jones Against Our Children and Relatives

at the Peoples Temple Jungle Encampment in Guyana, South America" to church members at the San Francisco headquarters. They distributed the "Accusation" to the press. They sent copies to Members of Congress, including Leo Ryan. Tim Stoen forwarded the petition to the State Department.

The relatives carefully singled out Jim for attack, avoiding any direct or implied criticism of family members. Additionally, since the U.S. government had no jurisdiction in Guyana, and Guyanese officials were unwilling to investigate Jim under that country's laws, the "Accusation" charged Jim with violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as violations of the Guyana Constitution.

The "Summary of Violations" at the beginning of the document ascribed a series of crimes to Jim Jones:

1. Making the following threat calculated to cause alarm for the lives of our relatives: 'I can say without hesitation that we are devoted to a decision that it is better even to die than to be constantly harassed from one continent to the next.'

2. Employing physical intimidation and psychological coercion as part of a mind-programming campaign aimed at destroying family ties, discrediting belief in God, and causing contempt for the United States of America.

3. Prohibiting our relatives from leaving Guyana by confiscating their passports and money and by stationing guards around Jonestown to prevent anyone escaping.

4. Depriving them of their right to privacy, free speech and freedom of association by:

- a. Prohibiting telephone calls;
- b. Prohibiting individual contacts with 'outsiders';
- c. Censoring all incoming and outgoing mail;
- d. Extorting silence from relatives in the U.S. by threats to stop all communication;
- e. Preventing our children from seeing us when we travel to Guyana.

The "Accusation" included affidavits from Steven Katsaris about his attempts to see his daughter, Maria,

and from Yolanda Crawford, a former Peoples Temple member who lived in Jonestown for three months during 1977. Crawford's description of her short stay, corroborated by Tim Stoen's shorter stay, formed the basis for many of the accusations.

Jim Jones said that the United States is the 'most evil' nation in the world, referring to its political and industrial leaders as 'capitalistic pigs'. He said he would rather have his people dead than live in the United States...

Jim Jones said that nobody will be permitted to leave Jonestown and that he was going to keep guards stationed around Jonestown to keep anybody from leaving. He said that he had guns and that if anyone tried to leave they will be killed ('offed') and their bodies will be left in the jungle and 'we can say that we don't know what happened to you.' He also said, 'I can get a hit man for fifty dollars. It's not hard for me to get a hit man anywhere'...

While still in the United States, Jim Jones asked the Temple members to turn over all their guns to him. I also saw ammunition being packed in crates for shipment to Guyana addressed to Peoples Temple from San Francisco. I heard Jim Jones say, 'If anyone tries to start anything, we are ready and prepared to die for our cause'...

Jim Jones said that black people and their sympathizers were going to be destroyed in the United States, that 'the Ku Klux Klan is marching in the streets of San Francisco, Los Angeles and cities back east.' There was 'fighting in the streets, and the drought in California is so bad, Los Angeles is being deserted'...

Before Jim Jones allowed me to leave, I was forced to promise him I would never speak against the church, and that if I did, I would lose his 'protection' and be 'stabbed in the back'. Furthermore, Jim Jones ordered me to sign a number of self-incriminating papers, including a statement that I was against the government of Guyana, that I had plotted against that government... Jones said the reason for signing those papers was to

discredit me if I ever decided to leave the movement 'and talk'...

I heard him state to the congregation in Guyana that Marshall Kilduff, who wrote the first articles exposing him, was dead. He said, 'The angels have taken care of him.' We all knew the 'angels' were his people who would do you in if you crossed Jim Jones...

On numerous occasions I was in the congregation when he told us 'I am God' and 'there is no other God, and religion is the opium of the people.' He stated he used religion only to get to the masses...

I recall several instances of Jim Jones stating he could silence critics or defectors by accusing them of being homosexual, child abusers, terrorists or sexual deviants.

The final pages of the "Accusation" list the petitioners and their kin in Jonestown. Not all Concerned Relatives were biological parents; a few were foster guardians. Fewer than half of the family members were children, that is, age eighteen or younger. Twenty-five individuals signed the "Accusation", although most signers were related to each other: Tim and Grace Stoen; Howard and Beverly Oliver; Sherwin and Elizabeth Harris; Sandy and Steven Mills (Sandy was related to the Rozynekos in Jonestown); Robert and Nadyne Houston; and others.

Peoples Temple responded a month later. Its "Open Statement by Members of Peoples Temple in Jonestown, Guyana, South America" dismissed the "Accusation" as an attack on the church's political beliefs. It's easy to see why Jonestown chose that way to answer the petition.

Most of the signatories to the "Accusation" were ex-members -- traitors in the eyes of Jim Jones and the majority of Peoples Temple members. They were the enemy: racist, elitist, well-to-do. Predominantly white, middle class, they had failed at communal living and now were bent on destroying Peoples Temple. Most had been privileged before they joined the church: Al Mills (not a petitioner, since he had no relatives in Jonestown, but a member of Concerned Relatives anyway) had been an executive at Standard Oil, and he and his wife owned several nursing homes; Tim Stoen, a Stanford Law graduate now had a private practice on Montgomery Street in San Francisco; Steven Katsaris (not an ex-member) was a clinical psychologist at a private church day-school in Ukiah; Mike Cartmell (not a petitioner, but a member of Concerned

Relatives) was a law school graduate; Jim Cobb, a black ex-member, was a dental student. The "Open Statement" read:

The group is led by a gentleman who cannot stand the fact that his 24-year-old daughter has asserted her independence from his emotional tyranny over her, and has been desperately trying to reunite daughter to 'doting daddy' [Steven Katsaris]...

It is interesting and instructive that many of the 'Concerned Relatives' have shown only a token concern in the past about their 'loved ones' that they now claim to agonize over. These loved ones -- the truth is that they are glad to be free of these relatives, and they wish to be left alone to live a life of their own choosing...

They are unable to understand the ultimate commitment of people to a cause that transcends their own personal self-interests. Their 'concern' -- about a group of people who feel strongly enough about their work for justice and human liberation that they would give their lives for such a cause -- is at once phony and disgusting...

Our community in Guyana is an open book. It has been visited by hundreds of people some of whom have decided to join with us even though they had no previous association with Peoples Temple. Others visiting are relatives of residents, both members and non-members of the organization. What they have found in this city shows the lie of all the perverted portrayals of the ringleaders of the 'Concerned Relatives' group: a community of joy, beauty, industry, accomplishment, total lack of racism.

Then, as Yolanda Crawford predicted, the "Open Statement" charged the Concerned Relatives with various crimes such as drug trafficking, child molestation, credit card racketeering, check forgery, theft, racism, welfare fraud, and sadism.

The rhetoric of the Concerned Relatives' "Accusation" and Peoples Temple's "Open Statement" presented the basic political and moral conflict between the two. The dichotomy is more apparent in an unpublished "Response" to the Relatives' petition, written May 29 by an unidentified Peoples Temple member. Comparing the

"Response" with the original "Accusation" shows how Peoples Temple implemented its philosophy, and why relatives might object. It's also obvious why the "Response" was never published: it was too honest about life in Jonestown.

The "Response" justified reading mail, some kinds on internal security and punishment; admitted pooling resources and passports; and explained why members "placated" relatives. These were exactly the human rights violations the Concerned Relatives raised.

For example, the "hard labor" the Concerned Relatives noted was described in the "Response" as a "sanction for anti-social behavior". Called the New Brigade or Public Service, it was a highly structured, supervised group which performed the dirty work of Jonestown: weeding, digging drainage ditches, building pathways. "People may be sent to work on the New Brigade," the "Response" noted, "for a day or several days, because of a severe error in judgment that could have damaged the collective. In one case, a person left insecticide around where a child could easily find it... It is humane, far more humane than putting someone in jail, or lashing them, or other forms of brutal punishment."

Since there were no telephones at the project, the community used international short wave radio to talk to the outside world. It occasionally set up a phone patch, radioing from Guyana to San Francisco, and patching from there to continental phone lines. Carolyn and Ann called John and Barbara once or twice a month by this method. Other parents were less fortunate. The project denied calls to relatives they considered hostile, noting the lack of privacy in radio communications as well as "potential legal problems". The "Response" gave an example in which Tim Stoen contacted a woman who had talked to her daughter via phone patch and warned her not to go to Jonestown. Tim's admonition indicated he knew details of her private conversation.

Because this kind of contact was limited, the Relatives expressed particular concern that their main source of communication -- letters -- was censored. While denying the censorship charge, the "Response" admitted that incoming mail was read to protect Jonestown from harassment. A committee screened outgoing mail, however. "If a problem is noted, the person is called back, the problem explained, and they can rewrite the letter." This was necessary, the statement added, because

a few people have a tendency to be grumpy and

complainers. They may write something in a letter that is a transient gripe or bitch, and a petty one at that -- yet that gripe may be picked up on the other side by the media and used to substantially hurt our organization. The gripe may be completely superficial, and forgotten by the individual the next day, yet we cannot allow such things to have a substantial effect on our cause and the development of our collective.

This kind of pre-screening may explain why the Relatives felt the letters they received were "standardized and unresponsive, as if written by machines." But the Relatives found letters such as those, unsatisfying as they were, better than nothing, since they believed communication with Jonestown could be cut off in a moment. They quoted a letter from a teenager to her grandmother which concluded: "I am sorry to hear that you called the radio station but since you did I will not be writing to you any more."

Another human rights violation mentioned by the Concerned Relatives was the "systematic confiscation of passports and all of the monies of Temple members upon their arrival in Guyana for the purpose of preventing them from leaving and returning to the United States."

According to the "Response", however, it was the U.S. Embassy which suggested that the community avoid losing the passports by locking them up together. Both the Embassy and the Guyana police knew of the centralization, and had no objections. "This system is not done to prevent people from leaving the country," the "Response" added, "as one does not need a passport to travel out of Guyana anyway: all one needs is to stop by the U.S. Consulate office, pick up travel papers, and go. A passport is not necessary."

Since the people worked in a collective and didn't need money, the project pooled all resources. "There isn't anybody in this place that has greater buying power or access to material goods than anybody else. All services, medical care, meals, special diet, entertainment, necessities are provided free of charge." According to the "Response", there was no place in the interior to bank or cash checks, so checks were endorsed by the individuals and deposited in the name of the organization. "The proceeds are used for the benefit of the entire collective, without respect to the origination of the funds."

While the "Response" admitted a number of the Relatives' charges, it denied others. For example, the state-

ment protested that "it would be impossible to station guards" along the ten- to twelve-mile perimeter. "It is physically impossible to prevent anyone from our project from having contact with our neighbors," it continued. "One can walk off the project at any time."

The Relatives doubted that. Five parents who signed the "Accusation" traveled to Guyana to visit their children: Steven Katsaris; Tim and Grace Stoen; and Howard and Beverly Oliver. Only Katsaris saw his daughter, and that was on his second trip, after he'd enlisted the help of Laurence Mann, Guyana's ambassador to the U.S., as well as some influential friends.

Peoples Temple distrusted the Relatives' motives in visiting, since many of the "children" involved were adults. Additionally, the "Response" explained that the group simply didn't want to deal with avowed enemies. "When parents and relatives have shown themselves to be hostile to this organization and collective, then we feel no obligation to have to allow them on our property."

The "Response" categorically denied charges of mind-programming, intimidation, sleep- and food-deprivation. A dentist from Georgetown "was absolutely shocked at the very low number of cavities in our children, and he attributed it entirely to a balanced healthful diet."

The "Response" also denied that Jim Jones had ever made a death threat. The Concerned Relatives began their "Accusation" by quoting a letter that went to all U.S. Senators and Representatives: from the Temple:

It is equally evident that people cannot forever be continually harassed and beleaguered by such tactics without seeking alternatives that have been presented. I can say without hesitation that we are devoted to a decision that it is better even to die than to be constantly harassed from one continent to the next.

The Relatives believed Jim had made this as a death threat, observing that "we know how exact you are in choosing your words."

Jim did not write the letter, though. Instead, Pam Moton, who died in Jonestown, drafted, wrote and signed the letter in the U.S. "It was an expression of frustration," the "Response" said, "and reflects ... the frustration and desperation that some in the community feel at continued harassment. In any event, it is not a threat nor was it ever intended as such."

The Relatives' error in the case of Pam Moton's

letter revealed their assumption that Jim controlled every aspect of life in Jonestown and supervised every detail in the community. Our own experience with Peoples Temple before and after the move to Guyana suggests that Jim's authority actually declined in the jungle. John noticed on his visit that Jim-worship, while not eliminated, was not as pronounced as it had been in San Francisco. Carolyn's and Ann's letters from Guyana talked less of Jim and more of the work of the community.

A description of the decision-making process at Jonestown in the "Response" showed how the group shared responsibility. Even as group leader, Jim could not make technical, agricultural, or economic decisions alone.

All major and even many minor policy decisions, personnel decisions, even counselling decisions are discussed and debated by the entire collective body. There is significant, and sometimes very lengthy, input from the collective. We have several major, large committees on the collective. For example, Steering Committee gets input from all departments on the farm and makes recommendations to the collective on most every aspect of the running of the farm and the allocation of its resources ... from changes in personnel, to decisions on where to locate the new latrine. We have a farm analysis board that meets regularly to discuss agricultural problems, do research, and again make recommendations to the entire collective body. This extensive input is brought to the 'town forum' which meets twice weekly, and where, for several hours, the information, recommendations, etc. are presented and debated, discussed at great length by the entire body of the collective, who add their individual output. Proposals are voted upon, or matters may be referred back to committee for further study etc. Jim Jones has never made a decision that ran contrary to the wishes of a substantial majority of the collective. The absurdity of this charge is that I don't think you could find a community anywhere, where more input is given by every person, regardless of age, or even senility at times. The collective operates on consensus, much more than majority rule.

Audio tapes support this. The FBI has hundreds of tape recorded meetings which feature livestock and agriculture reports. Department leaders worked in relative freedom.

After the publicity surrounding the Concerned Relatives' "Accusation" died down, a new strategy emerged from the organization: intensified legal action. On May 22, Steven Katsaris filed suit against Peoples Temple, Jim Jones, Sandy Bradshaw, Paula Adams and fifty other unnamed Temple members for damages totaling \$15 million. On June 7, Wade and Mabel Medlock filed a similar suit for \$18,532,000. And on June 22, Jim Cobb filed a \$23 million suit against Jim Jones and Peoples Temple.

The attorney for all three suits was Tim Stoen. He saved time and money by including similar supporting material -- i.e., the Concerned Relatives petition -- in each suit. Tim recruited his clients from the ranks of that organization. For instance, ten days after the Relatives delivered the "Accusation", Steven Katsaris met with Tim "professionally". It must have been an ironic meeting for Tim, who had earlier urged Maria Katsaris to flee to Guyana to avoid conservatorship proceedings. A few days after his meeting with Katsaris, Tim showed up at a Concerned Relatives meeting at the St. James Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles. Less than a month later, Tim happened to see Jim Cobb at the house of a mutual friend. Again, it must have been interesting for Tim to represent someone he'd earlier wanted to frighten into silence.

A letter from a relative solicited by Tim described his technique for recruiting worried parents:

Mr. Timothy Stoen telephoned me at my home May 7, 1978 -- explained to me that he wants to reach as many people as possible to talk about Jim Jones. He went on to say that he was with Jim a few years and claims he discovered that he is going insane and is a power maniac, and that Jim Jones wants to get control of thousands of adults and children, not only brainwashing them but removing all their personal belongings and finances also their passports so that it would be impossible for anyone to get away or come home if they want to. Also he threatens them with armed guards all around their village in order that no one could get out...

Mr. Stoen claims he is getting as many people as possible to sign a petition. Also if the petition is large enough that claims can be brought against Jim Jones, that the Prime Minister of Guyana will step in with the law, and help to free all the adults and children.

Tim made himself helpful to the Relatives in a number of ways. In May, he directed a new Jonestown refugee -- Debbie Layton Blakey -- to his wife's attorney, Jeff Haas. With the help of Haas, and presumably Tim, Debbie drafted an 11-page affidavit alleging abuses by Jim Jones at Jonestown. Debbie's criticism of the project, which she described to Richard McCoy on her flight back to the U.S., grew into a horror story under the tutelage of the two lawyers. Not surprisingly, Debbie's affidavit echoes Yolanda Crawford's earlier statement.

"A lot of what Debbie Blakey told me on the plane simply wasn't true," McCoy told us. "There weren't any guns, for example." But Debbie's complaints were serious enough for McCoy to suggest that she report them to the Justice Department or to a law enforcement agency for investigation. She did neither. Instead, she took her story to Tim and then to the press. Haas mailed a copy of her affidavit to the State Department.

Tim used affidavits to build his case against Jim, even though he'd disavowed his own earlier affidavit, saying he "knew it wasn't a legal document." For every affidavit he gathered, however, there existed a counter-affidavit. Peoples Temple loved affidavits. The church probably learned about affidavits during Tim's tenure as legal advisor.

Debbie's June 1978 declaration, for instance, is diluted by statements she made about Tim while she was a Peoples Temple member. In August 1977, she "being duly sworn," declared:

Timothy O. Stoen was never a man who cared for people as the title of attorney should represent... It became evident to me that he had too much of the capitalistic selfishness in him when he argued about the suggestion of visiting Guyana and starting an agricultural mission here. He was adamant that -- especially after visiting here -- the country was backward with little advantage for him in his legal/political career...

In one of the more controversial trials

here in San Francisco ... black truckers were imprisoned for actively standing up for their rights, were given excessive bails that even the wealthiest citizens could not afford. Timothy Stoen, then Assistant District Attorney for San Francisco, was the one who chose to set the bails for these men at approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000 dollars. It is impossible for a poor person, white or black, to pay such a bail.

In another affidavit, signed at the same time, Debbie swore that:

There was never any question about Jim being the true father of John. There was always doubt, though, about Tim being the dad. They don't have anything that is similar in their features. Jim has always had trouble with his kidneys and ears. So has his other known natural son Steve and so has John.

When she went to the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown, where an airplane ticket from her sister was waiting for her, Debbie signed yet another affidavit. In that one she said she decided to leave Peoples Temple because "I am afraid that Jim Jones will carry out his threat to force all members of the organization in Guyana to commit suicide if a decision is made in Guyana by the Court here to have John Stoen returned to his mother... I also believe that the Organization will physically try to prevent any attempt to remove John Stoen from the custody of the Organization."

Like most statements by or about Peoples Temple, Debbie's expanded affidavit, dated two months after her departure from Guyana, was only half true. Her comment that "Rev. Jones insisted that Temple members work long hours and completely give up all semblance of a personal life," implied that was not the way Temple members had always lived. Everything in Jonestown was communal: eating, sleeping, working, washing, playing, decision-making, learning. The communal life was important. The personal was unimportant and, in fact, negative and destructive to the goals of the project. This wasn't some sinister secret. It was clear to any visitor.

Debbie didn't like the food, labor or climate in Guyana. The diet of rice, beans, vegetables, and little meat in Jonestown was quite different from what she was

used to in America. But, according to several reports by the U.S. Embassy, as well as comments made by Guyanese visitors, the fare was adequate by that country's standards.

Debbie reported a "White Night", the community's hysterical Civil Defense alert in which Jim ordered a suicide drill. Other Peoples Temple members -- survivors rather than ex-members -- said that only one suicide drill ever occurred in Jonestown, and that happened around the time Debbie left. According to those survivors, the drill proceeded until Kimo and John Victor started crying. Stephan Jones confronted Jim and said, "Look what you're doing. You've made the children cry." Abashed for once, Jim called off the drill.

The trouble with Debbie's affidavit was that it was neither completely false, nor completely honest. It was rhetorical document designed to further Tim Stoen's argument against Jim Jones and Peoples Temple.

Debbie left Guyana just as John and Barbara were visiting the interior. Their experiences in Jonestown refute much of Debbie's statement. The photographs they took show a happy place, not a prison camp. John wrote of it afterwards:

I was asked by a reporter if I had asked people if they were happy. As I thought about that question later, it seemed like asking people celebrating at a party if they were happy, or coming down out of the stands and asking members of the team who were moving a ball toward a touchdown if they were happy.

Our own relations with Carolyn and Annie became strained during this time, but they did not break. In retrospect, we can see that they viewed any criticism as an attack which would further the goals of their enemies, the Concerned Relatives. Because we withheld judgment, they frequently extended invitations for us to visit them in Guyana.

In the spring of 1978, John and Barbara decided to make the trip. They planned to go in May, and Mac and I discussed the possibility of going with them. But a call from Jean Brown in the Temple's San Francisco headquarters killed the plan. On instructions from Jim, we believe, she requested that Mac and I make written statements saying we wouldn't write or publish any articles about Jonestown after our visit.

Nothing could have alienated me from my sisters

more than the request. I had no plans or interest in writing about Peoples Temple. I saw the request as authoritarian and paranoid -- which it was. I was furious with my sisters. I told John and Barbara it made no sense. What if we signed such statements and then, when we got back, went ahead and wrote something anyway? Who could stop us?

The whole thing was silly and pointless. I decided it would be better not to go. Letters from Barbara and John showed they understood my reasons and supported my decision.

I can understand why you have resentments towards Carolyn. Dad and I have gulped and 'walked the plank' ten times over since she's been with Jim and Peoples Temple. It seems to anesthetize one's sensitivities towards the feelings of other people...

I think I'd feel better if you could direct your disgust towards Peoples Temple rather than towards Carolyn personally. She is a willing follower of Jim and thinks she's a born-again Marxist. But then, she is also her father's daughter too and knows that he really put himself on the line at times signing a fake marriage certificate to give little Kimo legal status (Well, the guy gave his consent but this is all Q.T. of course). And there is this dichotomy in her psyche of admiring dad's mind and ethics and education, but having at the same time this slavish attachment to Jim.

John wrote:

I understand your feelings about visiting Carolyn and Annie. I think that postponing any journey there is a good decision. Your decision not to go will push them to try to understand why. This is important for them, in my judgment.

In his next letter, he added:

You might write Carolyn and Annie telling them what you are doing, and see what response you get.

Peoples Temple has its party line...

With all our reservations about Peoples

Temple, Annie and Carolyn are with people who care for them deeply. They have a new family.

I never wrote Carolyn and Annie. I drafted an angry letter criticizing their authoritarianism, but never mailed it. John and Barbara went to Jonestown without me. As it happened, that was my last opportunity to see my sisters. My self-righteous anger turned to bitter regret after the suicides.

John and Barbara wrote a joint statement, as well as separate accounts, of their visit to the Peoples Temple Agricultural Project. On May 28, they participated in a press conference sponsored by Peoples Temple to counter some of the bad publicity the church was getting. Although Charles Garry and several relatives of other church members were present, reporters directed most of their questions towards John and Barbara and asked about their trip to Jonestown. John began by explaining:

We were several nights at the Peoples Temple house in Georgetown, and ... then were in the [agricultural] project itself for three days. The two words that came to my mind immediately as I was there, and as I tried to reflect upon my experiences, were 'impressive' and 'amazing'. It almost boggles my mind to see that great clearing, and to understand how so much could have been done in the relatively short period of time...



The house at Lamaha Gardens, Georgetown, Guyana.



Kimo, Sebastian McMurry, Annie, and Barbara, Jonestown, 1978.



Kimo, John Moore, Martin and Christa Amos, Jonestown, 1978.

We wore ourselves out, walking around the facility... We were first impressed, certainly I was, with seeing the older people at the time we arrived about noon, engaged in calisthenics with an instructor, keeping their limbs and joints and muscles limber, and then we went to the nursery, the child care center. I had a feeling of freedom.

Barbara added:

It's a community of caring and sharing with an added dimension, and this dimension I would say is love. If you want to use that term; in a sense it reminds me of ... a New Testament community, in the purest sense of the word, in the love and concern for all, that we observed.

One of the reporters asked why they went to Jonestown.

John Moore: We went there to see our daughters.

Question: Were you concerned about them?

John Moore: Of course. We love our daughters, and we'd been separated from them, we hadn't seen them, our grandson there, we hadn't seen them for a year.

"Although most of the major media were present at the press conference," Peoples Temple noted afterwards in an "Open Letter to the Media and the Community", "only one reported any of the views of Rev. and Mrs. Moore (emphasis in original)." The letter went on:

The Moores' comments resoundingly refuted the allegations against the Temple based on claims of the so-called 'Concerned Relatives' group. With all the attention given by the media over the past year to the 'charges' levelled against Peoples Temple and Rev. Jim Jones, it is remarkable that there is such disinterest in giving direct refutation any forum at all.

It's a shame more relatives couldn't go to Jonestown to see the project for themselves. Charlie Touchette felt the leadership invited John and Barbara because of its elitism, commenting that other parents were denied access to their children. Why wasn't Brian Bouquet's mother allowed to see her son, Touchette wondered. He felt that Peoples Temple only wanted visitors who were prestigious, prominent, or who could advance the cause. It was a self-defeating attitude, since it was a group of parents which helped to destroy Jonestown.

John and Barbara's visit to the community completely changed their thinking about Peoples Temple. "We came away from the Peoples Temple Agricultural Project," they wrote in their joint account, "with a feeling for its energy and enthusiasm, its creative, wholesome ways ... and an understanding of the fascination and high sense of adventure it holds for its residents."

Privately John wrote me that:

I have never felt better about Peoples Temple. When the adults were together, they did talk about their harassment. Someone was firing shots into the compound for six days, last fall. [Christopher] Nascimento was Acting Prime Minister while Prime Minister Burnham was out of the country. As soon as he returned, the 'siege', as they called it, ended. I guess that people under attack, as in border disputes, terrorism, etc., simply are not going to have a very broad perspective. I think that they have been harassed, unquestionably; and so long as the criticism and harassment continue, they will be obsessed with it.

The critics, the members of Concerned Relatives, were largely ex-members. The fanatical loathing for Peoples Temple the defectors shared is an emotion common to many ex-"cultists". The supreme devotion they once gave their leader is superceded by extreme rage. We didn't share the desperate hatred for Jim Jones ex-members had.

John and Barbara remember the invocation Tim Stoen gave at Annie's graduation from nursing school. Instead of offering a prayer, Tim paid homage to Jim for ten minutes. "I guess I saw him as the Second Coming," Tim said after he left the Temple. "I would have died for Jim Jones."

Four years later, Tim called John to ask him to criticize Jim publicly. Tim said that "Jim is the devil." John wrote to me soon afterwards:

I don't recall ever praising Jim Jones. I have written letters expressing appreciation for the service ministries of Peoples Temple. In scanning what we have said and written since returning from Guyana, the only mention of Jim Jones was a reference to the death and burial of his mother in Jonestown. It's weird that I am asked to attack someone that I never praised publicly. I never believed that Jim was god, nor do I now believe that he is the devil. Tim's problem, in part, is that is exactly how he has seen and related to Jim.

We felt that Peoples Temple would ultimately work out its problems by itself. We believed that, with time, the abuses we read about would result in change. Either Carolyn or Annie would leave, or members would rebel. Something would change. People do not live in misery, if misery it was, forever.

Charlie Touchette's declaration to his daughter -- "I am an adult and I have made up my own mind" -- reflects our own understanding of most Temple members. They had freely made a commitment. That was the main reason John and Barbara participated in the press conference held by relatives with family in Jonestown who supported the agricultural project.

The Temple sponsored the press conference to counter bad publicity coming from the Concerned Relatives' "Accusation" and from another visit. Kathy Hunter, wife of the publisher of The Ukiah Daily Journal and a long-time Temple supporter, returned from Guyana with new horror stories in May. The "Accusation" prompted the repor-

ter to visit Jonestown. Jim had apparently befriended her and her family in Ukiah, and Mrs. Hunter had warm feelings towards him and Peoples Temple.

Her experiences in Guyana, however, terrorized her, and she fled the country without ever making it to Jonestown. She claims Peoples Temple members "interrogated" her, probing as to whether the article she was planning to write would be pro- or anti-Jones. She says they threatened her after she turned down their invitation to go to Jonestown. She also says the Guyana National Police posted a guard outside her door, and escorted her to the airport to protect her from the Temple. When she returned to Ukiah, two black men attacked her in her home. She also received threatening phone calls.

Peoples Temple denied any involvement in Kathy Hunter's harassment in Ukiah, and offered a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of her attackers. According to the church, the Guyana government had asked Mrs. Hunter to leave because she had entered the country under false pretenses. Minister of Home Affairs Vibert Mingo said, "We have investigated and found her statements to be totally untrue and that she lied to gain entry into our country which is in violation of our law."

Newspapers, radio and television stations in San Francisco as well as the rest of the state publicized Mrs. Hunter's trip. Not one reported Mr. Mingo's statements. Furthermore, only one TV station aired coverage of the press conference -- held shortly after Mrs. Hunter's return -- in which John and Barbara provided a different account of Peoples Temple in Guyana.

A few days after the press conference, Charles Garry advised Temple ministers and representatives to bar the Concerned Relatives "or any other persons [so] affiliated" from church property. Garry also reacted to the lawsuits being filed against the Temple by suing Tim Stoen for \$150 million.

The complaint charged that Tim violated his former attorney-client relationship with the church when he used confidential information against the Temple in the Katsaris, Medlock, and Cobb suits. According to the complaint, Tim filed those actions to "harass and oppress" Peoples Temple. The suit, filed July 10, 1978, asked the California Superior Court to forbid Stoen from soliciting "professional employment from ex-members of Peoples Temple, relatives of members of Peoples Temple, or from any other persons for the purpose of generating suits against plaintiffs."

The Temple lawsuit worked its way back and forth

through the courts, with both sides submitting declarations and evidence. All of Tim's clients denied that he solicited them in any way. All the Peoples Temple documents claimed Tim had worked in some capacity as legal counsel for the organization. Carolyn filed a statement about Tim with U.S. Consul Doug Ellice, which said:

I have known Timothy O. Stoen ... from 1969 when he joined the church 'til 1977 when he left. During the period from 1970 to 1977, part of my responsibilities were in the area of banking and investment of church funds. During all that time I frequently asked for and received advice from Tim Stoen concerning banking practices and the investment of church funds, as well as the legal effect of certain banking instruments, and the legal and tax consequences of various investments...

He went [to Los Angeles] for the purpose of giving legal counsel to members of the Los Angeles congregation, which he would do during and after services. We routinely would have organizational meetings Saturday nights which Tim would regularly attend and give legal advice and opinions on various church projects and activities.

Several times he represented the church in situations where we believed that ex-members had taken funds or other property from the church. This representation included hiring and paying private investigators...

In late fall of 1976, Tim Stoen, Harriett Tropp, and myself met another ex-member of the church at the apartment of Phyllis Houston at 998 Divisadero Street in San Francisco. The woman we met there was Joyce Cable Shaw... Tim Stoen again advised that nothing be said to her, except in writing. At the time, both Harriett and myself thought that this was a little ridiculous, since there was nothing improper about the content of the communications. Tim Stoen insisted, however, and he produced a notebook with a message typed on one of the sheets inside, covered with plastic, for Joyce Shaw to read. As best I recall, the message said something about our esteem for her late husband, and our hope that she would not try to pressure Mr. and

Mrs. Robert Houston, Sr., to take their grandchildren Patricia and Judy Houston, out of the church.

Tim Stoen also represented the church in several instances when we believed that we had been libelled by the press... When outside counsel was employed in these matters, they were selected by Stoen and supervised by him.

Garry believed the court would, at the least, issue a temporary restraining order against Tim. He told Jim that in October 1978. Meanwhile, the Concerned Relatives, and the Stoens continued to lobby the State Department and Members of Congress. State Department logs note the progress on the custody dispute in Guyana. On August 10, Guyana Justice Aubrey Bishop dissociated himself from the Stoen case, claiming he'd been contacted with intent to influence the outcome of the proceedings. He did not say by which party. Tim contacted the State Department, and it asked the Embassy to meet with the Guyana government on the case. On September 18, the Deputy Chief of Mission, Richard Dwyer, did meet with Chief Justice Sir Harold Bollen. The case had to begin all over again.

On October 3, Tim informed the State Department that he was prepared to retrieve John Victor by force, if necessary. Three days later, he sent a telegram which reiterated the threat. In his telegram he also noted the possibility of mass suicide described in Debbie Blakey's affidavit.

A document in State Department files shows others had considered force. Louis Gurvich, whose daughter Jann died in Jonestown, wrote in 1977 that:

I was thinking about recruiting mercenaries... I discussed it with a professional who had vast experience in training the Shah of Iran's bodyguard and is a weapons expert... We talked about how many mercenaries we would need, which we hadn't decided; that it seemed almost certain that we would have to go in by helicopter; weapons that we needed; and the repercussions of what would happen if we had to use them -- murder charges, perhaps, or construed as an act of war. We knew it would be illegal, no matter how well intentioned. But I would have done whatever I had to do.

A letter from Jann convinced Gurvich, who is a private investigator, that she was happy living in Jonestown. He dropped the idea of kidnapping her.

We don't understand why Tim threatened violence after Debbie had told him that Jim "swore that he would never return [Grace's] son to her." If he were truly alarmed, why risk further provocation? Nevertheless, Tim and the rest of the Concerned Relatives followed a course of action which contributed to Jim's and Jonestown's persecution complex.

No doubt they feel subsequent events justified their actions. Over two-thirds of the relatives they listed as living in Jonestown died November 18. Most of those who survived, did so by chance: they simply weren't in Jonestown that day.

The Concerned Relatives always thought we were wrong not to criticize Peoples Temple. A few months after the suicides, Jeannie Mills confronted John at a meeting. "Why didn't you say anything?" she asked. "You knew what was going on."

"We wanted to believe the good," John wrote several years later. "We wanted Jonestown to succeed. We always knew that Peoples Temple was ambiguous." In thinking about Jeannie Mills' questions, John found two relevant Biblical parables. The first was the story of King Solomon and the two women who claimed the same child. The second was the parable of the wheat and the weeds. The advice of Jesus was to let the wheat and the weeds grow together, until the harvest, when one could be distinguished from the other. Then the weeds could be uprooted without destroying the wheat.

"The question must be asked," John wrote:

What might have happened to Jim Jones and Peoples Temple if Ryan and the others had not gone to Jonestown? If they had gone in May 1978, there would have been no tragedy -- I am convinced. If they had gone in May 1979, other things may already have happened.

Reports of dissent and dissatisfaction quickly surfaced after November 18. On November 22, The San Francisco Chronicle quoted Stephan Jones as saying "he had tried to ease his father out of the decision-making process in the community because he was afraid of where his father's increasing paranoia would lead them." The December 1 Guyana Chronicle reported a power struggle between Charlie Touchette and Jim Jones. Touchette "allegedly spearheaded the struggle against

Jones," the paper said, using Stephan to provoke confrontations with his father.

We wanted to give Peoples Temple -- and especially Carolyn and Annie -- time. The weeds could then have been clearly distinguished from the wheat, the bad from the good. Instead, both were cut down together. And the child, John Victor Stoen, was cut in two, along with 900 others.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE VISE

The U.S. government pressured them. They were pushed and pushed until they went over the edge.

-- Skip Roberts

We are not paranoid; we simply have found no other logical way to make sense of our experiences.

-- Peoples Forum

Imagine being strangers in a strange land. As immigrants, Jonestown settlers were in Guyana at the pleasure of a foreign government. The church's friendship with the country's ruling political party was fragile, but necessary, if it were to be left in peace.

Imagine a place you can't get to by car. There are only three ways into Guyana's Northwest District: airplane, riverboat, or on foot, if you walk overland twenty miles from the Venezuelan border. From the airstrips at Port Kaituma and Matthews Ridge, or the boat landing at Kaituma, it's a bumping, spine-jolting ride via four-wheel drive vehicle.

Imagine no telephone, no daily newspapers, no television or radio. Like the Guyanese in the area, the people of Jonestown relied on shortwave radio and the mail, once or twice a week, for their news.

Imagine a place with nowhere to shop. There were no department stores or large suppliers of goods in the Northwest District. Boats brought necessities from the United States or Trinidad or, perhaps, Georgetown.

The church's main source of regular income was the checks the two hundred or so Social Security recipients donated. With the monthly income of \$37,000 from these checks, and the donations and gifts the church had accumulated before the migration to Guyana, the community of 1000 people fed itself, bought medical and school supplies, purchased heavy farm equipment, lumber, agricultural products and livestock. In short, Jonestown supported itself at more than a minimum level of survival. And it planned to expand.

If one can imagine this kind of lifestyle, then it shouldn't be hard to imagine what the community might feel when its checks were held up, its supplies delayed, its radio contact threatened, its relationship with the government disrupted, and its leader fighting an arrest warrant.

These were the very pressures Jonestown, and Jim, experienced. Congressman Leo Ryan's visit was the culmination, not the beginning, of the threats to Jonestown's existence.

John noticed a defensiveness in Jonestown during his visit. He and Barbara saw that the leaders talked only with each other. They fed their own fears because there was no outside or independent viewpoint. Jim filtered the news the community received. It was primarily negative, focusing on wars, natural disasters, and political events. He reported a border clash between China and the Soviet Union as a major war. Downbeat political films, like State of Siege, heightened the community's fears.

Adverse publicity, about Peoples Temple and Guyana, seemed to offer proof that a plot against the group existed. A letter from Carolyn indicates the connections leaders made between news and economic developments.

It seems interesting to me that CBS singled Guyana out as the only socialist nation in South America. That is no doubt where some of our problem comes. Recently trade agreements have been made with North Korea to export them timber, bauxite and sugar, in exchange for agricultural machinery. This along with other agreements should be a real boost to the economy. It will help counteract the embargo.

The New West article intensified the pressure. Carolyn wrote in August 1977:

With the continuing merciless attack by the press, we are beginning to wonder if we have accidentally stumbled on something bigger than we realized.

I remember in Phillip Agee's book [Inside the Company: CIA Diary] ... where he described how utterly vengeful the CIA was when Castro was victorious in Cuba. They were so angry that they made every possible effort to get [Che] Guevara beyond the normal parameters of intelligence work. It does make one wonder if they had some plan for Guyana that our presence has in some way unsettled. Or perhaps they just cannot conceive of a group of people who have rejected materialism for a freer lifestyle, though less creature comfort oriented.

It is hard to find a rational explanation for the continual press harassment unless they have some greater concern, or are being paid or intimidated into continuing.

Ironically, Temple leaders stumbled onto part of the truth. Negative publicity had been well-organized. In September 1977, The Berkeley Barb revealed that private investigator Joe Mazor had hired one of the largest public relations firms in San Francisco "to coordinate a publicity campaign against the Temple and its minister, Reverend Jim Jones." The article continued:

Bob Kenney, an account executive at Lowry, Russom and Leeper, confirmed for the Barb that he has been working for Mazor 'on this' (Peoples Temple) project, showing him how to handle the media.' He referred further inquiries to Mazor himself, whose only comment on Kenney's role was, 'I don't think that's any of your business.'

Mazor did note that he originally hired the public relations firm to help him attract business from insurance companies, 'and then the Peoples Temple matter just came up, and so naturally I turned to them for help.'...

Kenney's work for Mazor included sending out letters to selected journalists, offering them -- through Mazor -- exclusive material of an incriminating nature against Peoples Temple.

Kenney's campaign resulted in at least one article in The San Francisco Chronicle last month, concerning an alleged tape recording of a telephone conversation, in which Temple members supposedly discussed irregularities on the notary seal of a document transferring title of a member's home to the Temple. The allegations raised in that story are now also in dispute.

The news story said that Tim Stoen had attempted to arrange a payment to ex-members Marvin and Jackie Swinney in exchange for the couple's consent to a property transfer. The Swinneys made tapes of Tim, according to the article, which they later turned over to San Francisco Deputy District Attorney Robert Graham. No indictments ever followed, however.

Another indication that publicity had been well-planned comes from U.S. Customs Service documents. One comment, appearing in a September 21, 1977 report, says, "On July 18, 1977, a series of adverse newspaper, magazine, radio and television exposés were begun on JONES' operation of the Church." An earlier report notes:

It was then decided by [deleted] to attempt to arouse interest via a team of investigative reporters.

As a result of this action, a continuing series of magazine, newspaper, radio and television articles and coverage has been given to JONES and the Church.

During that same summer, Mazor called the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown and charged that twenty children were being held illegally in Jonestown. On September 6, the Embassy "reports further contact with investigator Mazor re custody of children." The Guyana Embassy in Washington, D.C. received similar calls from Mazor. Someone claiming to be the Attorney General of the United States also called the Embassy and reported that Peoples Temple had abducted 20 children. The Embassy notified Guyana Minister of Foreign Affairs Fred Wills.

Mazor's work against Peoples Temple, which included speaking on radio talk shows, had attracted attention. He was a lone, private citizen, however. This made his actions seem less threatening than those of the U.S. government. The Federal Communications Commission, the Social Security Administration and the U.S. Customs Service investigations greatly affected Jonestown by creating deep, and real, concern.

The Temple learned of the Customs Service investigation on September 29, 1977. A Miami freight handler told church member Jim Randolph that a Customs search occurred August 29. In October, Temple attorney Charles Garry asked Customs why the cargo had been searched. Customs replied that such examinations of exports were routine, but that "in any event, any information which might have prompted an examination would be of the type which would be exempt from disclosure to your clients."

An affidavit made by Jim Randolph contradicts this. Randolph asked the freight forwarder for SOPAC Transport Corporation if a search were standard procedure. "He replied that it is not." The customs agents, who were not from Miami, wore civilian clothes and had Customs Agents' identification.

When [the freight handler] mentioned the charge might have been made that we are shipping arms, I told him we would be the last people in the world to ship such things.

By that time the Customs Service had had Peoples

Temple under surveillance for ten months. An unnamed agent first made contact with Peoples Temple ex-members in February 1977. On February 24, the agent met with a dozen defectors who charged that the church was arming itself. Customs forwarded the report of that meeting to the Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the FBI, the Secret Service, the State Department, and the California Department of Justice, "as well as various state and local law enforcement agencies." Surveillance revealed "no indication of illegal activity." Similarly, the shipment identified in August was "examined in Miami with negative results."

U.S. Customs reports show a close scrutiny of Peoples Temple. On February 17, a Customs agent "surveilled the TEMPLE'S location in Redwood Valley and saw guards and watchdogs on patrol... According to the Mendocino Sheriff's Office, the guards at night are armed." On March 25, Customs forwarded four items to the San Francisco Crime Lab of the Postal Inspection Service for fingerprinting. On April 21, Customs contacted the Organized Crime Intelligence Division and the Criminal Conspiracy Section of the Los Angeles Police Department, "with negative results." An August 3 report observes:

Surveillance of the Church in San Francisco reveals evidence of large scale packing and crating indicative of an imminent move. One truck left San Francisco on July 9, 1977, for an unknown Gulf Coast port.

The surveillance continued into 1978. "Local enforcement activities relative to JONES' activities are being monitored," although at that point, Customs had closed the case. Lookouts posted in Houston since August reported on January 30 that nothing indicated "that either Jones or his associates have attempted to utilize Houston area ports for their venture." On April 20, 1978, the Miami District Customs office said it had been trying to locate the Temple's boat "CUDJOE" for a year.

The Customs Service failed to turn up any contraband or signs of smuggling, despite a year-long investigation. When House Foreign Affairs Committee staff interviewed the "Reporting Agent" after the suicides, he told them:

at no time was there any evidence of a substantial enough nature to justify an affidavit for either a search warrant or a presen-

tation to the U.S. Attorney for Federal Grand Jury action.

Nevertheless, the staff concluded that "investigators apparently felt enough residual suspicion" to send their findings to Interpol and to the State Department. Interpol, the international police organization, shared the report with the Guyana police, which in turn shared it with some Temple members in Guyana, including Carolyn. The report which Carolyn read found:

1. That in 1974 JONES had put out an appeal for all unregistered weapons his people could acquire. One of those attending the meeting stated she had over 170 of those weapons in her house until January 1976 when they were transferred to the church's San Francisco location.

2. That the weapons were subsequently taken to Guiana via chartered aircraft out of Miami.

3. That funds in excess of \$200,000 and \$300,000 were seen in cash in one member's home.

4. These monies are normally shipped via mail c/o Paula Adams at the mission in Guiana.

5. That JONES is an active supporter of both the Black Muslim and Black Panther organizations.

6. That JONES had considerable political power, both in Mendocino and San Francisco Counties.

7. That JONES had aspirations towards a political appointment to Guiana, possibly an Ambassadorship.

8. That JONES was seen throwing tear gas into a demonstration in Guiana in 1975.

9. That JONES would like to become a 'factor' in the Guiana government or power structure.

10. That he has upwards of 27,000 acres in Guiana approximately up river from Georgetown, whereupon he has his Agricultural Mission.

11. That he has surrounded himself with a para-military bodyguard known as the Apostolic Guardians. Surveillance at the Redwood Valley, CA, Temple verified the presence of an armed patrol around the compound.

12. That he had had an agreement with the Guianese government whereby all shipments to the Agricultural Mission would be labeled as 'farm implements' or 'used clothing,' and would not be inspected by local officials.

13. JONES communicates from Guiana to San Francisco in code by short wave radio.

As a result of this action, a continuing series of magazine, newspaper, radio and television articles and coverage has been given to JONES and the Church. Subsequently, investigations have been initiated by San Francisco and Mendocino counties.

JONES has retreated to Guiana and is apparently selling all property here and urging his people to come to the 'Promised Land'.

Lookouts have been posted at Miami, Houston, and New Orleans for shipments destined to the mission in Guiana.

Included as Collective Exhibit 1 is a preponderance of the material printed since July 18, 1977, on this matter.

Because investigation disclosed allegations that JONES intends to establish political power base in Guiana, and that he may currently have several hundred firearms in that country, the above information is furnished to [names not included].

The State Department Passport Office in San Francisco confirmed that they have been 'deluged' with passport applications from JONES' followers to travel to Guiana. Also, there are unverified reports several hundred members are currently enroute to Guiana, along with large quantities of supplies, description unknown.

The "Interpol Report" came directly from an August 26, 1977 Customs Service report. That document came directly from interviews with ex-members. As a result, the report contains a few inaccuracies and a great many innuendos.

The amount of acreage at Jonestown, as well as its location, are wrong. The agreement between Peoples Temple and Guyana not to search cargo -- if there were one -- ended in the summer or fall of 1977, according to the U.S. Embassy, when "Guyanese authorities began to pay greater attention to Peoples Temple activities." The

trawler belonging to the Temple was required to stop at Port Mabaruma for customs and immigration inspections. It is not clear why the Customs agent persisted in using the colonial spelling "Guiana", nor why he referred to "British Guiana" later in the report.

The Customs document notes connections with the Black Panthers and Black Muslims. Other Customs papers go further, and allege that Jim donated \$10,000 to the Muslims; and that "[deleted] acts as legal advisor to the Black Panthers."

The U.S. Customs Service circulated the report widely. The agent distributing it said the State Department never acknowledged receiving it. The Guyana police did, though.

The Commissioner of Police in Georgetown wrote to Interpol at the U.S. Department of Justice on January 31, 1978. He observed that the police had made "no progress along the lines indicated and that the [Guyana] Customs Police investigations had not brought to light any evidence to support the allegation of firearms or foreign currency." He concluded by saying, "surveillance will be maintained."

The Customs report outraged Carolyn. In December 1977, she wrote us that she'd read it.

The media has advertised us in the most grotesque and unreal manner -- due to this conspiracy which is indeed real, though I know you are not conspiracy-minded and tend to pooh-pooh the idea. I saw myself the Interpol [Customs] report which a high officer in government allowed a number of us to read firsthand. They are accusing us of the most absurd things -- trafficking in weapons and currencies. This I saw with my own eyes and as you know Interpol is closely related to high ranking and wealthy Nazis in the U.S. and originated from the Nazi movement in the first place. We have suffered an unimaginable sort of harassment in the United States. It is all a political game and since they can't get us on small things, I guess now they want to start on the big ones. You need to read Comrade George and other such texts to get a perspective on what U.S. tax dollars abroad are used for. Because we have close government ties here, we have been able to learn a lot of a number of things which otherwise we would not know. (Of course, all originates from the U.S.).

Church members didn't know how to handle the charges. They had little idea of the extent to which they circulated throughout the U.S. government. When Terri Buford forwarded the report to Charles Garry, she asked, "Do you suggest writing INTERPOL, or is that just a waste of time? Perhaps we should write our congressman?"

Peoples Temple viewed the Guyana customs searches as needless delays. They were more concerned about the possibility that their relationship with the country's ruling party, the People's National Congress was disintegrating. Critical articles had been forwarded to government officials. The Stoen custody case, pursued in part by the U.S. Embassy, made the project look bad, as did anonymous calls and threats to the Guyana Embassy in the United States.

A number of new and ominous developments occurred in the latter days of August 1977. Several hostile visitors came from different parts of the Guyana government to see Jonestown. A visit from the U.S. Consul, who asked to see Caroline Looman and John Stoen, also increased the group's concern. This was the first time the Embassy made inquiries about relatives. Then the Temple learned that the Stoens' lawyer was in Georgetown, bragging to Harriett Tropp and Paula Adams that a Guyanese Minister of State gave encouragement to him on the Stoen case. A day or two later, the attorney Jeff Haas arrived at the project with a Guyana marshal.

With three of their closest allies in the Guyana government out of the country, church leaders grew hysterical. The absence of Deputy Prime Minister Ptolemy Reid, Minister of Foreign Affairs Fred Wills and Minister of Home Affairs Vibert Mingo, coupled with Jeff Haas' visit and the issuance of an arrest warrant against Jim, convinced the group there was real danger. "It was conceivable to us that a coup had indeed taken place in the absence of Reid and the other officials," Carolyn wrote in a "To Whom It May Concern" statement.

We certainly had many concrete facts to lead us to this possible conclusion. Plus, we are very aware of the political realities of the country at this time. We know it's an election year, there is a serious sugar strike which will substantially impair the economic stability of the country and there is some increased desire to maintain detente with the U.S. for aid money. We are most empathetic to the struggles of this third world country. We are also aware of the fact

that we must have government backing to survive here as a Socialist group.

Jim's comments a month or two after the crisis emphasized the fear everyone felt. "We saw the CIA practically overthrow this country or a conspiracy practically undo it," he said in the voice of a preacher.

We saw all of its good leaders silenced. Then we saw them gain the ascendancy again... But we can remember that not many days ago when every time someone came down those roads, it was not friendly... Some of those same local officials that are now smiling because they've been given federal orders at the top level, were looking with austere looks of hate that could have penetrated a man if he'd been made of steel.

After Haas' first trip to Jonestown, Peoples Temple issued a press release claiming there had been an assassination attempt on Jim Jones. When Embassy officials reminded Temple leaders that Jim was supposedly not in the area, they "hastily backtracked." But later that month they began spreading the word that the CIA tried to assassinate Jim.

What really happened is not entirely clear. According to a secondhand report, Jim's son Jimmy said his father staged the shooting himself, and Jimmy almost got caught in the crossfire. Joe Mazor said he was in Guyana at the time as part of an armed expedition, which encountered another armed group in the jungle outside Jonestown. Mazor said the other group consisted of either Venezuelan bandits or "ultra-leftist Guyanese intent on harassing the colony."

Peoples Temple believed it was under attack. The group thought the Guyana Defense Force was on the perimeter of the outpost, armed and ready to strike. They had seen GDF aircraft fly overhead. Men, women and children armed themselves with cutlasses, boards, knives, and the few guns they had. Carolyn's statement explains the community's reaction.

If you had seen the pathos of the situation, you would immediately have known that we were not involved in any strategy. With a view of those peering at us from the bush with their binoculars, and shots fired at certain times, and with the knowledge that

at any moment the Marshal could be coming in to arrest Jim, or with a search warrant ... we had decided that we would die if that were required and it seemed to us that it was. We had received at that time no concrete assurances of anything. No one who has not faced death would fully understand it. A line of people with cutlasses just waiting.

The radio communication between Jonestown and San Francisco was frantic. Jim tried to reach the Guyanese officials who were in the U.S. at the time. Charles Garry's office set up phone patches with Angela Davis, Huey Newton and Dennis Banks. Angela advised Jim to stay cool and work things out in the Guyana courts. Jim sounded shrill and hysterical.

Many people have said the group threatened suicide. Debbie Blakey said Jim told Terri Buford and her to contact the Guyanese officials in the U.S. with a suicide warning, although she does not say she actually did so. U.S. Embassy Consul Richard McCoy says Patricia Parks, a defector who was killed at the Port Kaituma airstrip November 18, told government officials in Guyana that they were prepared to die. Charles Garry says Jim called him and said they were ready to commit suicide if authorities took John Victor Stoen away.

Jim's analysis of the events later shed a different light upon them. The suicide threat was absent. Instead, Jim spoke with authority, and calm, about defending themselves.

We're glad that we have come this far because it has steeled our own spine. It has committed our feelings more deeply than anything could have possibly committed it. When you have to face that battle line out there that surrounded this territory ... for many, many days -- three days and three nights solidly -- when you go through that kind of hell, you come out with an army. [Crowd shouts approval, applause.]

We have an army. There may be some who did not know what the sound of that distant beat of drummer was ... but enough came out that there is a mighty army up here. An army that will make its own conditions. We can survive together cohesively as long as we can build communalism, let bureaucrats come and go. As long as we can exist,

we're not particularly concerned what the hell politicians are doing in the world. But we want the world to know that we will exist together or we shall die together. [Crowd cheers.] Those terms must never be sacrificed, those terms must never be altered. That commitment must always be known in the back recesses of every person's mind -- that we are a family.

When the people of Jonestown said they "were prepared to die," we assumed they meant they would die fighting. Jim's statement confirmed this. The people would resist any attempt to take Jim or John Victor. Carolyn explained why.

Pragmatically the issue of John Stoen is not an isolated custody case to us. From the political perspective we know that if we do not get backing on this issue, how could we ever have confidence in the government backing us on far more controversial issues. We also know that if John Stoen were taken from the collective, it would be number one in a series of similar attempts... It was very much for the good of the collective that we decided as a group to make a stand on the John Stoen issue. Jim has presented to the entire group the alternative that he go to jail or that he simply take John and go. Both of these alternatives were totally unacceptable to the group. Jim was willing to give up John entirely if that was the collective will. This was against the recommendation of many of us with him that it was definitely for the collective good that we defend even to death the John Stoen issue. An added factor is that no child here would ever again feel secure if we handed over John Stoen.

There were never any Guyana Defense Force troops at or near Jonestown until November 19, 1978, according to the editor of The Guyana Chronicle. Relations with the Guyana police were cordial. The Guyanese never filed any complaints against the group.

Things calmed down once Reid, Wills and Mingo returned and after Haas left the country. Charles Garry

flew to Guyana in November 1977 to visit the project and talk with Jim. He came back saying he'd been to "paradise".

The negative publicity sponsored by Mazor and ex-members encouraged relatives to make inquiries about family members in Jonestown. In addition, the Social Security Administration (SSA) asked the Embassy in Georgetown to interview several SSA beneficiaries. As a result, "the Embassy initiated a policy (not customary in normal consular practice) of scheduling periodic visits by consular officers in Jonestown to follow up on these inquiries," said the House Committee report. Between August 1977 and May 1978, Consul McCoy interviewed a total of 75 Jonestown residents on three separate occasions. Although the community knew of his visits in advance, he did meet with people out of the hearing of other residents. No one accepted his offer of escort back to the Embassy and passage to the United States. In fact, McCoy told us,

None of the 75 people I interviewed defected. They all stayed and died with the others...

None of the people Debbie [Blakey] said wanted to leave, did. They all died.

The people who defected with Ryan had all been hardcore Peoples Temple members.

After the suicides, ex-members claimed McCoy was blackmailed into silence by an illicit relationship with someone in Peoples Temple. A survivor questioned by the FBI said McCoy was "targeted" for Carolyn or Paula Adams. Either would have made an unlikely candidate, since Paula was already having an affair with Guyanese Ambassador Laurence Mann, and Carolyn was Jim's mistress. McCoy reacted to the rumor by saying, "I've been around enough to know whether or not I'm being seduced. And if I was being seduced, it was a very bizarre method. The only time there might have been a question was when they gave me a bottle of liquor in the office."

Peoples Temple viewed the periodic inspections as intrusion and harassment from the U.S. government and the Concerned Relatives. They believed they were invasions of privacy. The group did not trust McCoy, either, although it got along with him. Carolyn told John and Barbara during their visit to Jonestown that he worked for the CIA. Earlier she wrote:

I have come to town to renew my pass-

port, so went down to the local American Embassy to chat with 'the local do-it-yourself CIA attache'. We were told by high government officials that he is definitely working for the CIA and he is just the type.

A former member of an Air Force counterintelligence team, McCoy says he once made a joke to Carolyn and some others about being a CIA agent. "So what if I were the CIA chief here, what's so bad about that?" he asked them, before he realized they would not appreciate the humor.

While McCoy ridiculed Peoples Temple's paranoia, he also indicated to us that the U.S. Embassy, or the U.S. government, was watching the group in Guyana. "We knew where the money was going," he told us. "We knew it was going to the Soviet Union and to Cuba, and not just for humanitarian purposes." He also said the Embassy knew of the group's visits to the Soviet Embassy in Guyana, adding that "there's no law against an American citizen going to a Soviet or Cuban Embassy."

McCoy's visits to Jonestown -- August 30, 1977; January 11, 1978; and May 10, 1978 -- gave him an opportunity to see the development of the project, and get a sense of the people living there. "Anyone who says it was a concentration camp is just being silly," he told us. "For the old people, and people coming from the ghetto, it was relatively better."

As late as November 7, 1978, other Embassy officials echoed McCoy's sentiments. Foreign Service Officer Dennis Reece wrote:

At no time did the Emboffs [Embassy officials Reece and Douglas Ellice] on November 7 see any barbed wire, any guards, armed or otherwise, or any other physical sign that people were being held at Jonestown against their will. Nor did any of the conversations by the Emboffs with Peoples Temple members at Jonestown reveal any indication that the inhabitants of Jonestown were receiving anything less than normal Guyanese standards of food, clothing, shelter and medical assistance.

Earlier in his report, Reece wrote that his general impressions were:

The members appeared to be in good health,

mentally alert with due exception being made for advanced ages of some members. The members seemed generally happy to be at Jonestown and absorbed in their various jobs such as metal working or teaching.

Relatives and critics charge that Jonestown residents were coached on what to say before the visits. They probably were. A tape recording made shortly before the visit from Soviet officials reveals an interesting, and often hilarious, coaching session between Jim and individuals in a community meeting.

- JIM: I'm gonna talk like a reporter could talk... [Crowd laughter] 'I don't know what "wonderful" means. What kind of food do you have?'
- WOMAN: Well, we have--
- JIM: Please don't mind. I'm just acting like a reporter...
- WOMAN: We make our own bread. We have rice. We have--
- JIM: For Christ's sake. [Crowd laughter] Don't name rice first, please. 'Cause that damn woman [Debbie Blakey] said we never eat anything, Debbie said we never eat anything here but rice. [Laughter] So I'd just forget the rice for the time being. Can't you think of something else?
- WOMAN: We have fish, rabbit, eggs, fruit. We always have plenty of fruit, vegetables--
- JIM: That's good, Mom, I like the way you're talking. That's good. How about the next person? Don't say anything about rice. [Laughter] Put it the last... All right, how's your health, sir?
- MAN: It's fine. I gained more health since I been here than I was in the States. I'm more stronger--
- JIM: Say, 'gained better health'.
- MAN: Gained better health--
- JIM: Some of us use that word, 'more health.' Gained better health... (to two girls) Now what is the common complaint around here about the people. What kind of complaints do they have?

GIRL: I haven't heard any.

JIM: (astonished) Haven't heard any complaints at all? In a community that's 1200? No complaints?

GIRL: No.

JIM: Somebody can say that, but some place along the line, somebody can say, 'Well we got one chronic complainer, they don't like this or that once in a while.' They say, 'Is it one person?' 'No, no, they're not the same one person every time. They'd complain if they was in heaven'... Shit, we're not perfect. I know one. [Crowd laughter]

GIRL: I live in a cottage and there's another family with me.

JIM: Another family? A whole 'nother family with you?

GIRL: Yes. I have no children, so I chose to have another family share the cottage with me.

JIM: Well, how big is the family?

GIRL: It's just a husband and a wife.

JIM: O.K., if they got a couple of kids -- Don't say family, 'cause if they want to twist it -- You say, a couple share my house. But I don't like that. They'll say that the male got two women. [Crowd laughter] Uh-uh, I would say, if you're single, I'd say I'm sharing with some other single people. Women. You understand what I'm saying?... I wouldn't want many of you being single. I got a companion. I'm married. I'm engaged. You know what I'm saying? Don't look dumb if they ask you if you got a boyfriend. Sure, say yeah...

Nothing about being on the floor, public services, nothing mentioned at all. We decide everything in a participatory democracy...

Tell me, how many hours you work, sir, and what do you work at?

MAN: I work eight hours a day, and I'm a heavy equipment operator.

JIM: What's your shift, what's your hours?

MAN: Seven to six. [Crowd laughter]

JIM: Seven to six mean -- by last count, eleven. [Crowd laughter] You gotta

watch it with reporters. They'll trip your ass. Eight hours. Seven to three. Or seven to four, with an hour off for lunch. [Someone in the crowd shouts that he has a three-hour lunch. They all laugh.]

The Embassy knew of the Concerned Relatives' allegation of corporal punishment, but "the allegations were not corroborated" by the official visits. McCoy wanted to spend an entire week at the project to probe beneath surface appearances of well-being, but U.S. Ambassador John Burke vetoed the idea. McCoy confided to us that he also wanted to recruit spies within the organization, to inform the Embassy of Temple activities. "But of course," he admitted, "that would have been illegal."

Suspicious at the Embassy finally prompted Ambassador Burke to cable the State Department requesting permission to urge the Government of Guyana to "exercise effective jurisdiction" over Jonestown. In other words, Burke wanted the U.S. government to allow him to suggest action to a foreign government. His telegram followed an aborted police raid on Jonestown, "just to see what was there," according to McCoy. The Guyana government reportedly stopped the raid, although individuals in Guyana deny a raid was ever imminent. The police never went in because "no one ever complained," said Skip Roberts. "No one told us they were being beaten or tortured."

The State Department turned down Burke's request, saying that:

Absent credible evidence of unlawful conduct at Jonestown, an approach to the Government of Guyana urging it to exercise effective jurisdiction could be construed as U.S. Government interference with the privacy and religious freedom of American citizens.

Jonestown really was too far away in miles and terrain for any government to oversee internal activities, although officials visited almost weekly. A few pages from the Jonestown guestbook, published in the House Committee report, show a constant flow of outsiders into the project. People from neighboring areas, as well as visitors from the capital and from the U.S. all traveled the muddy road cut through the heart of the jungle.

The major link the community had with the outside world was the shortwave radio. Peoples Temple radio conversations ranged from the subjects of continuing education and licensing for R.N.'s an x-ray machine and electric sterilizer, to red T-shirts, beehives, training cassettes about farm animals, and tractor parts. Often the content was more political, with drafts of press releases or public statements communicated from one continent to the other. The group's public "Response" to the Concerned Relatives' "Accusation", for example, was dictated from Guyana over the radio.

Because the amateur radio service is a public medium, anyone could listen in to Peoples Temple radio transmissions. And just about everybody did, including the Federal Communications Commission.

Acting on a tip from a San Francisco ham radio operator, the FCC's San Francisco office began monitoring Temple radio communications in April 1977. The office began taping conversations that same month. The next month, W.E. Ours, Chief of the FCC's Enforcement Division, asked the San Francisco office to "continue daily coverage." The agency cabled GuyTelCo, Guyana's communications company, with the call letters of a Temple member operating in Guyana. And shortly thereafter, the FCC sent notice of agency rule violations to two licensed amateurs in the U.S. associated with the Temple.

Throughout the next year, the FCC monitored Temple radio activity closely. By November 1978, the commission had logged between forty and sixty hours of conversation. After November 18, it turned over 25 cassettes and four reels of tape to a federal grand jury. In the meantime, it had assessed fines against Temple operators, and sent further notices of rules violations in March, April, May and October 1978.

The FCC cited Temple licensee Ben Bowers with using a code, operating out of the authorized frequency, and failing to give his call letters at ten minute intervals. Additionally, the agency charged Bowers with conducting business communications. Over a year later, the FCC warned another Temple amateur, Elton Adams, against carrying on business traffic, that is, "any transmission or communication the purpose of which is to facilitate the regular business or commercial affairs of any party."

Peoples Temple felt the violations were minor, and justified. Although it did not solicit funds or attempt to defraud anyone, it did go out-of-band for private conversations, it did fail to give the call letters with required regularity, it did allow unlicensed people

to use the radio, and it did use codes for transmissions. The people in Jonestown, Georgetown and San Francisco believed the importance of their work mitigated these infractions. They wrote to the FCC in May 1978:

Ham radio communication is essential to our work, and we cannot understand why it is allowed to be disrupted... The need for radio contact is indisputable. The growth of the Project is phenomenal, and planning for the agricultural, medical, educational, and even industrial needs of Jonestown is underway on the radio almost daily.

Peoples Temple saw FCC interference as a threat to its existence. A letter from a lawyer in Washington, D.C. to one of the Temple's attorneys made the threat explicit. James M. Weitzman of Stambler and Shrinsky wrote on November 6, 1978, that:

It is my conclusion from reading all of the enclosed documents and from conversations with Commission staff members, that the Commission intends to pursue continued business communications by American Amateur Radio Stations on behalf of the Peoples Temple. The Commission has not yet moved to institute proceedings for revocation of the license of WD6WDI, but I suspect that this action may be forthcoming if the business communications are not discontinued.

Although business communications troubled the FCC, one engineer noted that, "We haven't found anything wrong other than the business-type traffic... It's the out-of-band bit we need to hang them."

Transcripts of conversations between FCC engineers show that their investigation aimed at "hanging" Peoples Temple. For example, on September 9, 1977, one engineer remarked that he "want[ed] to get a good tape about their talk of a conspiracy." And again on September 23, one noted "more talk about conspiracy and terrorists." On September 15, the FCC recorded a conversation between Maria Katsaris and her father. On September 19, the intercept caught a Temple reference to a favorable article appearing in the Communist weekly People's World. At the end of the two-page transcript, an engineer added that Temple callers had changed bands by a few kilohertz.

Negative publicity particularly stirred interest

at the FCC. San Francisco Engineer in Charge Serge Marti-Volkoff reported August 25, 1977, that:

The San Francisco Chronicle has been running numerous articles concerning the Peoples Temple. Apparently there is ample evidence to indicate that the Temple leader, Jim Jones, is in possible violation of various state laws. This office has conducted the investigation primarily as an inquiry into the use of amateur radio transmission equipment. According to various law enforcement agencies in San Francisco, there exists a strong possibility that the Peoples Temple may be engaged in nefarious acts on an international level. According to local sources, the Peoples Temple continues to use coded transmission to cover up alleged illegal activities.

Marti-Volkoff told our private investigator John Hanrahan that those activities included "gun-running, narcotics and moving funds out of the country illegally." He said his information came from the Intelligence Division of the San Francisco Police Department. It sounds, however, very much like the U.S. Customs Service report. Marti-Volkoff added that he had seen no documents substantiating the "nefarious activities".

Case data about Peoples Temple included everything the FCC could get its hands on. One engineer overheard a television talk show.

It was brought out on the program about public whippings of children in the church. Most of the program time was used by members of the Peoples Temple calling in to waste time and say how good the church was...

[FCC respondent] ... Make it an official observation. Will attach it to current case data. I realize this group seems very offensive, much like the Church of Scientology, which uses the designation of 'Church' as a shelter word to cover untaxable funds. It is natural that I should warn you and the rest of the net, that we are not allowed to approach this case from the viewpoint that this is a bad 'Church' and should get its due, only as to whether they are violating the rules and regs of this commission...

Hopefully KNBR will allow FCC San Fran

to view the tape and get the names of the different individuals who gave testimonials, just in case they are some of the individuals we have intercepted on the case so far.

The FCC was interested in a lot of things, considering the fact that it was limiting its inquiry to violations of the amateur radio service. Conversations about Rosalynn Carter's trip to Venezuela, Jim's meeting with Jimmy Carter, the erroneous data that the Black Muslims owned the Peoples Temple San Francisco headquarters, as well as transcripts of personal conversations and press releases clog the FCC case file.

FCC communications dated April 29, 1978, show a typical conversation about Peoples Temple.

Engineer A: To cite for any violations on these while they are operating in the amateur band and not for the type of traffic they are running would be to condone this illegal operation. Such action might be questioned later. Give your tape to LA&E [the FCC's Legal, Advisory and Enforcement Division]. See if they can shun this one.

Engineer B: Roger, plan to do so. Hope can convince them to set down and listen to it.

Engineer A: They are raising peanuts down there too. Any idea what a PSU is?

Engineer B: Don't know. Maybe something to do with the motorbikes they were discussing.

Engineer A: Roger. Well, said he was short 50 of them. I'm also awful curious about what's in the suitcase. The guy seems quite concerned about its arrival.

Engineer B: Yep. That's the package they're to open and distribute. Maybe medical supplies or drugs.

Engineer A: Roger. Well, they said it contains shirts, whatever it means.

Engineer B: Maybe personal or personnel supply units?

Other conversations took on a more vindictive tone.

Engineer A: As I understand it, it was turned over to Legal several months

ago for revoke. Maybe we'll get them off the air before too much longer.

Engineer B: I keep asking about it since we spent so much time on it. Would like to see them shut down.

Another time:

Continue alerts, as frequent as you feel necessary... If you seem to be getting the signal real good, you can sample some of the more remote stations... Would like to cross these guys on a pin head. If we would ... need a lot of gunpowder to go for revocation.

The monitoring engineers couldn't understand how Peoples Temple stayed on the air. One commented, "high powers in D.C. friendly with this group."

We especially tried to track down a somewhat cryptic message dated September 11, 1977.

Mr. Freeman called here and requested we monitor. (FBI had requested we monitor)

J. Jerry Freeman, the Engineer-in-Charge at the FCC's Norfolk, Virginia station, explained to John Hanrahan that he had received a call from a duty clerk at the FBI. The clerk forwarded a complaint made by a ham operator because the ham had been unable to reach Freeman. The engineer wrote a letter to John, saying:

The amateur operator complained of unusual communications on the 20 meter amateur band. I personally monitored the communications and, at that point, called the Watch Office at FCC Monitoring Control in Washington, D.C. to alert our monitoring stations.

Freeman's explanation satisfied us about that particular message. But in trying to unravel its meaning, we found something else. John Hanrahan called Norman Blumenthal in the FCC General Counsel's office, to ask him about the FBI. John reported:

Blumenthal volunteered that the FBI had, indeed, asked the FCC to monitor the Peoples Temple radio communications, but that the FCC had refused. (In Blumenthal's words, 'We told the FBI to take a powder.') He said there were

documents to that effect... He said the FCC had told the FBI that the FCC could not monitor communications for any other agency. Besides, he said, the FBI is perfectly capable of doing its own monitoring and that its equipment was far more sophisticated than anything the FCC has.

We heard about the FBI from another source at the FCC. When Hanrahan read through thousands of pages of documents at the Private Radio Bureau, he asked staff attorney James McGrath about listening to the FCC's tapes of Temple communications. McGrath said, "The FBI would have the same tapes." Pursuing this, Hanrahan

asked if he meant the FBI had the subpoenaed tapes [author James Reston, Jr., had filed suit to obtain the FCC's tapes of Temple radio communications]. He said no, he meant the FBI was also monitoring Peoples Temple communications. Then he corrected himself and said he had been confused -- that the tapes the FBI had were of what happened at Jonestown.

Hanrahan believed McGrath made an honest mistake.

Beginning in the fall of 1977 and continuing throughout 1978, numerous U.S. hams complained to the FCC about Peoples Temple. One of the earliest complaints -- a letter forwarded from Senator Barry Goldwater's office -- observed that the group might be involved "in either a membership brainwashing campaign or perhaps revolutionary activity." In addition to providing the first reports about Peoples Temple radio traffic, ham radio operators continued to feed the FCC information. A May 16, 1978 FCC cable remarked:

My main informant had called me yesterday and told me about the switch of call sign to WD6DVI last Friday evening and how they discussed our latest correspondence to them.

It is clear from the complaints that the hams knew exactly who, and what, they were monitoring. On October 12, 1978, the amateur who initially contacted Senator Goldwater informed the FCC that:

There are about ten amateurs that I know of who maintain an active vigil monitoring Temple traffic. We trust that vigilance will

pay off with the eventual demise of this most outrageous abuse of the Amateur Radio Service.

The Concerned Relatives also listened to Temple radio communications. Tim Stoen called the FCC in the fall of 1977 and "complained of violations of FCC regulations by the Temple's radio station," according to a State Department report on its performance. The FCC advised Tim to make a written statement, but "heard nothing more from Stoen." However, Tim later used intelligence from international shortwave communications in the lawsuits he filed against Peoples Temple. An amended complaint in Steven Katsaris' suit, for example, cites information obtained from radio transmissions on September 20, 1977, and April 11 and May 1, 1978.

The FCC notes the large number of complaints it had received in a response to one writer in April 1978. The FCC added, though, that it had "been unsuccessful in establishing probative evidence of recent alleged wrongdoing." This was in spite of daily coverage. Another letter, from the Chief of the Field Operations Bureau to the surgeon who assisted Larry Schacht performing a Caesarean section, observed that, "I am not aware of any reason why emergency medical traffic for which no remuneration is received should not be permitted between U.S. amateurs and [Peoples Temple radio in Guyana]."

The FCC drew a clear distinction between emergency traffic and regular business traffic. It was the latter which the FCC used to "hang" Peoples Temple. In April 1978, a year after the agency had first begun to intercept the church's radio communications, the Commission clarified its guidelines on phone patches and on third-party business communications. The clarification made no distinction between profitmaking and charitable organizations: a commercial message was a commercial message, regardless of who made it.

That August, the Commission made its position on Peoples Temple explicit when it advised Elton Adams that:

The communications involving your radio station related to the normal day-to-day administrative details of operating the missionary outpost of People's Temple. This type of communication has previously been interpreted by the Commission as constituting the regular business affairs of a charitable organization...

You are therefore advised that the use

of your radio station to facilitate the administrative and operating functions of the Peoples Temple missionary outpost are prohibited third party communications.

The letter concluded with the threat that if business transmissions continued, "enforcement sanctions such as monetary forfeiture, or, if necessary, revocation and/or cease and desist proceedings" could result.

The FCC's warning came on top of a new communications problem. The Maritime Mobile Net refused to carry phone patches for Peoples Temple, saying the FCC had told it Temple calls were illegal. One of the group's lawyers complained to the FCC, but the agency denied the charge, and added that it had no control over the communications network. Maritime Mobile Net could refuse service to anyone. This meant that Peoples Temple calls had to be routed through the San Francisco office. Direct calls were no longer possible.

Concern about the community's financial security equaled concern over the ability to communicate. In 1977 and 1978, two government agencies threatened that security.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) district office in San Francisco asked postal officials in the summer of 1977 to alert it immediately of any address changes marked Guyana. The Postal Service went a step further and, according to a USPS routing slip, ordered all U.S. Treasury checks destined for Guyana returned to Treasury. It wasn't until the late Congressman Phillip Burton (D-Calif.) wrote several times, and included the Postal Service note, that SSA finally solved the problem in December. Normally all SSA and SSI (Social Security Insurance) checks are forwarded, and the Treasury Department notified.

In the spring of 1978, more checks were misrouted. Letters poured forth from Peoples Temple, and SSA quickly solved that problem as well.

The SSA interim report detailing its action on Peoples Temple revealed that the San Francisco office "went to extraordinary lengths to ensure Social Security Administration was notified when a member who was entitled to social security benefits moved abroad. This action proved very effective." When members who had been entitled to SSI benefits left the U.S., Social Security moved to stop the payments. Later, SSA discovered that in all but ten cases, SSI payments stopped in August or September 1977. No SSI payments had been mailed outside the United States; nor should they have been.

Another threat to the Temple's financial security came from the Internal Revenue Service. On February 21, 1978, the IRS informed the Temple it was conducting an examination "to determine if it receives income from any activity which may be subject to income tax." The IRS District Director asked for organizational documents, financial statements, payroll tax returns, and copies of licenses and permits to operate commercial activities.

Temple leaders and their lawyers considered this more harassment, and decided to challenge the examination at every step. The lawyer on the case, Marshall Bentzman,

said the closer you look at the letter, the more you tear it apart... Demands for audit under 7605 (c) have to come from the Regional Director. Therefore, this is only a request, and not an audit, and is a fishing expedition hoping we will be gullible and comply... They cannot demand what they ask for under these provisions and at this level.

Bentzman met with a representative of the IRS in April and learned from him that "publicity gave rise to our inquiry about the church." Nevertheless, Bentzman felt confident that the IRS couldn't prove the Temple earned more than 25 per cent of its income from unrelated business activity, the crux, he felt, of the inquiry. An April 29 report by a Temple member said that Bentzman "feels what they are after is to determine our political activity." He also suggested asking Congressman Burton to look into why IRS was conducting its examination. The attorney and Temple leaders believed an informer had talked to the IRS, and that the agency had little solid information.

Even before the IRS letter arrived, individual Peoples Temple members had written asking if they were being audited. The IRS responded that it was not auditing any individuals. An undated, unsigned "UPDATE ON CURRENT HARASSMENT BY INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE" noted that more than 80 Temple members had been called in for audits during the Viet Nam war. The Update also claimed that "this latest move is undoubtedly organized, as the notice of it came on the same day [original italics] that an attempt was made to serve papers (both here and in the U.S.) on Jim."

In 1977, Temple members also wrote to IRS to object to intimidation they experienced. Richard Tropp wrote in March to the Treasury Department's District Director about David Conn. Conn had told Dennis Banks

that the Treasury Department was investigating Peoples Temple. Conn "is reportedly 'out to get' us," wrote Tropp, who added: "We wanted to bring this matter directly and immediately to your attention. We consider this a form of harassment."

Probably describing the same incident, Temple leader Mike Prokes wrote a month later that:

A number of people ... have told us that they have received calls and inquiries about our church from a person (or persons) who represents himself as being with the Treasury Department... Enough such calls have been made to prompt us to ask whether an inquiry about our church is, indeed, being conducted and, if such is the case, why we have not been so informed.

The IRS replied that it was not conducting an investigation of Peoples Temple.

When the National Enquirer began nosing around in June 1978, Peoples Temple again saw the long arm of the Concerned Relatives. A reporter called John and Barbara in August. A few days later, Tim Stoen called John. He wanted

to urge me to speak out against Jim Jones. I told him that I could not understand him. He had been 100% for Jim and was now 100% against him. He said that Jim is power hungry. (When I told Mom, she said that she had known that all along.) He advised me to speak out against Jim, or our grandson and daughters would be hurt... I told him that I had known for eight years that there would be a lot of pain for all involved one day... I read Tim Stoen's calling us as recognition that we are a stumbling block to their campaign. We seem to be one of two or three voices that sound different from theirs.

Gordon Lindsay, "a very nasty reporter of English vintage," according to Barbara, talked to John for an hour,

trying to break him down into admitting untruths regarding Peoples Temple, personal criticisms of Jim Jones, Debbie Blakey and others... Then he talked to me with a sort of replay for 20 minutes and added a few extras...

Dad kept his cool and said he did not reveal confidential information about his church members and was not going to comment on personal information regarding members of Peoples Temple... I told this guy that I questioned the reliability of his sources of information. And mostly I said I didn't really know what he was talking about as I did not know much of anything other than stories I read in the newspaper regarding one member and his allegations. The guy gave up on me after repeated phrases such as, 'You're a good Christian woman, how would you feel if etc., etc., etc.'

John wrote that Lindsay

sounded like Lester Kinsolving when he interviewed me. He tried to put words in my mouth. Both appealed to our sense of Christian ethics, or really they tried to shame us, to manipulate us.

Gordon Lindsay referred to Jim Jones' "concubines" in his conversation with Barbara. John concluded that Carolyn and Kimo would be mentioned in the article, adding in a letter to me, "We both assumed that the truth would one day become public, and in a painful way." He continued:

Mom and I feel okay about the truth becoming public. We can handle the truth far better than secrecy and pretense. I am worried about Carolyn. She took pay from the school district for sick leave. That may be questionable. Income tax questions can always be raised, especially by political partisans.

But the article never came out. Temple "Feedback" dated September 30, 1978 proclaimed that "Gordon Lindsay's article now completely stopped." The man who stopped it, Mark Lane, became a kind of folk hero to the members of the Temple.

As far as Peoples Temple was concerned, Lane possessed impeccable credentials. He had long supported liberal causes, and had discovered conspiracies in the John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King assassinations. Lane, along with author Don Freed, expressed his belief in a conspiracy against the Temple, thereby legitimizing

the group's fear. And both Lane and Freed offered proof of the conspiracy.

Don Freed, a liberal journalist who had worked with Lane, introduced the lawyer to the group. The Temple's San Francisco attorney, Charles Garry, brought in Freed because the Temple was searching for a sympathetic writer to tell its story.

Freed visited Jonestown in August 1978. He described government conspiracies to an enthusiastic group of listeners. A commentary filed in the Jonestown library observed that Freed claimed the murders of Martin Luther King, John and Robert Kennedy, and Malcolm X were all connected. "It is important to crack them," the commentary reported

to expose the 'invisible government's' structure. The invisible government is that undercover spying system that controls the lives of Americans.

Freed went on to describe his and Lane's work on the King assassination.

Temple leaders discussed their fears about the National Enquirer article with Freed during his visit. The writer confirmed their suspicions, as Carolyn indicated:

Don Freed who is now here and did the investigating on the MLK and JFK assassinations knows DEFINITELY the CIA contact in the Enquirer and anything that is this drug-out could be nothing less than conspiracy. You should not even dignify talking to Tim Stoen. Freed thinks there is much reason to believe he was a plant from the start with his various organizational connections and just a lot of things fitting together.

Freed did more than just talk. He provided a flesh-and-blood conspirator, according to Carolyn.

[Freed] has helped us get a conspirator to come forward. I am asking Terri Buford to play you the tapes of the conspirator who said in detail how he engineered a mercenary effort here and how they intended to blow up our generator and radio room. It is stupefying.

The conspirator: Joe Mazor, the private investigator for the Concerned Relatives.

That September, Mazor went to Jonestown with Mark Lane. Mazor apparently decided to play one side against the other. The Temple considered hiring Mazor through Charles Garry's office, so that he would be bound by attorney-client privilege. But Mark Lane thought "Mazor could be trying to set us up or just greedy. Strongly advises we don't let him work for us." "Feedback" for September 27 notes "Paying Mazor the 2500 we owe him, cash but getting receipt."

Mark Lane's trip was equally profitable, resulting in the promise of a \$20,000 retainer from the Temple. He used \$7500 to obtain the National Enquirer article, although the Los Angeles County District Attorney investigated the possibility that Lane already had the article in his possession when he took Temple money for its "purchase". Lane and Freed both began negotiations with the Enquirer, and eventually the article died. September 30 "Feedback" says that, "Mark got highlights of it and it was horrible -- everything was in it -- you name it, he said it."

The Enquirer deal marked the beginning of a public relations "counteroffensive" Lane and Freed planned. The Temple believed they would contact independent producer David Wolper about making a film on Jonestown. Notes in the FBI's Don Freed file from Temple material outline the strategy:

- I
 - Mazor "book"...
 - Negotiation w/ Stoen
- II
 - Team formed w/ media
 - Confirmation w/ Stoen, et al
 - Turning of Stoen or other leading activists
- III
 - Roll up the network
 - Break series of stories, coordinated with legal action
- IV
 - Publish magazine and book history of the conspiracy as part of larger story of Peoples Temple and Jonestown

The strategy included carefully-planned press conferen-

ces. Freed suggested holding "a mini-conference on the sly with some of the sympathetic press and that then they should have their stories ready to be released when the real conference took place so that something good would be ready at that time."

Mark Lane had already given one press conference. On September 20, he told reporters assembled in Georgetown, Guyana that none of the charges made against Peoples Temple were true. He added:

We have also concluded without question that there has been a massive conspiracy to destroy the Peoples Temple and a massive conspiracy to destroy the Reverend Jim Jones... We justly conclude that the plans to destroy the Peoples Temple and the plans to destroy Jim Jones were initiated by the intelligence organizations of the United States.

In San Francisco, Lane gave a similar press conference on October 3. He announced plans to file suits against the FBI, CIA, IRS, Department of State, and the U.S. Postal Service for conspiracy against Peoples Temple. He also described an attack on the settlement which parallels Joe Mazon's account of his first visit to Jonestown.

An article in the February 1979 edition of Esquire Magazine cited a memorandum which listed what Lane agreed to do for the Temple to earn his retainer. According to the memo, Lane planned to file Freedom of Information Act requests on the Temple's behalf. The memo did not mention any lawsuits against the government.

A tape recording made in Jonestown revealed that Lane explicitly told his audience to expect legal action. He promised:

When the offensive campaign is finished, every single person who has participated in this [unintelligible] campaign will be a defendant in a massive, multi-million dollar action. Criminal complaints will be filed against every single person who has violated the law in the effort to destroy Peoples Temple and Jonestown.

He explained that a suit against the government filed in federal District Court

will give us an opportunity to participate

in discovery proceedings with every single person who has participated in this campaign against Jonestown.

Lane had barged onto another lawyer's turf. Charles Garry was defending the Temple in at least five lawsuits, and pursuing a civil suit against Tim Stoen, when Mark Lane made his promises. Garry had worked for Peoples Temple for a year and a half. Lane told Temple members in California, according to Temple notes made October 11, that, "Peoples Temple needs to get another representative, that no matter how hard this one tried, anyone could do better." Lane convinced Gene Chaikin, himself a lawyer, that Garry was senile and could not handle the cases properly. In a memo to Jim written a week before the suicides, Chaikin recommended dropping Garry and hiring "a competent civil defense attorney... I don't care so much about his politics unless they are very hostile."

When Mark Lane returned from his visit to Jonestown and announced to the press that he represented Peoples Temple, Garry was furious. In early October, Garry told the Temple he would no longer represent it if Lane were also counsel. Marceline Jones responded by saying Jim was extremely ill. Jim called Garry a few days later and begged him to come to Guyana. Garry waited, and when he heard about Leo Ryan's plans, he contacted Ryan's aide, Joe Holsinger, to find out what was going on. Pat Richartz, Garry's aide, told him he'd better go down to Guyana and work things out with Jim personally. On November 15, the day after Congressman Ryan left San Francisco for Guyana, Garry flew to New York to make his own connecting flight to the country. At Kennedy Airport he met Mark Lane, who greeted him with outstretched hand. Garry turned on his heel and decided he wouldn't go if Lane were going. But again, Pat Richartz told Garry he'd better settle the matter personally with Jim.

When Garry arrived in Jonestown, he found Jim very sick, both mentally and physically. The Temple leader had lost thirty pounds in the year since Garry's previous visit.

Annie worked as Jim's personal nurse, administering the drugs stocked in Jim's small refrigerator. She talked about her role in a note to Jim:

I just wanted for you to know that I do not mind being your nurse and there is nothing more I would rather be. You should not feel guilty for having me watch you. I would rather

be around you than anyone else in the world. I like to be here, it is not a burden. I will do everything I can think of to help keep you going. You have given everything to me so anything I can do for you is only right for me to do and I do not resent anything. If I seem irritated when trying to put you to sleep, it is because of frustration I have that it all has some bad side effect. But I am not mad at you. I will try not to show frustration any more. Sometimes I leave because I have to take care of other problems in the Bond or because I hope you will fall asleep before I come back but not because I don't want to be here. I like for you to be able to sleep and when they build the pool, I'll be out there checking also. I just thought I should let you know so you won't be feeling guilty about this. (I get more bookwork done down here anyway.) From Annie

John Jacobs, who co-authored Raven, found the note in Jim's cabin after the suicides. He felt it indicated that Annie really did resent caring for Jim, that it was indeed a burden. Knowing Annie, though, we feel she meant what she said. She wrote the note because she felt she had communicated some frustration to Jim; now she was apologizing. Additionally, on our visit to Jonestown after the suicides, we found two drawings by Annie taped to Jim's bedstead. One was a humorous get well card "from Uncle Zeke and the Gang".

Jim's condition was evident to everyone: his lawyer, the U.S. Embassy staff, Annie and Carolyn, Marceline, and all those who remembered him as he'd been -- strong and kind and righteous -- rather than what he'd become. Embassy Consul Richard McCoy remarked, "I knew he was irrational the day I met him. By May 1978, it was clear he was on drugs."

Two other Embassy officials who went to Jonestown ten days before Ryan's arrival reported that Jim exhibited erratic behavior, slurred speech, and mental confusion. During the visit, Consul Doug Ellice and Vice Consul Dennis Reece found Jim wearing a surgical mask during lunch. He appeared to need help in standing up during a luncheon meeting.

Mental aberrations accompanied Jim's physical illness. Vague suspicions and doubts blossomed into outrageous accusations. Jim was cracking up. A stronger per-

son would have fought back -- through the courts, in the press, with public appearances and group rallies, with an aggressive public relations program. And Peoples Temple did fight in these ways. Jim, though, was beginning to lose control of himself and his community.

In a set of "Instructions/Revelations" presumably given by Jim a month before the suicides, he said:

It's full moon and the 16th. Most people it affects positively. We are 98% water and we rise like the tide. Most people it affects positively and some it affects negatively. So we have to be more aware for dangers to our life or crippling disorders or diseases around the 16th and the full moon. Please remember that fact and regard it for your own safety... Be careful with the heavy duty equipment because of that revolution -- it's the full moon so be cautious on the full moon cycle.

By instituting strict discipline, and creating a climate of fear, Jim sought to regain his lost control. Field workers had their breaks at unscheduled times. No one knew when a day off was coming. This was to prevent conspiracies and flight. Jim told the group that the Guyana Defense Force would shoot to kill if anyone ran away.

Other terrors lurked outside of Jonestown. "One person trying to go through the jungle was found recently torn up by a tiger," Jim told them, "also trying to cross the border." He went on:

Also the people in those areas are very immoral and cruel, on that Venezuelan border as you cross it.

Danger hid within the community as well. "There is an element in here trying to kill me," Jim said. He warned the group:

Attention! Anyone coming near my abode, don't touch my window or my door. You might find yourself in a lot of trouble -- it's meant only for mercenaries.

The security force was "to rove constantly. That is the rule of the day." But as security increased, so did trouble with the security force. Jim required the

Jonestown police force to take weekly classes in self-analysis. "They can't be walking around like gaudy asses and making mistakes like two did the other day and arrest some woman and run her ass clear across to the piggery." A personal note to Jim "not to be read allowed [sic] unless you wish" described another problem:

Al Tschetter gets very excited at times and explodes. Night before last he got mad and said he was 'through' -- he gave the gun to Sylvester and walked out mad in front of the crew... ALSO, HE SOMETIMES COCKS THE GUN AND PUTS IT ON PEOPLE. I worry about this for fear of an accident. Al told me that Sylvester left a shell in the chamber a few days ago. I reported this to Joyce T. who said she thought it was o.k. to cock the gun.

Jim exhorted his followers to report incidents and problems. Several tapes and letters include the apology, "I guess I should have reported it." Jim reminded the group that reporting is honorable in a communist society because "here you're reporting to protect the people."

And underneath it all, a current of resentment and discontent bubbled. After November 18, survivors talked to each other and learned they shared criticisms of the final days. Mike Touchette said he would take a bulldozer out into the jungle, park it, and read a book in secret defiance. One person drank gasoline in a suicide attempt. Some tried to escape.

Tommy Bogue tried, but security guards caught him on the road to Matthews Ridge. As punishment, he says, he and his friend were shackled in chains for three weeks and forced to chop wood for 18 hours a day. He said that others who tried to escape were placed in a coffin-like box for several days. They were checked by the medical team at least once a day. Others who were disaffected or unruly had to dig ditches. "Those who didn't work, didn't eat."

We asked several survivors about the "box". It was used only "one or two times," said one. "No," said another, as they discussed it among themselves. "It was used more than that. A couple more times." The first responded, "I didn't know that."

The "box" was fairly mysterious. Stephan Jones told Penthouse:

It was kind of ambiguous to everybody.
It was one thing that Dad would collaborate

on with only a couple of people. Tom Grubbs developed this. He's dead, and maybe I'm trying to save a dead man from a lot of disgrace, but I honestly feel that he thought it was a humane way of getting through to people. Really, there are people that are amoral. He had worked with handicapped children in a special school for ten or twelve years. That's why his opinion regarding sensory deprivation was accepted and tried. This all has been exaggerated.

Tim Carter complained to the Guyana Chronicle that "when it is used in mental institutions, it is called psychotherapy. When it is used in Jonestown, it is called an underground prison and a horror chamber."

Behavior control and modification replaced corporal punishment at Jonestown. The spanking ceased the last seven or eight months in Jonestown, according to Tommy Bogue. Stephan Jones agreed. "You didn't even spank children -- that was a taboo." Jim threatened individuals who didn't "smile and give encouragement." He warned, "You will hear it next from the floor if some of you don't change your patterns in this way." The community used the "box", drugs, and most frequently, the learning crew or public service for changing or disciplining anti-social behavior.

The learning crew did the dirty work in Jonestown. Those jobs included cleaning bathrooms, showers and sidewalks, cutting grass, hauling wood and bricks, and digging ditches. Some children, especially teenagers, comprised the crew. Evaluations show the infractions, and the improvement, people made.

Ronnie Dennis (7 days on) 3rd time on crew.
Sleeping on security. Attitude and work good.
Helpful in dorm.

Wayne McCall (10 days on) Slept in Socialism class, caused trouble while taking a shower.
Worked through his lunch yesterday...

Mark Rhodes... Slept in Socialism class
(think he's eight years old)...

Keith Wade (1 day on) 2nd time on crew.
Giving dirty looks last night.

Of course, the crew supervisors evaluated themselves as well, and were much harsher in their reviews.

Sebastian (self-criticism) -- Sometimes I'm real easy on the crew, which I shouldn't be. Sometimes I don't listen when something's wrong with them. Sometimes I close my eyes for a couple of minutes. I will stop doing all these things and for discipline I will go on the Learning Crew for a week.

Drugs provided another part of the social control. Jim encouraged the medical staff "to see that those who have proved themselves incapable of their own controls ... have medical controls placed on them." On October 16, 1978, he asked people to "put your name in and we will help you by some mood elevation medication... You will not be brought on the floor," he added.

People had grown unhappy, but there seemed to be nothing they could do. Stephan Jones admitted that:

There were people who weren't happy with the conditions. And there were people who weren't proud of what they were doing, and people who wanted to live a more comfortable life. And I don't think they felt they could say it, and I don't think they felt they could leave.

Jim must have sensed the dissatisfaction when he asked the group, "Why in the hell would anyone think about going back to the United States when we've got right now proof of the CIA being after us?" Another time, he explained they would be going to the Soviet Union soon, and anyone who didn't want to move could go back to live in "fascist USA".

It was an idle promise. No one could go back. At least five lawsuits and one criminal complaint remained pending against Jim and individuals in the Temple. Jim asked Charles Garry about the likelihood of jail if he were to return to the U.S. "He needs to know by name the ones you think could be indicted," a list of "Questions [to you] from Jim" wondered.

The specific names, because he needs to be able to think in terms of some maybe taking vacations. He is never under any circumstances going to let anyone go to jail without him going too.

In sum: Who would go? For how long? How soon?

Other pressures made a return unlikely. The FCC seemed certain to cut off the project's communication lifeline. Guyanese journalists told Temple leaders that the U.S. was pressuring Guyana to expel the group. Joe Mazor revealed a plot against the church. The Concerned Relatives threatened to hire mercenaries.

And then, on November 1, Leo Ryan publicly announced his intention to visit Jonestown. Peoples Temple wavered between letting him come and denying him access. On November 4, it finally set three conditions for his visit: that the delegation be balanced, with people sympathetic to Peoples Temple accompanying the Congressman as well as critics; that no members of the press be in attendance during the visit; and that Mark Lane be present.

As the Temple's representative, Lane wrote Ryan to request that he change the dates of his visit. Lane pointed out:

Jonestown is a private community and that while they appear willing to host your visit there under certain circumstances, courtesy requires that arrangements be made in advance of your visit. For example: there are no hotels or restaurants in the area and you would be the guest of the community during your entire visit.

Ryan responded that the visit would continue as planned. His aide, Joe Holsinger, told the press, "A Congressional delegation does not wait upon the pleasure of Mark Lane."

Ryan was determined to go to Jonestown at any cost, although he knew it could be dangerous. He knew of Debbie Blakey's affidavit and believed mass suicide was a real possibility. The State Department told him on November 13 of the existence of weapons in Jonestown, although the agency added, no violence had ever been directed against visitors. Debbie Blakey accompanied him to that State Department meeting. He knew of alleged illegal activities, especially since the Los Angeles District Attorney asked him to interview some Temple members about the extortion complaint he was investigating. Ryan knew of Jim's 1973 lewd conduct arrest. The FBI found notes concerning it in his briefcase on the Port Kaituma airstrip. The Concerned Relatives had lobbied Ryan for eighteen months, beginning with Robert Houston's account of his son's involvement in Peoples Temple. Leo Ryan fully knew of the danger. The Washing-

ton Star reported that "all sources agreed that Ryan knew he was embarking on a dangerous journey when he ventured out to the Jonestown settlement."

Ryan's colleagues in Congress tried to dissuade him from making the trip. The chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Clement Zablocki, advised him that he could not go to Guyana unless other members of the committee accompanied him. Ryan found another -- Edward Derwinski of Illinois -- but his ally had backed out by November 1. Another Congressman who almost joined Ryan, Don Edwards of California, told Ryan the trip

was not the right thing to do. I advised him to work through the State Department and the Attorney General of Guyana... I said Congressmen are ill-advised to take such matters into their own hands... I don't want to be critical of Leo -- he was very good and he regarded it as his duty to investigate. But I advised him against it.

"Certainly no one could have talked him out of his trip to Guyana," wrote reporter Karen Feld, who met with Ryan shortly before his departure. Ryan had made up his mind. He wanted to verify personally the "deplorable" conditions in Jonestown.

Ryan's altruism and dedication were mixed with a desire to be in the right place at the right time: where the media was. After the Watts riots in Los Angeles, he lived with a black family in the ghetto and taught at an inner-city school. He spent a week in Folsom Prison and wrote a play about it when he got out. He sped to the Teton Dam when it collapsed, to help the people there, and traveled to Newfoundland to protest the slaughter of baby seals.

His media consciousness also extended to his trip to Jonestown. As early as September 15, when he first told the State Department of his plans, he mentioned that at least one reporter would accompany him. By November 1, when he notified Jim of his intent to visit the agricultural project, an NBC camera crew was making arrangements to go with him. The crew of four were the only reporters out of the nine traveling with Ryan who had obtained visas to enter Guyana.

The State Department, especially Richard McCoy who was by then Guyana Desk Officer in Washington, D.C., told Ryan not to take members of the press or Concerned Relatives with him. Their presence would make it that much harder for Ryan to get into Jonestown.

As it was, Peoples Temple suspected Ryan of bad faith because he was bringing the press. It was that perception which led the group to specify its three conditions for allowing Ryan into Jonestown. When Ryan arrived in Guyana, the church issued a statement claiming that his visit was "staged for the purpose of manufacturing adverse publicity for the Jonestown Community."

Ryan had already made several provocative statements. As he left the San Francisco airport, he told reporters, "If they set up objections that can't be met without any discussion, the conclusion has got to be obvious ... that they are failing to show cooperation with an honest effort to obtain information. And that indicates they have something to hide." According to Holsinger, the Congressman planned to lead a group of Concerned Relatives and the media to the Jonestown gate to "show that people were not free to come and go."

Peoples Temple did not see this as "an honest effort to obtain information." The Congressman made no attempt to satisfy any of the Temple's conditions. He had ignored the group's lawyers, refusing to negotiate with Lane and snubbing Garry. His party included bitter enemies of the Temple. Almost everyone who'd filed suit flew to Guyana with Ryan. Tim Stoen declared, "We hope to liberate at least some of the people who are down here against their will." Ryan added that he planned to "force" the issue.

"I think they believed we were there to destroy them, destroy the community basically," Steven Sung, an NBC soundman wounded at Port Kaituma, observed a few days after the massacre. Skip Roberts blames one person for that: Tim Carter. Radio Barbados aired a Canadian Broadcasting report that said Jim decided to end Peoples Temple "after receiving information that he would have been killed." Tim Carter, "the trusted Peoples Temple lieutenant who gave that information to Jim Jones," according to the CBC, had infiltrated anti-Temple groups in California by pretending to defect from the church. He returned to Jonestown a few days before Ryan arrived. After learning "that Bishop Jim Jones was going to be killed ... [he] communicated that information to Bishop Jones."

Jim himself excited fears by saying that a Congressman "who's close to the John Birch Society" would be coming. He described Ryan as "so far right he can only be called a fascist." And he said Ryan supported "the people who killed [Chilean President Salvador] Allende." "My opinion is to tell him to stick it," he told an enthusiastic crowd one night.

Church members in California wrote Ryan many letters trying to dissuade him from making the trip. One writer observed:

Your present delegation leads many to conclude that what you are doing is just one more attempt to tear down the most constructive program Americans have built abroad.

Leo Ryan did not recognize his limitations. In the United States, he was a Member of Congress, with certain rights and privileges. In Guyana, he was merely a U.S. citizen attempting to visit other U.S. citizens. The State Department and the U.S. Embassy tried to impress upon him the fact that Jonestown was private property, and that he had no legal right to demand entrance. On November 9, the State Department bluntly told two of Ryan's assistants, Jackie Speier and Jim Schollaert, "the Congressional Delegation would have no official authority in Guyana."

"For a Congressman to barge in there is not the proper way," Charles Garry said as Ryan left the United States. "This is these people's homes."

When he left for Jonestown on November 17, Ryan still did not have permission to enter the community.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE LAST TO DIE

If there are angels, you can
be sure many have been added
to the list.

-- Letter of condolence
from Peoples Temple
member

Jim Jones planned the death of Congressman Ryan as carefully as he planned his own. He knew of the ambush on the Congressman and his party in advance. He sent Larry Layton on a suicide mission to destroy Ryan's plane in the air. When he learned there would be two planes, he sent the crew on the trailer to make sure Ryan would be killed.

The Congressman's visit enraged him. After he learned that Ryan's plane was en route to Jonestown on November 17, 1978, Jim announced over the loudspeaker: "Alert, alert. We're being invaded." Tim Carter said it was the first time he heard Jim use the word "alert", and it scared him.

Jim ordered the Jonestown basketball team back to the community. The team had gone to Georgetown to play the Guyana National Team. But the young men refused to return. "We just laughed at the order and said it was dumb," said Stephan Jones.

It didn't seem dumb to Jim. Leo Ryan had brought just about every known enemy of Peoples Temple to Guyana. Tim and Grace Stoen, Mickey Touchette, Nadyne Houston, Sherwin Harris, Steven Katsaris, as well as hostile reporters made up Ryan's entourage. Several who made the trip had sued Peoples Temple. Others had threatened, publicly or privately, to retrieve their relatives by force.

But as people gathered in the pavilion on the afternoon of the 17th, Marceline Jones argued that the Congressman and relatives should be allowed to come into the community. The group was relaxed, she told Jim, ready for Ryan's visit. After an hour, Jim relented.

Ryan met with Mark Lane and Charles Garry that morning, hoping to get Jim's okay. With no assurance of anything, he announced he would go to Jonestown "with or without permission and that he would take along the news contingent and some of the Concerned Relatives," wrote Washington Post reporter Charles Krause. If the Congressman were turned back at the gate, the NBC news team would be there to record the event. The Concerned Relatives talked among themselves, and sent four to accompany Ryan:

Jim Cobb, Beverly Oliver, Carol Boyd, and Anthony Katsaris, Maria's brother.

The relatives were disappointed when the pilot of the Guyana Airways Twin Otter told them he didn't think he could land on the muddy airstrip at Port Kaituma. He flew over Jonestown, and everyone gasped at the size of the project. It looked like a real town, not a jungle camp. The pilot flew over the landing strip a second time and decided he might be able to make it.

A Guyana police corporal greeted the group leaving the plane. He told them he was instructed not to let anyone go to Jonestown without Jim's permission. Lane and Garry met with some Jonestown residents waiting in a truck on the edge of the airstrip. The two lawyers then told Ryan to wait for a couple of hours while they went to the settlement to persuade Jim to let the group in. But five minutes after they left, the truck returned. Ryan, his aide Jackie Speier, Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy Richard Dwyer, and a Guyanese official from the Information Ministry, Neville Annibourne, were told they could go in. The others had to wait.

Ryan arrived in Jonestown, and after taking a brief tour of the place with Marceline, told Jim that journalists and relatives were waiting at Port Kaituma. Although Jim remained reluctant to let them in, Charles Garry convinced him it would be good publicity to grant access.

Once the reporters reached the pavilion, they began to question Jim. Marceline had told Ryan, Dwyer and Annibourne that Jim was sick. The reporters, however, did not know anything was wrong, although Jim struck them as odd.



The road into Jonestown, 1979.

While Jim fulfilled the journalists' expectations, the community surprised them. It didn't look anything like the concentration camp they'd anticipated. Charles Krause later wrote:

I noted immediately that, contrary to what the 'Concerned Relatives' had told us, nobody seemed to be starving. Indeed, everyone seemed quite healthy. I began to walk, alone, up toward the main building at the center of Jonestown, thinking that, considering everything, this little place was rather pleasant. I could see how someone might want to live here.

After dinner, the Jonestown entertainment committee put on a show of song, dance and comedy for the Congressman and his party. Unlike other visitors, however, who enjoyed the performance, Ryan and several reporters thought it was "unnatural" for old people to keep time to the music. Ryan pointed out Tom Kice, Sr., to Krause and observed that Kice's eyes looked glazed. Tim Reiterman, a reporter for The San Francisco Examiner who'd written critical articles about the Temple, added:

As I looked around at the benches of people, old and young, clapping and bouncing to rock and jazz, one thing was fresh in my mind: the stories of former members who recounted that performances and tours were elaborately staged when politicians and other dignitaries visited the Temple in San Francisco.

It didn't seem that these people were clapping and smiling on command, nor that little children would be pulling dogs' tails and ears and nudging each other on command, nor that those smiling, foot-thumping entertainers with beautiful strong voices backed by horns and guitars were under command.

Yet there was a slight undercurrent of control.

Someone announced that the Jonestown basketball team had just won its game in Georgetown by ten points. Jim jumped to his feet and shook hands with Annibourne. "That's a coup," he said through the applause.

Marceline took the microphone at one point during the evening and introduced Congressman Ryan to the group



Older thatch-covered houses in Jonestown, 1979.

of residents assembled in the pavilion. Ryan explained that he'd come to talk with a few people whose relatives in the U.S. had asked how they were being treated. He'd already spent time that evening interviewing several Temple members. But, he added, Jonestown seemed to be the best thing that had happened to many of the people there. The group gave him a standing ovation.

When the show ended, sometime between 10 and 11 that evening, reporters once again questioned Jim, while Ryan met with people he wanted to see. The newsmen asked Jim about beatings, drugs, guns, and the doubts that Peoples Temple was really a church. Jim answered the hostile queries angrily, defensively. He then sent the reporters back to Port Kaituma, denying their request to spend the night in Jonestown.

It was late, and the reporters didn't know where they could stay. They ended up at the Weekend Bar, where local Guyanese told them horror stories. The stories, combined with a note someone handed NBC news reporter Don Harris before he left Jonestown, aroused the journalists' suspicions.

Signed by two people, the note said, "Please help me get out of Jonestown."

Jim was cheerful the next morning as he talked with Congressman Ryan. But when the reporters returned, and demanded to be let into Jane Pittman Place -- one of the dorms for seniors -- Jim grew angry. He wouldn't let them in. Charles Garry urged him to reconsider, and he finally consented.



The Jonestown basketball court, 1979.

Inside the large, thatched building, one of the first to be constructed at the community, were row after row of bunkbeds. Mark Lane called it a "slave ship". A more correct comparison would be an army barracks. The building, which we saw, was big enough to accommodate sixty people in two rows of fifteen bunks. There was room for sleeping, but little else.

When the group got back to the pavilion after the tour, word went around that several Jonestown residents wanted to leave. Ryan informed Jim that a family of six -- the Bagues -- wanted to go with him. Jim replied, "I feel betrayed."

Certainly Tommy Bogue had reason to leave. He'd tried to escape at least once already. And he'd spent a lot of time on the learning crew. He stole aluminum roofing sheets and had to dig a latrine through one night, according to an article in The San Francisco Chronicle. His medical staff supervisor gave him a poor evaluation, and recommended "that he spend some time in the Nurse's office doing orthopedic treatments, such as hot packs, foot soaks, etc." When Ryan offered him the chance to go, he took it.

Eleven residents had already left Jonestown that day. The group, which included a family of five, said they were going on a picnic. Instead, they walked along the railroad tracks where a train picked them up and took them to Matthews Ridge.

Everyone could feel the tension, visitors and

residents alike. Don Harris grilled Jim for 45 minutes, while NBC crew member Bob Brown held a camera in Jim's face. "Harris peppered him with hard questions about weapons, drugs and corporal punishment," Charles Krause wrote. "All lies, my friend," Jim answered. Harris had interviewed Debbie Layton Blakey before the trip. His questions came directly from her accusation.

The number of people who wanted to leave grew from six to 12 to 14, to as high as 20, according to one report. Ryan's aide made arrangements to have another plane sent to Port Kaituma, since the Twin Otter they'd come on would not hold all the defectors.

Ryan assured Jim that he would not call for a Congressional investigation of Peoples Temple upon his return. This was little consolation for Jim, as he said farewell to the people departing. In fact, according to Charles Garry:

When 14 of his people decided to go out with Ryan, Jones went mad. He thought it was a repudiation of his work. I tried to tell him that 14 out of 1200 was damn good. But Jones was desolate.

As the group of defectors and journalists made their way to the truck that would take them to the airstrip, a woman ran up and began screaming at her husband. He'd taken their children without telling her. Other families were split, too. If Jim were desolate, other community members were frantic. "It was devastating," Tim Carter said at the inquest into Ryan's death.

Families were broken up on the spot. One man went off and left his wife working in the kitchen and didn't even tell her he was going. Children were split up from their parents. It was horrible. In a matter of hours, everything had disintegrated. People were stunned. They didn't know what to do.

Another reason the defections were so devastating was that most of the people leaving had been Temple leaders. The Parks family virtually ran the medical center. The Bogues had been longtime Jonestown residents. Harold Cordell and Vern Gosney had been Temple members for many years, and Cordell had been an officer of the church. No one expected these people to leave.

The journalists took the defections lightly. They were surprised there weren't more. Charles Krause thought

it was a sign of the community's strength that only 14 wanted to leave.

It seemed to me that the Peoples Temple had a legitimate purpose, a noble purpose, and was more or less succeeding. The fact that 16 [sic] people, most of them members of two families, were homesick and leaving with Ryan didn't change that view.

As the group of church members and newsmen waited on the truck for Ryan, they heard a commotion. They saw the Congressman, Mark Lane and Charles Garry walk quickly towards them. Lane, they learned, had saved the Congressman's life by thwarting an attacker with a knife. "I wouldn't be alive if it was not for Mark Lane," Ryan later told reporters.

Temple member Don Sly had grabbed Ryan from behind, shouting that he was going to kill him. Lane wrestled the knife away while Jim looked on. Garry noticed that the attack didn't upset Jim. Instead, it seemed to amuse him. "It was just to scare off Ryan," Garry said.

Several believe someone manipulated, or ordered, Sly to attack Ryan. Guyana's Assistant Police Commissioner Skip Roberts showed us that if you really wanted to kill someone, you wouldn't do it by grabbing the victim around the neck and screaming. Instead, he demonstrated, you simply thrust forward with the knife, and the person is dead.

After the attack, Jim asked Ryan, "Does this change everything?" "It doesn't change everything," Ryan responded, "but it changes things."

The truck carrying Ryan and the others began to pull out of Jonestown at 3:15 on November 18. Larry Layton ran up after Ryan boarded the truck, and said he wanted to leave too. The other defectors questioned him, as did his wife Karen. All Larry said was, "It's just personal."

After the group had gone, Jim got on the loudspeaker. He calmly told people to go to their cottages. The community was shocked and silent. "The thing that was most noticeable was the quiet," Mike Prokes said at the inquest.

Usually Jonestown was a busy, noisy place. You walked around and you heard people doing things. Music playing. People laughing or talking, kids playing. Now there

was nothing. People were walking around whispering to each other. There was a hush everywhere.

A violent and unusual storm subdued the community further. Said Prokes:

I've seen a lot of storms here before, but never one like this one. It came out of nowhere. Congressman Ryan and his party had left a little while before. Suddenly it got very, very dark. And the wind came up like I've never seen it here. It blew so hard that dust and stuff blew up in the pavilion so thick you couldn't see. It rained very hard. And then it was just over.

While the people of Jonestown waited, not knowing what would happen, the tractor-drawn truck took Ryan's group over muddy roads to the airstrip. Journalists talked with the defectors, but Charles Krause noted:

None of the other defectors on the truck and none of the people at the commune had confirmed any of the horror stories we had gotten from the 'Concerned Relatives' back at Georgetown.

The knife attack on the Congressman concerned U.S. Embassy officer Dwyer. He asked Neville Annibourne to go with him to the Port Kaituma Administrator to report the incident. They rode the short distance in the Peoples Temple truck. As they talked with the Administrator, a trailer with about seven Temple members drove by them on its way to the airstrip. The men who'd driven Dwyer and Annibourne to the Administrator's turned their rig around and followed.

By the time the two walked back to the airstrip, two planes had arrived. The Guyana Airways Twin Otter -- the plane that had brought them all to Jonestown -- was there, as well as a small Cessna. They found a few Guyanese policemen frisking defectors for weapons.

According to NBC News Field Producer Robert Flick, a scuffle broke out between the defectors and the men who'd arrived on the truck. We believe he referred to Larry resisting the search. Several diagrams and reports show that initially the attackers were not near their victims.

The men in the truck ordered the Guyanese out of

the way. Then they opened fire. Fifty to 75 blasts from shotguns, rifles and pistols sprayed the area.

Inside the Twin Otter, which he'd boarded to stow his baggage, Annibourne heard a sound "as if the cultists were stoning the plane." People in the plane told him to duck down, and he lay on the floor beside the pilot.

Inside the Cessna, Larry Layton allegedly fired three shots at defectors before his gun jammed and ex-member Dale Parks took it away. Monica Bagby, the only black who'd decided to leave with Ryan, was seriously wounded with two bullets in her back. Another defector, Vern Gosney, was also shot.

Although several people have said Larry fired first, signaling the other gunmen to commence, the pilot of the Cessna claims Larry began after the ambush started. We think Larry did not shoot until he heard the gunfire outside. Jim had sent Larry to destroy the plane when it was airborne, not while it was still on the ground. The decision to send gunmen after the Congressman was spontaneous, added when Jim learned of the second plane. The ambush confused Larry, and he reportedly started shooting.

The gunfire outside stopped, and Annibourne, in the Twin Otter, looked up. He saw Temple members, "both black and white," aiming guns at the group. The shooting began again.

During the second barrage, the attackers took "special pains to put coup de grace shots into Ryan and Brown, the TV cameraman, and [Greg] Robinson, the newspaper photographer," The Washington Post reported November 20. NBC soundman Steve Sung said the men also deliberately finished off Don Harris. "The assassins carefully selected their victims," he said. "They sought to slay Ryan, but not the State Department official standing beside him." They also avoided killing Annibourne, who leaped from the Twin Otter and ran to a shed fifty feet down the runway.

It was Ryan, not the defectors, who enraged Jim. Although the Congressman had praised the project, and hadn't been disturbed when a few people wanted to leave, Jim decided Ryan could not return to the U.S. He tested Ryan with a phony assassination attempt. The Congressman still refused to give him a reason to panic. The only explanation for the attack we can propose is that, in the logic of madness, Jim needed a legitimate excuse for initiating the suicide he longed for.

The press, and the lies it would tell, also angered Jim. It was a cameraman, a photographer and a per-

sistent reporter whom he wanted dead. They were the most obvious enemies. Bob Brown, the NBC cameraman, lay next to Steve Sung. Both were wounded. The gunmen came up and shot Brown dead. They left Sung, perhaps because he was Asian-American. It wasn't what the cameras recorded that bothered Jim, since the gunmen made no attempt to recover them. It was the people, and what they'd done to him, that maddened Jim.

The Concerned Relatives, defectors and other reporters got caught in the gunfire, but none were singled out for death. A couple of Guyanese soldiers stood at one end of the airstrip, watching the ambush. They did nothing, they later explained, because it was a fight between two groups of Americans.

It was over in less than twenty minutes. The Cessna took off, carrying the pilots of the disabled Twin Otter, and Monica Bagby. The pilots reported the attack when they returned to Georgetown, and at six o'clock, Prime Minister Burnham telephoned U.S. Ambassador Burke and asked him to come to his home. By six-fifteen, Jim Schollaert, one of Ryan's aides who'd remained in Georgetown, learned of the shooting from the U.S. Embassy.

Richard Dwyer, himself shot in the hip, took charge of the wounded. Some had fled into the brush and would remain there overnight. Dwyer and Annibourne placed four seriously in-



The Jonestown tractor at Kaituma airstrip. May 1978.

jured people in a Guyana Defense Force tent at the eastern end of the airstrip. Three members of the Concerned Relatives -- Anthony Katsaris, Carol Boyd and Beverly Oliver -- were wounded, as were three members of the press corps -- Steve Sung, Ron Javers, a reporter for The San Francisco Chronicle, and Tim Reiterman, a San Francisco Examiner reporter. Jackie Speier, Ryan's assistant, was badly hurt.

Dead were Congressman Leo Ryan, NBC cameraman Bob Brown, NBC newsman Don Harris, San Francisco Examiner photographer Greg Robinson, and Patricia Parks, a Temple defector.

Dwyer got out a radio message a little later. Guyanese officials assured him that soldiers would be sent

that night. Guyana Defense Force troops were flown to Matthews Ridge and, traveling part way by jeep, part way by foot, reached the Port Kaituma airstrip at dawn.

About 5 P.M. on November 18, around the time the gunmen attacked Ryan's party, Jim calmly ordered everyone to come to the pavilion. Tim Carter waited while his wife went to get diapers for their child. "You don't stop to pick up diapers if you think you're going to die," he observed. Although kitchen workers were usually exempt from community meetings, Lew Jones ordered them to the pavilion. He had a gun in his belt, according to Stanley Clayton, a survivor of the suicides, but it wasn't drawn. On his way to the pavilion, Tim Carter saw a girl named Shirley Smith, dancing. She had flipped out.

Maria Katsaris stopped Tim and Mike Carter by the cage of Mr. Muggs, the chimpanzee. She told them Mike Prokes needed help with a suitcase. They had to go to Georgetown with him. According to the Carters, they went back to their houses to pack and later returned to the pavilion.

Mark Lane and Charles Garry had taken a walk after Ryan left. When they showed up at the pavilion, Jim warned them off. He told them that some people who left with Ryan were "going to do terrible things which will reflect on us." Put under guard in the guest house, Lane and Garry listened to their captors tell them everyone was going to die.

Jim explained to the assembly that someone was going to shoot the pilot on Ryan's plane. They had better prepare to die, he said, because the Guyana Defense Force would arrive in 45 minutes. Any survivors they found would be tortured or castrated. "We better not have any of our children left when it's over," he cautioned them.

Jim had instilled in them a vague respect as well as a fear for the GDF. The group could fight against the fascists, but it couldn't fight against its black brothers. On one occasion Jim asked, "Do you want to fight the soldiers that are just following orders?" If they were truly nonviolent, they could not resist in a violent way.

When the men returned from the airstrip, they whispered to Jim. He entreated people to remain calm and told them not to excite the children. "Jones was clever," Skip Roberts said six months later. "He had parents kill their children first. Who would want to live after that?" he asked rhetorically.

"The first person who went up was a young mother,"

according to Odell Rhodes. Rhodes survived by offering to get a stethoscope for Larry Schacht. When the nurse he accompanied went into the medical center, Rhodes hid. That first volunteer

had a small baby, about one-and-a-half. She administered [the poison] to her own baby, then she took her own. She walked over to a field and sat down. It was hard to believe.

Yet Odell Rhodes came to believe, as the children he'd taught in the Jonestown school died in his arms. Skip Roberts says he always told the media that 270 had been murdered in Jonestown. That was the number of children who died.

Others who resisted the poison were murdered as well. Rhodes said a girl named Julie Reynolds "kept spitting it out and the nurses kept forcing her to take it." Journalists reported seeing syringes with needles bent into the arms of victims. Guyana's chief pathologist, Leslie Mootoo, says he found at least 70 people who had been injected. Clayton said Jim pulled reluctant ones forward. Armed guards and men with crossbows circled the pavilion area.

Clayton fled the suicides by pretending to search for survivors, and then running away. Like Tommy Bogue, he felt little love for Jonestown by the final day. Jim humiliated him publicly, and at great length, at a community meeting. He called Clayton a "class enemy", a "retard", and a drug pusher. Jim berated him for his relationship with a woman in whom Larry Schacht was interested. It's possible Clayton was beaten, because Jim talked about his torn clothes. But the harsh verbal ex-coriation may have been sufficient punishment for Stanley.

One woman is heard questioning suicide on a tape of the final hour. "Is it too late for Russia?" Christine Miller asked.

JONES: It's too late. I can't control these people. They've gone with the guns. And it's too late.

MILLER: Well, I say let's make an airlift to Russia. I don't think nothing is impossible, if you believe it.

JONES: How are we going to do that?...

MILLER: Well, I thought they said if we got in an emergency, they gave you a code to let them know.

JONES: No, they didn't.

Although many, like Christine Miller, thought the Soviet Union was an alternative, and that life would be better there than it had been in the United States, Jim didn't. For him, life was hopeless. Nothing but death would relieve his pain. So he continued talking with Miller:

JONES: To me, death is not a fearful thing. It's living that's cursed. It's not worth living like this.

MILLER: I think that there were too few who left for 1200 people to give their lives for those people that left.

JONES: Do you know how many left?

MILLER: Oh, 20-odd. That's small compared to what's here... I feel like that as long as there's life, there's hope.

JONES: Well, everybody dies. I haven't seen anybody yet didn't die. And I like to choose my own kind of death for a change. I'm tired of being tormented to hell. Tired of it.

MILLER: But I look at all the babies and think they deserve to live.

JONES: But don't they deserve much more? They deserve peace.

MILLER: I think we all have a right to our own destiny as individuals. And I have a right to choose mine, and everyone else has a right to choose theirs.

JONES: The best testimony we can make is to leave this goddamn world.

And the crowd shouted Christine Miller down.

In fact, most people died "more or less willingly," said Rhodes. "Basically a lot of the people were sitting, especially the senior people -- just waiting and watching." Another survivor, 79-year-old Grover Davis, watched the suicides until he decided to hide himself in a ditch. "He [Jim] didn't force nobody as far as my knowing," he observed.

I didn't see him shooting nobody with no needles and I didn't hear nobody say they wasn't willing to take suicide shots... They were willing to do it.

"Many of them had a peaceful look, as if they were sleeping," a reporter for the Guyana Chronicle wrote.

The impression was reinforced by the fact that for the most part they were lying down in family groups, in many cases mothers with children, couples with their arms around each other, and several with bed-sheets pulled over them as in slumber. Most were lying face down.

Time Magazine's New York Bureau Chief Donald Neff described it this way:

Grotesque in their swollenness but looking relaxed as though comforted in their family togetherness. Nearly all of them were on their faces, eerie figures of slumber... There were no marks of violence, no blood.

And a U.S. Army spokesman surveying the scene announced that, "There was no evidence that force was used on the ... victims."

If people had resisted, there should have been evidence of violence. "I figured if I was going to die, I would die with a bullet in the back of my head," Stanley Clayton said. "I was not going to commit suicide." Only two people were shot, however -- Jim Jones and Annie -- and both were apparent suicides.

It's hard to believe that people wanted to die. But for the residents of Jonestown, it was all over. The defections had stunned them. Whole families had left. They learned Ryan was dead, and knew trouble was coming. There might be more separations. Those who had religious convictions believed Jim when he said, "It's just stepping over into another plane... If you knew what was ahead of you, you'd be glad of stepping over tonight."

Haunted by the prospect of torture and suffering Jim described, they spared their children by killing them. Death was an experience they shared together, as they had shared life. We can't begin to comprehend the feeling that prompted a woman to shout, "This is nothing to cry about. This is something we could all rejoice about."

People lined up, waiting patiently to take the poison. Once they drank it, others led them away from the pavilion to make room for more bodies. The poison took between five and twenty minutes to work. Mixed

with painkillers and sedatives, the potion was designed to minimize pain. When the crowd grew panicky, Jim spoke through the microphone. "You must die with dignity," he said. "It was mass confusion," according to Rhodes. "People were standing in groups, saying goodbye to each other, walking around hugging old friends."

Once the deaths began, they couldn't be stopped. No one halted the process by overturning the tub of poison. "Why didn't anyone rush the vat?" Roberts asked us. "Because they wanted to die. The guards weren't even necessary at the end." They were found with their crossbows and guns, beneath other bodies, according to Roberts. The men suspected of killing Ryan and members of his party also died of poison.

Some have said the participants believed it was a suicide drill. They'd practiced taking cups of Kool-aid and heard before that they would all die. Jim had taught them how to die. "How many of you are afraid of death?" he asked them once, "'cause we'll help you." A young person testified to the group that

Life is shit. What Dad says is true,
life outside this collective is shit... I
want to die a revolutionary death.

In his October 16 directive, Jim made clear what he expected of suicide.

I have no desire to lay my body down and
let it rot when I could make an impact
against the fascists in the USA if nothing
else. And that's our whole motivation. People
want to have rest and not live so badly.
So that's why I'm sure the religionists are
right -- not in the way they think it, but
we do survive the grave.

And on November 18, he reassured them that "we're going to meet in another place."

We don't think the people of Jonestown ever thought it was a drill that day. If Christine Miller had thought it was phony, would she have argued with Jim? Stephan Jones immediately felt a disaster was unfolding in Jonestown when they found Sharon Amos and her children dead in Georgetown. "We'd had the suicide drills," he told Penthouse Magazine, "and I knew something was happening." Odell Rhodes added, "It was evident that this was not a drill... People started going into convulsions, foam came from their lips, and many were crying."

Meanwhile, Mark Lane persuaded the guards to free Garry and himself on the assurance that he would tell the story of Jonestown. After asking directions, Lane and Garry bolted into the jungle. As they ran, Lane heard Jim cry, "Mother, mother." He didn't hear Jim's complete statement, however, or he would have understood that Jim was chiding people for upsetting their children.

Mother, mother, please. Don't do this. Lay down your life with your child. Free at last. Keep your emotions down. Children, it will not hurt. If you be quiet... I call on you to quit exciting your children. Stop this nonsense.

The charisma Jim must have had to persuade people they should kill their children is inconceivable. Yet he had such power. People trusted and obeyed him, even unto death. And not just the simple folk.

As people were dying, Tim Carter returned to the pavilion. There, he says, he saw his son dead and his wife dying. He fled to Jim's cabin. Annie was there, watching Kimo and John Victor Stoen. "Where does Jim want the children?" Annie asked Maria Katsaris. We don't think she left the cabin after that, although some theorize that she did. The two children died there. We assume she remained with them the whole time, although Odell Rhodes said she helped distribute the poison.

Maria brought out a suitcase and two handguns. She gave them to Mike Prokes and the Carter brothers, telling them to deliver the bag to the Soviet Embassy in Georgetown. The suitcase, stuffed with a quarter million dollars in cash, was too heavy to lug to Port Kaituma. They buried it at the chicken coop, and reportedly pocketed some of the cash themselves.

Maria chose Tim Carter and Mike Prokes for the errand because they were church leaders. Carter handled customs and shipping, and Prokes coordinated the Temple's public relations. Prokes had also been to the Soviet Embassy before. Mike Carter, who was the radio operator in Jonestown, accompanied his brother and Prokes.

Jonestown transmitted its decision to die before it shut down its radio communication. Someone in Jonestown ordered members of the basketball team to kill the Concerned Relatives staying at the Pegasus Hotel in Georgetown. Sharon Amos and her daughter, Liane Harris, took the call. Sharon apparently instructed the team to go to the Pegasus. At 7:30 P.M., the team met with the Concerned Relatives. Stephan Jones asked Tim Stoen: "Why are you causing all the deaths?"

Then, without saying anything to anyone, Sharon took her birth daughter Liane and her two adopted children, Martin and Christa, into the bathroom. She allegedly asked Charles Beikman to assist her as she cut her children's throats and then her own. Guyana police arrested Beikman and accused him of the murders.

In San Francisco, Sandy Bradshaw waited for Carolyn to talk on the radio. The last message she got before the line went dead was: "Hold on a minute. Carolyn wants to tell you something."

The hardcore loyalists were the last to die in Jonestown. Thirteen people, including Carolyn, Annie, Maria, and Jim McElvane committed suicide in Jim's cabin, a quarter mile from the pavilion.

Before they died, however, they attended to a few last details. They sent Prokes and the Carters on their way, with a note to the Soviet Embassy and letters instructing banks to release Peoples Temple assets to the Embassy. They shot Mr. Muggs twice, although the two slugs did not kill the large chimpanzee immediately. Skip Roberts found him alive two days later. They killed two dogs with another two shots.

Then Jim shot himself, or had someone else do it for him. The New York Times reported that Carolyn "had been assigned by Jones to shoot him if the anticipated suicides were ever carried out." Either way, it must have been the "orgasm of the grave" he'd desired. More than 900 people had died at his bidding.

The people remaining then gathered in Jim's cabin. Someone had brought a thermos of the cyanide. Another, a panful. The children, found in their bunks, were probably sleeping, or put to sleep, before being injected. A few adults drank the poison, while others chose injection. A few elected "double death": drinking and injection. They lay on their bunks, on Jim's bed, or on the floor, and went to sleep.

Except for Annie. Stanley Clayton said he heard a shot, well after the five earlier ones. Annie lay dead next to the door, the first one inside the cabin as you entered. The last one to die.

Guyana's chief pathologist, Dr. Leslie Mootoo originally believed Ann was murdered. He thought the mutilation of the left side of her head was the entrance wound. Dr. Mootoo testified at an inquest in Guyana that he felt someone fired a high-powered rifle at Annie as she looked up to see who had entered the cabin.

An autopsy performed in the U.S. revealed that the entrance wound was located on the right side of Ann's head. It was an injury consistent with the .357 Magnum

lying beside her, and consistent with suicide. The autopsy also showed, however, that she had been injected.

We wanted to believe it was murder. Annie couldn't have been a willing participant, we told ourselves, she didn't know what was going on. We hoped that she resisted, fought, rebelled at the last moment. But it's impossible to believe that, at the end of it all, she did not want to die. "If she'd lived," said Skip Roberts, "she'd have gone crazy after seeing everyone else dead."

Next to the gun lay her notebook. "I am 24 years of age right now and don't expect to live through the end of this book," she wrote. Roberts thought that she began the diary after the group learned of Congressman Ryan's plan to visit. It's more likely, however, that she wrote it that day, November 18 -- perhaps as the suicides were going on at the pavilion -- since she used the past tense to describe Jonestown:

I thought I should at least make some attempt to let the world know what Jim Jones is -- OR WAS -- all about.

It seems that some people and perhaps the majority of people would like to destroy the best thing that ever happened to the 1,200 or so of us who have followed Jim.

I am at a point right now so embittered against the world that I don't know why I am writing this. Someone who finds it will believe I am crazy or believe in the barbed wire that does NOT exist in Jonestown.

It seems that everything good that happens to the world is under constant attack. When I write this, I can expect some mentally fascist person to find it and decide it should be thrown in the trash before anyone gets a chance to hear the truth -- which is what I am now writing about.

Where can I begin -- JONESTOWN -- the most peaceful, loving community that ever existed, JIM JONES -- the one who made this paradise possible -- much to the contrary of the lies stated about Jim Jones being a power-hungry sadistic, mean person who thought he was God -- of all things.

I want you who read this to know that Jim was the most honest, loving, caring concerned person whom I ever met and knew. His love for animals -- each creature, poisonous snakes, tarantulas. None of them ever bit him

because he was such a gentle person. He knew how mean the world was and he took any and every stray animal and took care of each one.

His love for humans was unsurmountable and it was many of those whom he put his love and trust in that left him and spit in his face. Teresa Buford, Debbie Blakey -- they both wanted sex from him which he was too ill to give. Why should he have to give them sex -- and Tim and Grace Stoen -- also include them. I should know.

I have spent these last few months taking care of Jim's health. However, it was difficult to take care of anything for him. He always would do it for himself.

His hatred of racism, sexism, elitism, and mainly classism, is what prompted him to make a new world for the people -- a paradise in the jungle. The children loved it. So [did] everyone else.

There were no ugly, mean policemen wanting to beat our heads in, no more racist tears from whites and others who thought they were better. No one was made fun of for their appearance -- something no one had control over.

Meanness and making fun was not allowed. Maybe this is why all the lies were started. Besides this fact, no one was allowed to live higher than anyone else. The United States allowed criticism. The problem being this and not all the side tracks of black power, woman power, Indian power, gay power.

Jim Jones showed us all this -- that we could live together with our differences, that we are all the same human beings. Luckily, we are more fortunate than the starving babies of Ethiopia, than the starving babies in the United States.

What a beautiful place this was. The children loved the jungle, learned about animals and plants. There were no cars to run over them; no child-molesters to molest them; nobody to hurt them. They were the freest, most intelligent children I have ever known.

Seniors had dignity. They had whatever they wanted -- a plot of land for a garden. Seniors were treated with respect -- something they never had in the United States.

A rare few were sick, and when they were, they were given the best medical care.

Although the rest of the diary was written in blue ink, the last line appears in black: "We died because you would not let us live in peace. [Signed] Annie Moore."

"The Central Intelligence Agency relayed the first word to Washington that there had been mass deaths at Jonestown," New York Times reporter Nicholas M. Horrock wrote on December 1, 1978.

In the pre-dawn hours of Sunday, November 19, survivors reached the Guyanese army post at Matthews Ridge, a few miles [sic] from the Jonestown camp with the story of the deaths. A police officer relayed this immediately to his superiors in Georgetown, the capital... A Guyanese police official who acts as an agent for the CIA in turn reported it to agency personnel.

The Defense Department After Action Report confirms that the CIA first informed Defense of the suicides.

Neville Annibourne said he first heard of the suicides on the evening of the 18th, when survivors told police in Port Kaituma about the deaths. Mike Prokes and the Carters could have done so, since they went to the Kaituma docks to meet the Temple boat. The Cudjoe was gone, but the police were there. Skip Roberts said Odell Rhodes was the first to report the suicides to the authorities. Rhodes and Clayton also reached Port Kaituma that evening.

By early Sunday morning, a few government officials in Washington knew of the suicides. Ambassador Burke had already notified the State Department of Congressman Ryan's death at 8:30 Saturday night. At 8:40, the Ambassador learned of Sharon Amos' death.

The Guyana government sent troops to the Northwest District the night of the 18th. Darkness, bad weather and muddy roads slowed the soldiers as they traveled from Matthews Ridge to Port Kaituma.

Mark Lane surfaced after the Guyana Defense Force arrived at the airstrip the next day. He told them he'd heard 80 to 85 bursts of automatic weapon fire. "Lane said he and Garry dived into the bush as terror-stricken sect members fled into the jungle to the accompaniment of heavy gunfire," according to The San Francisco Chron-

icle. Charles Garry told John, however, that he was three feet from Lane and "heard three or four shots."

Although some news stories say Lane and Garry didn't reappear for 26 hours, they must have emerged from the jungle before the Guyanese soldiers went into Jonestown, because Skip Roberts claimed:

Mark Lane created a lot of trouble with his story about the burst of gunfire and automatic weapons... So the GDF went in expecting to be attacked... They took each house like it was a war, and destroyed evidence... I don't blame them, since they expected to be machine-gunned.

While the troops were en route, carefully circling the project before going in, 76-year-old Hyacinth Thrush woke up. She got out of bed and left the dormitory. "Not a living soul was in view," she told reporters.

I struggled along the path to the pavilion and was surprised no one was around. I was looking for the senior citizens center and I managed to pull myself up the stairs. It was then that I saw all my people.

Thrush tried to revive her sister, who'd been injected along with the other seniors in the cabin. Hyacinth had escaped scrutiny by the medical team, because she'd been asleep.

Sunday afternoon, Grover Davis joined her. The two were cautious. Guyanese troops didn't find them until that evening.

The Guyana Defense Force reached Jonestown late Sunday afternoon and counted three to four hundred bodies. The rest of the settlers, they assumed, had scrambled into the bush.

A Guyana Airways Twin Otter and a GDF aircraft arrived in Port Kaituma Sunday morning to pick up those wounded in the attack on Ryan's party. The dead and injured were transferred to a U.S. Air Force C-141 transport in Georgetown, and the most seriously wounded stayed at the Roosevelt Roads Naval Hospital in Puerto Rico. The transport then flew to Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, D.C.

The night of November 19, television network news aired a film of the attack on Ryan that was made by Bob Brown. NBC Field Producer Bob Flick had grabbed Brown's camera at the airstrip and carried it all the way to Puerto Rico.

We base our theory of what happened November 17, 18 and 19, 1978, on many different accounts from many different people. We took the pieces we found most credible, rejected what didn't fit, and guessed at the rest. Some reports -- Mark Lane's, for example -- weren't consistent with evidence found afterwards. Other stories are mysterious, but probably not relevant, and certainly not verified. We can't explain how Hyacinth Thrush saw a nurse Sunday afternoon who gave her a sandwich and ran into the jungle, saying many others escaped as well. We don't know what to make of Stanley Clayton's conviction that he heard a lot of people cheer 45 minutes after the suicides.

We hypothesize without having all the facts, knowing that information may come out later to contradict us. Perhaps some of the wilder theories may prove correct: that it was a neutron bomb that killed everyone; that the CIA marked Leo Ryan for a "hit" because he leaked the story about the agency's involvement in Angola; that Jim Jones worked for the CIA.

Perhaps there was more coercion than the tape of the final hour in Jonestown reveals. Since fewer than a dozen autopsies were performed, done in the U.S. a month after the suicides, we really don't know how people died that day. More people may have been shot. Perhaps most were injected. At this point, no one knows. Or no one is telling.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

CLOSING THE BOOKS

Everyone but the ones who helped
build the Temple is getting the
money.

-- Elderly claimant
against Peoples
Temple

Reports about the wealth of Peoples Temple surfaced almost simultaneously with the news of the Jonestown deaths. A few hours after the suicides, Guyana police arrested three Temple members in the tiny village of Port Kaituma, five miles from Jonestown. Mike Prokes, and Tim and Mike Carter told police they had been asked to carry jewels, gold and cash out of Jonestown. A few days later, Tim Carter showed police where they'd stashed over a quarter million U.S. dollars in the jungle. Guyana authorities eventually recovered \$634,867 U.S. from Jonestown as well as 57,000 Guyanese dollars. Police also found a large quantity of U.S. Treasury checks that had been paid to Social Security beneficiaries living in the community.

Former Temple members living in the States quickly spread stories of the Temple's opulence. According to Terri Buford, a financial secretary who left Jonestown one month before the suicides, the church had eight million dollars in Swiss bank accounts. Buford said the money had been set aside for a "Last Stand Plan" which would finance assassinations of political leaders and Temple critics. Tim Stoen, another ex-member, upped the ante to \$20 million, and added that the church planned to channel money to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Still other church critics said income averaged \$250,000 a month. Debbie Blakey claimed she processed \$65,000 in SSA checks each month while in Guyana -- almost double Social Security Administration estimates of what it paid to Temple members living in Jonestown.

It wasn't until mid-December 1978 that the true picture of Temple wealth began to emerge. At the Guyana inquest into the deaths in Jonestown, police produced the letters Mike Prokes and the Carter brothers tried to get to the Embassy of the Soviet Union in Georgetown. The letters, signed by elderly church member Annie Jane MacGowan, instructed two of the Temple's banks in Panama to send cashier's checks to the Soviet Embassy. The Swiss Bank Corporation in Panama City had over two million dollars in Temple deposits, while the Union Bank of Switzerland's Panama City branch held almost \$5.25 million.

By the end of 1978, almost all Temple assets had been located:

Money hidden by Carters	\$ 296,500
Cash found in Jonestown (U.S. currency)	634,867
Cash found in Jonestown (Guyana currency converted to U.S.)	22,400
Swiss Bank Corporation	2,043,000
Union Bank of Switzerland	5,241,536
Cash on hand in San Francisco (turned over by Temple members to their attorney, Charles Garry)	295,000
TOTAL	<u>\$8,533,303</u>

This \$8.5 million figure did not include any of the church's capital investments, like heavy machinery or medical equipment. It didn't include any real estate holdings, either, like the property in Los Angeles, San Francisco or Redwood Valley.

It was enough to unleash a flood of lawsuits against the Temple, however. By mid-January, a dozen legal actions had been filed. The U.S. Department of Justice sued the Temple for \$4.3 million in an attempt to recover government costs incurred during the bodylift. The five children of Congressman Leo Ryan filed a wrongful death suit and asked for one million dollars each. One man who lost eleven relatives in Jonestown made a claim for \$51 million.

Early in December, Temple lawyer Charles Garry formally asked the San Francisco Superior Court to dissolve the Peoples Temple Corporation. The next month, Superior Court Justice Ira Brown agreed to the dissolution, and named local attorney Robert Fabian to act as Receiver of Temple assets. Judge Brown also ordered all claimants against the Temple to petition the court within four months. The number of claims exploded to 709.

In Guyana, the government and the government-owned Guyana Airways also filed suit against Peoples Temple and two of its members. The Attorney General froze Temple assets in Guyana banks in February 1979, while the government claimed breach of contract on the Jonestown lease and sought reimbursement for the expenses arising from the clean-up operation. Guyana Airways wanted to recover the cost of damages incurred on its twin-engine Otter airplane at the Port Kaituma airstrip. Temple members still living in Georgetown filed a countersuit, claiming the money belonged to them.

Most of the Temple money in Guyana banks had been deposited after November 18. In fact, it became an embar-

rassment to the government of Forbes Burnham. The prime minister's wife, Viola, and Deputy Prime Minister Ptolemy Reid flew out of Port Kaituma November 20 in a plane loaded with over a million dollars in currency, jewels and gold collected in Jonestown. When The Washington Post reported the incident in late December, the government angrily produced evidence that the money was on deposit at the Bank of Guyana.

Around the time the Post article appeared, the American Embassy also began inquiring about Temple deposits in Guyanese banks. The Barclays Bank in Georgetown informed the Embassy that it needed a court order to comply with a request which would violate its policy of confidentiality. By April 1979, the U.S. Department of Justice decided not to sue either the banks or the Guyana government. Instead, it turned all Guyana affairs over to the Temple Receiver. A Guyanese barrister represented Fabian as the courts worked to untangle Temple finances.

Fabian and his counsel met with little success. Guyana ultimately returned only 36% of the \$1.45 million it held in Temple funds.

The million dollars in Guyana banks didn't look like much beside the seven million located in Panama. As far as Peoples Temple was concerned, the Central American country had several advantages over Guyana. For one thing, freer currency regulations made large deposits and withdrawals far more convenient. For another bank policies protecting client confidentiality surpassed those of Switzerland, according to Terri Buford. Combined with its ideal proximity, Panama became the banking center for the Temple.

The seven million on deposit at the Panama City branches of the Swiss Bank Corporation and the Union Bank of Switzerland turned up almost immediately after the suicides. It took nearly two more years, however, to locate an obscure safe deposit box at the Banco Unión of Venezuela in Panama City. On August 13, 1980, \$60,050 in cash was found in safe deposit box number 110. Carolyn Layton had rented the box.

The path to Box 110, and the last major cash deposit unearthed by the Receiver, led directly through the heart of the Temple's complicated financial structure. Fabian pieced together the international banking picture by taking depositions of principals involved, and by interviewing others. He discovered a system in which several individuals knew a little, and no one knew much.

Tim Stoen, the church's legal advisor, set up the

initial bank accounts in Panama, creating dummy corporations into which he and others channeled Temple funds. Check transfers and donations from Peoples Temple went through legitimate routes into the account of the Asociación Evangelica de las Americas at the Banco Mercantile. The Banco Mercantile then made a deposit into the Asociación's account at the Union Bank of Switzerland for the same amount. The inter-bank transfer eliminated the connection between the Temple and its dummy corporation.

In addition to establishing the Asociación Evangelica's account, Tim Stoen started an account for Briget, S.A. at the Swiss Banking Corporation in Panama City. "That was more of a private account," Terri Buford said in a deposition she made with Fabian.

As I told the Grand Jurors, Tim Stoen carried a lot of cash down to there and that money wasn't, technically, Peoples Temple's.

Tim incorporated Briget November 7, 1975, and opened its bank account with a \$500 deposit. He incorporated Asociación Evangelica almost a year later, on August 13, 1976. Terri Buford, Debbie Blakey and Maria Katsaris became signatories to both the Briget and Evangelica accounts at that time.

According to Terri Buford's deposition, Tim carried half a million dollars strapped to his body on that August 1976 trip to Panama City. Tim denies this charge. "I never smuggled any money out," he told a reporter for The San Francisco Examiner.

The money was transferred by bank transfer. It's perfectly legal to set up a church corporation in Panama.

The three young women staying in Panama City knew something was going on, although they didn't know exactly what. Debbie told the Receiver that:

The head of the bank was a little bit nervous because he asked me and Maria what the name of the account was and I didn't even know what the name of the account was... He looked at our passports and then we signed various papers which were all in Spanish; I guess they were signatory and opening of the account cards.

Gene Chaikin and Carolyn also traveled to Panama that month to help set up the accounts and signatures. These six people -- Stoen, Chaikin, Carolyn, Buford, Blakey and Katsaris -- controlled most of the Temple's international finances. Deborah Touchette handled a Temple account in Grenada. Marceline Jones had a \$17,000 account in Nassau. Maria and Carolyn managed other accounts in Panama, Curaçao, and Venezuela.

Peoples Temple hid its wealth by putting individuals' names on its bank accounts. However, the system worked only as long as those individuals remained loyal. So when Tim Stoen left the church in 1977, all the accounts had to be changed. Since everyone in the church had signed hundreds of sheets of blank paper, Temple leaders assumed Tim purloined a few for his own use.

As a result, Terri Buford changed Briget to a numbered account, and closed out Evangelica after she set up a new corporation: Asociación Religiosa Pro San Pedro. "Where did that name come from?" asked lawyers at Buford's deposition. "Just made it up," she replied.

[Temple attorney in Panama City Señor]
Tapia suggested saying Asociación Religiosa
and he said, 'Name a saint.'

I said, 'Saint Peter.'

He said, 'San Pedro.' No great science
to this.

After Tim's departure, Terri also took about \$1.5 million from the Panamanian accounts and set up a numbered bank account at the Union Bank of Switzerland in Zurich.

Debbie Blakey accompanied Terri from Panama to complete these transfers. From there they traveled together to London to study banking laws, and to Zurich, to set up the new account. Tim had suggested banking in Geneva. They selected Zurich instead. Terri told Debbie she planned to go to Rumania or Albania to set up accounts in those countries as well. They separated, but Terri did not travel any further.

More financial juggling followed Debbie's defection in May 1978. Terri, Debbie, and Maria Katsaris had remained signatories to the accounts in Panama. Debbie was also a signatory to the Zurich account for San Pedro. This meant everything had to be changed all over again.

Jim Jones no longer trusted anyone. Tim and Debbie had defected, and Gene Chaikin was under suspicion. The Temple financial group, reduced to Carolyn, Maria and Terri, tried a new tactic. For a time, Carolyn -- whom Terri identified as "Jim's most trusted individual" --

became sole signatory to new accounts established in Panama. In June 1978, they instructed both the Panamanian and Zurich branches of the Union Bank of Switzerland to transfer all accounts and deposits for Asociación San Pedro into a single account in Panama City. Terri Buford then confirmed the transfers by letter that September, closing the old accounts in Zurich and Panama. The new account, 121-00.123-A, was signed by Esther Lillian Mueller, a senior who lived in Jonestown. Devoted to Jim, Mrs. Mueller wasn't likely to leave the Temple anytime soon. And, in fact, she died with the others on November 18.

Although over five million dollars flowed into Mrs. Mueller's account at the Union Bank of Switzerland in Panama City, it flowed out again fairly quickly when Terri Buford fled in September. Another defection from the inner circle meant more changes. The money shifted to another account. On November 18, 1978, the bequests to the Soviet Embassy carried the signature of another elderly Temple member, Annie MacGowan. Maria Katsaris probably typed the letters over MacGowan's signature. She also typed the Soviet Embassy a note about her own account at the Bank of Venezuela in Caracas. It held about \$19,000. She gave the letters to Tim Carter, along with the suitcase full of cash.

The difficulty in locating Temple assets lay in pursuing a complicated trail of dummy corporations, numbered accounts, cash deposits, and individual signatures. Robert Fabian tried to find a master ledger which might list all foreign financial transactions. Terri Buford believed that:

Carolyn should have this all written up someplace in Guyana. Carolyn had the practice of always having one sheet, and I never saw it, but she told me, one sheet with the name of every account and safe deposit box, since she was the only one who had the information and Jim couldn't remember numbers...

Q. Did she give copies to anyone that you know of?

A. There is no one she would have -- it's possible. She was the top of the line. There was something she knew that just nobody knew.

Terri also told Fabian that Carolyn controlled the ownership interest in Briget, and the other corporations, by holding all the bearer stock certificates.

"All I know," she admitted, "when I got these stock books, I just ripped the pages out and gave them to Carolyn." A chance remark that she saw Carolyn putting the certificates into a safe deposit box in Panama prompted Fabian to begin a search for it.

Q. When was the last time you saw the Briget certificates...?

A. Four or five years ago [1974-1975], Carolyn was putting them in. She has her own safe deposit box.

Q. In the United States?

A. No, Panama, which was independent of anything that she and I both signed on. It was just her.

It took Fabian close to another year to find Carolyn's safe deposit box. Although it didn't contain the master list he'd hoped to find, it did hold stock certificates, a few statements of account with different banks, and various documents relating to the Temple's corporations. And \$60,050 in cash.

When the Receiver's office notified John and Barbara, as Carolyn's heirs, of the money in Box 110, they weren't surprised. Earlier that year we learned of her involvement in another facet of the Temple's financial organization: real estate. In March 1980, an attorney for the Receiver told us about a \$12,000 piece of property in Los Angeles to which Carolyn and former Temple member Mike Cartmell held title. The Receiver claimed the property belonged to Peoples Temple. We agreed. Mike Cartmell released his interest in the property. We wanted to sign a release as well, but Carolyn's marriage to Mike Prokes posed a problem. Technically, Carolyn's estate went to Prokes, and after his suicide in March 1979, to his heirs. That meant that John and Barbara couldn't legally assign any part of Carolyn's estate.

John told an attorney working with Fabian that the marriage was "a Peoples Temple" marriage -- that is, in form only. John wrote to his lawyer about the problem, noting that Mike Prokes and Carolyn never lived together.

When we signed the license, I presumed that at some time we would face the decision of a public acknowledgement. Whenever our family tells its story, this will be included. The question ... was one of time, not of disclosure.

The Receiver succeeded in having the marriage declared invalid, thus eliminating any claims that might have come from Prokes' heirs. And John and Barbara assigned their interest in the vacant lot in Los Angeles to the Receiver, "because of the understanding of the undersigned that this property belonged to Peoples Temple and decedent held only bare legal title." Similarly, they signed over the contents of Box 110.

Peoples Temple derived much of its wealth from real estate holdings. Investigative reporters uncovered over thirty real estate transactions involving the church from 1967 through 1977. Members donated property when they joined. At the time the New West article appeared in August 1977, six pieces of Temple property were up for sale in Mendocino County. The total value came to \$1.25 million.

Other sources of income for Peoples Temple included the social security checks of older members, state welfare payments for the Temple care homes, and salary donated by working members. Ex-members estimate the Temple collected between ten and twenty thousand dollars from offerings each weekend. A group of 110 former Temple members who sued the Receiver for Temple assets claim they gave \$30,000 to \$40,000 apiece in exchange for life care from the institution. One of the elderly claimants said she sold her home and turned over the proceeds to the church. She believes she donated between \$30,000 and \$38,000 while she was a member. One young black man says he gave the church about \$56,000 in a seven-year period.

We assume both Carolyn and Ann signed over their paychecks to Peoples Temple when they lived and worked in San Francisco. Between the two of them, they probably supplied over \$20,000 a year. They also contributed family heirlooms: an antique dining room set, some jewelry, sterling silver. We frequently wonder where it all went, who has it now? We never asked them about it.

All these gifts, donations and offerings added up to a great deal of money. But the cost of running Peoples Temple was high. The Albatross, the church's trawler cost \$19,500. The dozen buses, \$89,400. Grace Stoen, a former Temple member and vocal critic, admits paying out \$30,000 to \$40,000 each month in Temple funds for auto and bus garage bills. The auction of Temple property in March 1979 disposed of four tons of wheat, a complete printing shop, the buses, and medical equipment. It took enormous amounts of money to maintain church buildings, residential care facilities, and a children's home.

Finally, the Temple gave over a million dollars to its parent denomination, the Disciples of Christ, during its lifetime in California.

And then there was Jonestown. The community needed lots of capital. At the end, it still remained far from its goal of self-sufficiency. The group had to import food, despite the amount of acreage under cultivation. The equipment required a huge investment: a backhoe, an x-ray machine, trucks, a generator. From lumber to drugs, to chickens and pigs, the needs of Jonestown never abated. The community relied heavily on the California operation, since Temple members in Guyana drew no salary.

The ever-present possibility of expulsion from Guyana meant Jim had to consider the cost of resettlement as well. He wanted to have ready cash. At times it seemed probable that all 900 residents would have to relocate. Despite the need for immediate access to cash, the Temple had to keep it sufficiently removed to prevent both U.S. and Guyanese authorities from getting suspicious.

At the Guyana inquest in December 1979, the prosecutor argued that Jim Jones planned to leave Jonestown with Temple assets after the suicides. A jealous, or angry Temple member killed him to thwart the plan, according to the prosecutor. But Jim Jones didn't want money to buy himself luxury. He didn't drive a Cadillac. He didn't wear expensive clothes. A letter that appeared in The Washington Star after November 18 noted that most cult leaders dine on "steak and champagne". This did not characterize Jim. He wanted power over people, and fame. He used money to achieve those ends.

With over six million dollars actually recovered, the Peoples Temple Receiver proposed a plan in May 1980 to settle the \$1.8 billion in claims against the church. While Fabian denied legal liability for most categories of claims, he did extend compromise offers to all but a minority of claimants. In his 236-page proposal, Fabian gave the greatest share of "Receiver's Certificates" -- prorated shares of Temple funds -- to the 403 plaintiffs in wrongful death suits. These claimants included heirs of those who were shot and killed at the airstrip as well as those who died in Jonestown. He offered \$45,585 total to the Ryan children.

Fabian also allowed claims for burial expenses, at the rate of \$540 per decedent. Since he had earlier persuaded the court to pay for the interment of indigent Temple members, he wrote in his plan that he "believes that the heirs or other interested persons who stepped forward to shoulder burial expenses should be treated

similarly with those who were reimbursed by order of the court."

Fabian wasn't as generous with other categories of claims. He offered \$175,000 in Receiver's Certificates to ten of the 58 individuals who made bodily injury claims. The majority of the ten had been hurt at the airstrip. Of the 220 people who claimed they gave property to Peoples Temple, the Receiver proposed a total settlement of \$8171 to the fifteen who could document their assertions.

Still other claims he disallowed entirely. He rejected all defamation, false imprisonment and emotional distress suits. He denied federal rights violations, as well as attorneys' fees and related costs. He refused to reimburse San Mateo County for the cost of the special election it held to fill Leo Ryan's Congressional seat. And he threw out all claims for donated services, and all claims for life care contracts.

According to Fabian's compromise plan, administrative expenses took first priority. At the rate of \$100 an hour, the Receiver projected \$1.5 million in expenses over a three-year period. Meanwhile, the church's investment income, derived primarily from Certificates of Deposit, totaled about \$150,000 per quarter, at the time of the Receiver's report. By May 1980, the Temple earned about \$1600 a day.

The Justice Department also tried to recover Temple assets until Fabian agreed to give the government first crack at the money he collected. In United States v. Peoples Temple, the department claimed the government spent some \$4.3 million on the bodylift. The Internal Revenue Service added another government claim when it revoked the Temple's tax-exempt status and sought back taxes for the last thirty months of the church's existence. In late 1981, both Justice and IRS agreed to settle out of court for \$1.7 million. The settlement reduced Temple assets to \$7.9 million. At the same time, the agreement released \$260,000 in Social Security checks which the government agreed to honor. In 1983, the final settlement figure was \$1.4 million.

In spite of the big chunk the U.S. government grabbed, Temple investments were earning \$315,272 per quarter -- \$3000 per day -- in about 17 C. D. accounts at the time of the settlement. The social security money, as well as a \$460,000 payment from the Temple's insurance carrier and the \$60,000 from Carolyn's strongbox bolstered the Temple's assets. The auction of Temple furnishings pulled in \$75,000. The San Francisco Geary Street headquarters sold for \$300,000, while two Redwood

Valley properties brought in \$266,000. Guyana turned over more than \$60,000 in Social Security checks.

Judge Brown approved the Receiver's compromise plan. Despite grumbling and disappointment about the size of their shares, over 400 claimants accepted the offer. Lawyers involved agreed that litigation would eat up the assets. Nevertheless, about 200 claimants refused to settle. According to The Western Law Journal, the largest group of intervenors consisted of 110 aged Temple members who maintained they had lifetime care contracts with Peoples Temple. They rejected the Receiver's offer of three per cent of the claimed value.

Judge Brown appointed former Superior Court Justice Francis McCarty to arbitrate the disputed claims. Although McCarty successfully solved most of the problems, the Receiver himself had to deal with another set of unhappy litigants: those injured at the Port Kaituma airstrip, and the heirs of those who died there. Initially the Receiver extended those who suffered bodily injury no more than the highest award in the wrongful death actions. He offered Jackie Speier, Leo Ryan's aide, \$23,000, and NBC soundman Steve Sung, \$16,000. Additionally, Fabian proposed giving airstrip heirs roughly the same amount as heirs of deceased Temple members.

Marvin E. Lewis, attorney for many of the airstrip claimants, advised his clients to refuse these offers. According to Lewis, these were comparatively small wrongful death and bodily injury settlements. After all, no one at the airstrip voluntarily chose to be injured or killed, as had those who died in Jonestown. Lewis threatened to take his cases to trial to let a jury decide.

Fabian took the threat seriously. Two years after his initial compromise proposal, he announced new settlements for Lewis' clients that totaled \$1.575 million, over a tenth of the Peoples Temple pie. Less than a month later, McCarty accepted the agreement.

Then in August 1982, Judge Ira Brown gave final approval to the Receiver's plan for distributing Peoples Temple assets. Within the next ten days, over \$4.5 million in checks were mailed out.

The individual checks came to far less than the amounts initially suggested by the Receiver. With \$14.7 million in compromised claims, and \$9.5 million in assets, Fabian paid out about 64 per cent on each Receiver's Certificate, according to the Associated Press.

Fabian himself came very close to his projection of \$1.5 million in legal costs over the three years he

worked as Receiver for Peoples Temple. From March 1979 to March 1983, he earned almost \$500,000. And his law firm, Bronson, Bronson and McKinnon, collected a million dollar fee.

Fabian managed Peoples Temple finances far more profitably than the Temple ever did. With little more than the information Terri Buford, Debbie Blakey and other ex-members provided, he ferreted out what he believed were most of the Temple's secret bank accounts. And he tried to disperse the money in a fashion he considered equitable. At the very least, his original compromise plan seemed to favor no single group or individual.

The airstrip claimants, whose involvement was accidental, received the largest settlements. Jackie Speier got \$360,000; the five Ryan children, \$135,000, or \$27,000 each. The largest total amount of money, however, \$7.9 million, went to relatives of the victims. Fabian estimated the payments at \$328 per year, based on the life expectancy of the deceased.

Former Temple members were awarded a total of one million dollars. One woman complained that, "Everyone but the ones who helped build the Temple is getting the money." This group of claimants saw its money offered to individuals who had worked against the church, or who left the church at the very end. One member wrote Judge Brown:

I beg you to please consider the total picture... the injustice of now having our hard-earned assets go to people who cared nothing for us when we were alive.

The dispute over money mocked the sacrifices members made throughout the years. At the end of 1972, Annie wrote:

I don't mind sacrificing things to help change the society because there's not much in this world to offer anyway. I don't see how anyone can find happiness or satisfaction or whatever until the whole world is free of oppression and people are totally equal, honest and unselfish.

In November 1983, a few days before the fifth anniversary of the Jonestown deaths, Superior Court Judge Ira Brown signed the order which formally terminated Peoples Temple as a non-profit corporation.

The court had paid out over \$13 million.

Robert Fabian also obtained the court's permission to destroy the list of survivors and relatives he had compiled during his five year tenure as Receiver. He curtly informed Mac, "I didn't want them being harassed."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

RESIDUAL SUSPICION

The conscience of the world refused to stir when the Temple cried out against persecution. Now, instead of searching itself and its conscience, the world is persecuting the Temple, even in death.

-- Mohamet Hamaludin
Guyanese journalist
November 25, 1978

Since November 18, 1978, the United States government has spent millions of dollars investigating Peoples Temple. These investigations ranged from Congressional studies and hearings, to lengthy probes by almost every agency of the federal government, from the General Accounting Office to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Most of the studies had one of two purposes. The first, and most important, was to absolve the government of any malfeasance or negligence regarding Peoples Temple. The second purpose was to complete earlier investigations into allegations of illegal activities, such as gun-running and narcotics violations, by the church. None of these studies could support any of the charges, neither those made against the government, nor those against Peoples Temple. There was no welfare fraud, no illegal government payment, no hit squad, no arsenal.

The only individuals ever brought to trial on any crimes connected with Peoples Temple were Charles Beikman and Larry Layton. Beikman, who pleaded guilty to the attempted murder of a young girl at the Temple's Georgetown headquarters, served a five-year prison term in Guyana. A jury in Guyana acquitted Larry of attempted murder charges, while a jury in this country deadlocked over conspiracy charges. Both the United States and Guyana governments used the Layton and Beikman trials to demonstrate that they had done something about Jonestown and about Congressman Ryan's death. But in spite of the money, time and effort spent, we still don't know why, or even how, the people in Jonestown died.

Because of these tragic and bizarre deaths, "residual suspicion" -- a description used by House committee investigators -- clings to Peoples Temple. That suspicion can't be dispelled until the U.S. government conducts a thorough study of its relationships with the Temple, and makes its findings public. All the research thus far has focused on small bits of the Peoples Temple story.

The longest and most well-known government document on Peoples Temple is the House Foreign Affairs Committee report on "The Assassination of Representative Leo Ryan and the Jonestown, Guyana Tragedy". The 782-page report, prepared by a Staff Investigative Group (SIG) comprised of George Berdes, Ivo Spalatin, and Thomas Smeeton, devotes 37 pages to actual analysis and recommendation. Reprints of newspaper articles, copies of the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act and other federal regulations, as well as legal opinions justifying the investigation of cults fill over 500 pages of the report. The remaining 200 pages reprint letters from committee chairman Clement Zablocki to various government agencies, and their responses. State Department documents form the bulk of this section. For some reason, however, the State Department did not include any report from the man who had the most contact with Peoples Temple, U.S. Embassy Consul Richard McCoy.

Part of the report is classified. We believe the material is sizable, since the committee has twelve volumes of collected documents. The Table of Contents for the SIG's findings shows what the committee left out of its public version.

- A. Jim Jones and Peoples Temple
 - 1. (Tactics: In classified version only.)
 - 2. (Motivations: In classified version only.)
 - 3. Staff Investigative Group internal memorandum describing Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules and regulations concerning tax exempt status of religious organizations.
- B. Conspiracy Against Jim Jones and the People's Temple?
 - 1. (In classified version only.)
 - 2. Executive Orders 11905 and 12036 limiting and defining CIA responsibilities with respect to intelligence gathering on U.S. citizens
- C. (Opponents and media intimidated, public officials used: In classified version only.)
- D. (Awareness of Danger, Predicting the Degree of Violence: In classified version only.)
- E. (U.S. Customs Service Investigation: In classified version only.)
- F. (Conspiracy to Kill Representative Leo Ryan: In classified version only.)

G. The Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act

1. (In classified version only.)
2. Correspondence between the Department of State and Hon. Clement J. Zablocki
3. Department of State implementation of the Privacy Act and the Freedom of Information Act
 - a. Materials provided to the Staff Investigative Group stemming from the February 2, 1979 letter from the Hon. Clement J. Zablocki
 - b. Staff Investigative Group internal memorandum describing the general provisions of the Privacy Act and the Freedom of Information Act and analyzing the Department of State's performance in implementing those two acts
 - c. Staff Investigative Group memorandum elaborating on the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and the exemptions from agency disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act

H. (Role and Performance of the U.S. Department of State: In classified version only.)

I. (Involvement of the Government of Guyana: In classified version only.)

A statement our family made to the committee is among the classified documents.

The Foreign Affairs Committee approved the SIG's recommendation to release transcripts of interviews on January 1, 1985. George Berdes, a staff investigator, explained that the late declassification date protected the witnesses. He admitted to our private investigator John Hanrahan, however, that the committee wanted to prevent critics "from second-guessing the investigation, and second-guessing the kinds of questions we asked."

Information in the report relating to the CIA has a higher classification and may never be released. The report provocatively asserts that, "No conclusive evidence is available to indicate that the CIA was acquiring information on Mr. Jones or People's Temple." Does this mean there might have been inconclusive evidence of CIA involvement? The report adds that "the CIA was

legally proscribed from engaging in any activities vis-a-vis People's Temple," and includes copies of executive orders which prohibit the CIA from spying on U.S. citizens. The report doesn't point out that these legal constraints have not prevented the CIA from engaging in such activities in the past.

The evidence the Staff Investigative Group gathered about the alleged hit squad was equally inconclusive. Nevertheless, the SIG decided that although it "cannot be concretely documented, it should not be totally discounted."

As an official document, the House committee report was disappointingly insubstantial. Staff investigators had difficulty documenting most of their suspicions. They relied on "circumstantial evidence", "unconfirmed reports", and "reported statements" -- in other words, hearsay. As a result, they added little to the investigation of Congressman Ryan's death, nothing to the general knowledge of Peoples Temple, and nothing to the understanding of Jonestown.

The Foreign Affairs Committee held a single hearing in May 1979 the day its report was released. Staff investigators testified, reiterating the opinions expressed in their report. They urged an overhaul of the exemptions in the Privacy and Freedom of Information Acts. They also suggested that Congress review IRS guidelines for tax-exempt churches. Despite the advice of several specialists in constitutional law, who found no legal distinction between churches and cults, the investigators called for a "concentrated program of research and training on cults."

Neither the report -- even in its complete, classified version -- nor the hearing satisfied one Member of Congress. Representative Bill Royer, Leo Ryan's successor, adopted Ryan's role as Congressional spokesman for the Concerned Relatives. Royer used oversight hearings held by the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Operations as a platform for allowing a group of relatives to discuss their frustration with the State Department. The subcommittee met in early 1980 to examine how the State Department had implemented changes in Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act reporting in the wake of Foreign Affairs Committee recommendations.

In addition to two parents of adult children who died in Jonestown, Ryan aides Jackie Speier and Joe Holsinger testified at the first hearing. All voiced harsh words for the State Department. "Is it State Department policy," Holsinger asked, "to make protection of American

commercial interests abroad its top priority at the expense of American citizens?" Two minor State Department officials appeared at the second hearing to rebut the charges. One of the officials, the Undersecretary of State for Security Assistance, Science and Technology, couldn't answer many of Royer's questions.

Other Congressional committees slammed the door on further investigations. The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, for example, announced that it found no evidence of CIA involvement in Jonestown. The committee did not publish a report of its findings, however. The Judiciary Committee refused to hold oversight hearings on the Justice Department's investigation of Ryan's assassination. Chairman Peter Rodino said the problem lay outside the committee's jurisdiction.

The investigations by individual Members of Congress continued in the Leo Ryan tradition. Highly publicized, they had little real substance. Senator Robert Dole held a one-day hearing on cults which featured Jackie Speier and a cast of media stars and demonstrators. In January 1979, Senator Alan Cranston scheduled a hearing on alleged welfare fraud by Peoples Temple. Cranston acted on what turned out to be erroneous information.

The problem began when the California Social Services Department Director for Mendocino County claimed that Peoples Temple had cared for 150 foster children at one time or another. Cranston believed this meant that Peoples Temple had 150 foster children in its care on November 18 and, by extension, that most had died in Jonestown. The California Senator asked the General Accounting Office to learn if federal dollars had been spent on those children while they lived in Guyana. That kind of payment was illegal, since the children would have lost eligibility once they left the U.S.

Although preliminary figures came out a few months after Cranston's hearing, the GAO's final report didn't appear until the end of 1980. According to the GAO, of the 294 children under age 18 who died in Guyana, 17 had been in foster care prior to their move to Guyana. However, only one child was in active foster care at the time of emigration, and that child survived the mass deaths.

While foster children ultimately did not pose financial or moral problems for the government, over twenty children in guardianship care did. The State of California estimated that \$20,000 had been overpaid under Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Adults

in the Temple who maintained legal guardianships received these payments. Overpayment occurred when checks were issued to guardians who had moved to Guyana. Although some unwarranted payments were made, they generally happened by mistake, and welfare officials quickly caught the problem. An investigation by the California Attorney General's office also found that children in guardianship custody had permission to move to Guyana from at least one parent or guardian.

Potential overpayment to Social Security recipients posed another problem. Shortly after November 18, the Social Security Administration (SSA) scrambled to account for 748 U.S. Treasury checks -- totalling over \$100,000 -- the Guyana police found in Jonestown. Because the body count remained low for several days, SSA officials worried that many beneficiaries might have died before November 18. Additionally, Debbie Blakey claimed she had processed \$65,000 worth of SSA checks each month. Since that amount was \$25,000 more than the agency's own estimate, staff at SSA grew doubly concerned.

Four days after the suicides, representatives from seven regional SSA offices met to discuss the possibility of welfare fraud. They began by cross-checking the lists of beneficiaries against the lists of identified dead and known survivors. They also suspended all payments going to the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown, including those addressed to survivors.

The Social Security Administration already had a thick case file on Peoples Temple. As early as 1975, it investigated the Temple's practice of depositing beneficiaries' checks directly into bank accounts. In 1977, the District Office in San Francisco went to "extraordinary lengths" to stop payments to recipients who were emigrating to Guyana. That same fall, SSA asked the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown to make sure beneficiaries were not assigning their checks to the Temple. Consul Richard McCoy interviewed thirteen seniors in early 1978 and reported that everyone he talked to seemed healthy and happy. Adverse publicity prompted SSA to request another Embassy investigation, this time "on a face-to-face basis, in a place where privacy is assured, rather than dealing with them by mail." The visit to Jonestown was scheduled for January 1979.

As of June 1978, about \$37,000 worth of checks went to beneficiaries each month. The recipients at that time included 93 retirees, 23 disabled persons, 12 children and 13 aged widows. The embassy again verified that everyone receiving a check was in fact alive. By Novem-

ber 1978, almost 50 more SSA recipients lived in Jonestown. After the suicides, reporters called Social Security with the names of individuals who allegedly died before November 18. The agency found that only one -- Lisa Layton -- still received checks. The mother of Larry Layton and Debbie Layton Blakey, she'd died of cancer in October. One reporter also charged that many were ineligible for benefits because "the beneficiaries were all working their asses off." SSA officials explained to Ken Wooden, who wrote The Children of Jonestown, that the work Jonestown residents did could not be considered employment, since it was not performed for wages. The agency added that the Embassy determined that beneficiaries were not employed in January 1978.

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the predecessor to the Department of Health and Human Services, submitted its final report to the House Foreign Affairs Committee in June 1979, a month after the committee's report came out. In a letter to Chairman Zablocki, HEW Secretary Joseph Califano noted that:

A total of 188 beneficiaries of social security retirement, survivors, disability insurance (RSDI) died in the Mission Village mass suicide/homicide of November 18, 1978. There were 8 survivors. Of the 188 who died, the bodies of 169 have been positively identified. The bodies of 12 adult and 7 child beneficiaries were not identified and are presumably among the more than 200 unidentified remains in Dover. Handwriting analysis has confirmed that the endorsements on the checks dated November 3, 1978, issued to the 12 adult beneficiaries were genuine, proving that the beneficiaries were alive and in receipt of their checks as of that date. The 7 children did not receive checks in their own name. Therefore, handwriting analysis of the endorsements on their checks could not be used to verify that the children were alive.

A review of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) records has identified 160 individuals who received SSI payments at some time prior to leaving the United States for the Peoples Temple in Guyana. All but three of these individuals died in the suicide/homicide. In comparing SSI termination dates with the dates of arrival in Guyana,

SSA has determined that 28 of the deceased individuals continued receiving SSI after arriving in Guyana. All of these SSI checks were mailed to addresses in the United States. The records of these individuals are being referred to the social security offices serving the last known United States address of each person to determine whether recovery of the overpayment is possible and to ascertain the extent of any fraudulent activities. SSI payments to the three survivors were properly terminated while they were outside the United States; therefore, overpayment did not exist in these cases.

The subsequent investigation revealed that the 28 people noted in HEW's report cashed 93 SSI checks, totalling \$17,000, for which they were ineligible. Peoples Temple members in San Francisco located, and returned, another 102 SSI checks. Only one or two SSI checks turned up in Guyana. The SSI checks comprised the only overpayments made to Peoples Temple beneficiaries. The move to Guyana did not affect social security and disability payments. Based upon the HEW report and its own investigation, the San Francisco SSA field office said it "failed to disclose any perpetration of fraud."

Because the Temple had extensive welfare dealings in California, the State Attorney General's office studied the group's relationship with local welfare officials. The Investigative Report, prepared by the Deputy Attorney General, concluded that there had been no collusion or unusual involvement. In addition to its own findings, the report noted the Mendocino Grand Jury's investigation of the Temple after the suicides. "The county welfare fraud investigation was closed," the report observed,

as no evidence of welfare fraud involving members of Peoples Temple was found. Welfare Director Dennis Denny agreed that no fraud had been found in his search of county social service records...

All cases of welfare fraud uncovered by the counties were frauds perpetrated by individuals for personal gain and were not part of any conspiracy by Peoples Temple to finance its operations by fraudulently obtaining public monies.

The California Attorney General also looked into allegations that Peoples Temple had engaged in fraud during the 1975 San Francisco city elections, in which George Moscone defeated John Barbagelata in the mayoral race by 4443 votes. After the election, one hundred voter registration books, each containing 25 registration forms, could not be located. Peoples Temple became an immediate suspect, even though the county Democratic chairman stated that Jim and the Temple delivered volunteers, not votes.

This investigation of election fraud was the second. In 1976, the San Francisco District Attorney presented his findings to a county grand jury and came up with 39 indictments. None involved Temple members. The participation of Temple member Tim Stoen, who was Assistant District Attorney at the time, could have tainted the first investigation's findings, though. Unfortunately, voter fraud could not be proved or disproved later, because records from the 1975 election had been routinely destroyed. Nevertheless, then-Attorney General George Deukmejian stated at the end of his ten-month probe that "no persons interviewed or examined under oath could give direct evidence of any voter fraud perpetrated by a member of Peoples Temple."

Although the Social Security Administration and California welfare agencies came under attack following November 18, critics reserved their harshest comments for the State Department. State, through the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown, had the most direct contact with Peoples Temple once the group left the United States. The department received numerous letters and complaints from members of the Concerned Relatives and from Peoples Temple. By June 1978, State had over 912 documents on Peoples Temple, according to the Embassy's Consul, Richard McCoy. When McCoy returned to Washington in May 1978, he briefed department officials extensively about Jonestown. He related Debbie Blakey's concerns and fears, which she'd communicated to him as he escorted her back to the U.S. As criticism of State mounted after the massacre, the department responded by claiming it had devoted more time to Peoples Temple in the previous eighteen months than to any other group of American citizens living abroad. In that case, critics wondered, why didn't State warn Ryan of the potential for violence, or predict the mass suicides?

State responded by appointing two retired Foreign Service Officers to examine its handling of Peoples Temple. "The Performance of the Department of State and the

American Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana in the People's Temple Case", or the "Crimmins Report", as it came to be known, found that the State Department knew all the "critical aspects" of the Peoples Temple controversy, but that both the department and the Embassy failed to use the information "as well as they could and should have."

The report studied two main areas of State Department involvement. The first covered the relationship between the Temple and the Concerned Relatives. Both the department in Washington and the Embassy in Georgetown viewed the conflict between the two -- particularly the Stoen custody case -- as a fight between two groups of Americans. As the representative of all Americans in Guyana, the Embassy was supposed to remain neutral, although the report concluded "there was a 'tilt' towards the Stoens' position in early official actions."

The second area of State Department responsibility in regard to Peoples Temple encompassed the preparation and handling of Leo Ryan's visit to Jonestown. In this respect, the area of highest public criticism, the Crimmins Report felt "the briefings for the Congressional visit were quite thorough in content and scope." Ryan's aides disagreed. They pointed out that the State Department made very few, if any, cables or documents available to them. Additionally, department and Embassy officials did not warn Ryan of the possibility of violence. The report explained that "there was nothing in their dealings with Jonestown to warrant such a caution."

State and Embassy officials had difficulty judging accusations from the Concerned Relatives and from Peoples Temple, because both sides exaggerated. For Richard McCoy, the Concerned Relatives had a "credibility problem, since many of their claims were untrue." McCoy frequently interviewed people who were supposedly being held against their will in Jonestown. Time and again, people told him they remained in Jonestown voluntarily. And, he added, they did not appear to be in fear and under pressure. The evidence he saw in Jonestown belied the allegations of the Concerned Relatives.

This may explain why McCoy and others at the State Department did not take the Temple's suicide threats seriously, and why they discounted the Concerned Relatives. Although Temple members announced they would die before giving up John Victor Stoen, and although Blakey personally told McCoy, and later the department by affidavit, about suicide rehearsals, the State Department believed in neither.

However, Congressman Ryan had more faith in the

Concerned Relatives. Their allegations persuaded him to go to Guyana to investigate Jonestown. They accompanied him and his staff on several meetings to the State Department. And on November 14, 1978, fourteen relatives gave an "emotional recital ... of allegations of physical abuse of their kin" to Ambassador Burke, Congressman Ryan, and two of his aides.

Leo Ryan possessed largely the same information the State Department had. While State ignored warnings provided by Concerned Relatives, Ryan did not. At the same time, State knew that the Concerned Relatives would inflame the Temple against the Congressman. The Crimmins Report noted that:

The record does demonstrate that Congressman Ryan and his staff members were clearly advised that the presence of concerned relatives might cause friction with Jonestown about access.

The Crimmins Report really doesn't analyze why the State Department ignored the suicide threats. In fact, its omissions reveal more than its contents. For example, the report never mentions the Guyana Desk Officer by name. Although Frank Tumminia held the post until July 1978 and should have been a key contact in the department, the report fails to study his role in any depth. And even though the document states that Embassy relations with Peoples Temple "declined" with the arrival of Deputy Chief of Mission Richard Dwyer in May 1978, it doesn't explain why. The Crimmins Report does not mention the awareness the Embassy had of the content of Temple radio communications. It doesn't mention the Embassy's additional intelligence about the church's contacts with foreign governments. Finally, the Crimmins Report does not discuss the actions of Embassy officers on November 18. This is a particularly serious omission, since the audio tape made on November 18 includes Jim Jones saying, "Get Dwyer out of here."

Instead of answering some of the questions these issues raised, John Hugh Crimmins and Stanley S. Carpenter, authors of the report, attacked both the Freedom of Information and the Privacy Acts. They recommended "the necessity and practicality of seeking amendment to the two statutes." These statutory "constraints", coupled with First Amendment protection of freedom of religion, obliged the State Department and the Embassy

to follow a cautious policy that stressed

impartiality, objectivity, accuracy, adherence to strict legality, and insistence on hard evidence as the only basis for action...

Concern about the FOIA and the provisions of the Privacy Act permitting access by an individual to government files about himself reduced Embassy reporting and led to an emphasis on the purely factual at the expense of the speculative and analytical.

Were Embassy officials purposely interpreting the law in a legalistic fashion? Richard Dwyer told us in May 1979 that restrictions of the Privacy Act prevented the Embassy from doing more. He spent more time discussing privacy than describing what happened in Jonestown. But if Embassy officials knew, or suspected, something was wrong in Jonestown, neither the Privacy Act nor the Freedom of Information Act nor the First Amendment prevented them from acting responsibly.

In fact, Ambassador Burke understood his responsibility when he sent a cable to the State Department in June 1978, requesting authorization to approach the Guyana government about Jonestown. "Because of the importance of the telegram to the Ambassador," said the Crimmins Report, "the Ambassador, by telephone, called it to the attention of the Desk Officer for Guyana requesting that it receive careful consideration." The Desk Officer, Frank Tumminia, did not remember Burke's call.

In spite of Burke's concern, and in spite of the fact that several officials in the department knew what the ambassador meant -- including recently-returned Consul Richard McCoy --

No one was quite sure what the Embassy was driving at... The Director of SCS [the Office of Special Consular Service] ... questioned the necessity of the action for which the Embassy was requesting authority on the grounds that the approach should not be undertaken unless there were evidence of lawlessness. The Chief of the Division questioned the propriety of the approach since the area was under the control of the Guyanese Government and there might be a charge of interference...

The Desk Officer for Guyana [Frank Tumminia] did have a better grasp of the Embassy's purpose... In his opinion, the Em-

bassy was asking: what action can we take? With these thoughts in his own mind, the Desk Officer told SCS that prompt action was needed. There is no evidence, however, that he transmitted his opinions to SCS or inquired about the SCS understanding of the telegram. Moreover, he took no exception to the Department's reply even though perturbed by the failure of SCS to clear it with him before dispatch.

The State Department responded by telling the Embassy that any approach to the Guyana government could be construed as interference by the U.S. government. Unless evidence of lawlessness surfaced, or unless American citizens requested assistance, the Embassy could do nothing.

Both the ambassador's cable and the department's response were remarkable. In light of the Embassy's diplomatic note to the Government of Guyana concerning the Stoen custody case, Burke's request seemed moderate.

In a personal interview with John Hanrahan, Richard McCoy said that the State Department "fully understood" Burke's telegram. "The people who received that telegram had been personally briefed by me regarding Jonestown for several hours, three and a half weeks before that telegram was sent. They knew all about it here." If, for some reason, they forgot McCoy's briefing, or failed to read the massive files already available on Peoples Temple, or if they truly did not understand the ambassador's vaguely-worded message, "all they had to do was ask."

Since everyone at State knew, or had the opportunity to find out, what the cable meant, Ambassador Burke did not pursue the matter when he made a personal visit to Washington, D.C. the very next month. The Crimmins Report only notes that Burke did not discuss the telegram with anyone at State during his month-long visit. Again, it does not explain why.

McCoy, who became the Guyana Desk Officer in August 1978, blamed his predecessor for "mishandling" Burke's cable. The people who had the most information about Jonestown were "low-level people ... somewhat inexperienced." They lacked the power to convey the true picture to people who could make political decisions. Embassy staff also felt that department officials in Washington did not want to get involved in anything controversial.

Burke sent a second telegram in September, when he learned of Ryan's impending visit. His September 26 cable asked the Caribbean Area Director to "review" the June exchange carefully. Since the director remembered the "tenor" of the exchange, he did not actually look at the telegrams.

Ambassador Burke received the major part of what little blame the Crimmins Report assigned. McCoy said that the report's authors sincerely believed that an ambassador had the primary responsibility for Embassy activities. If Burke felt strongly about Jonestown, they reasoned, he should have protested State's inaction on his request to approach the Guyana government. He did not.

Burke himself was stung by the criticism. After the report came out, he wrote to State's legal advisor "reiterating my position that the Embassy took appropriate steps" regarding Jonestown. John Hanrahan asked Burke for this letter, which isn't classified. Burke referred him to the legal advisor's office, which refused to give him the letter.

In addition to precipitating Leo Ryan's trip to Guyana, the Concerned Relatives and ex-Temple members also encouraged other investigations, both before and after November 18. The U.S. Customs Service, for instance, began looking into their allegations of gun-running early in 1977. A two-year probe could not confirm any of the charges, however, in spite of surveillance conducted in San Francisco, Houston and New Orleans. Nevertheless, Foreign Affairs Committee staff believed the investigation had been compromised by leaks to the Temple, and therefore was inconclusive.

Arsenal and gun-running stories emerged again after the suicides. Reporters from the Associated Press found papers in Jonestown which suggested the possibility of systematic smuggling. Some of the documents observed that it was easier to prevent extensive searches by Guyana Customs if sanitary napkins were placed on top of items in crates.

The rumors seemed more credible following an incident two weeks after the mass deaths. On December 2, 1978, Los Angeles police raided the real estate office of a Temple member and discovered 200 rounds of ammunition and a dummy bomb. The Los Angeles District Attorney had already been investigating the real estate agent in connection with the Medlock case.

Within days after November 18, the Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms began

a trace on the 35 weapons recovered in Guyana: seven shotguns, fourteen rifles, ten pistols and a flare-launcher found in Jonestown; and three pistols taken from Larry Layton, Tim Carter, and his brother Mike.

On January 2, 1979, the ATF reported that, "There was no evidence to date of any violation of laws under ATF jurisdiction and ... ATF had no reason to continue the investigation." Government investigators traced 25 firearms to the Yokayo Rifle Shop in Ukiah, California, and learned that all but three of the weapons had been purchased before March 1975. At least thirteen were bought prior to 1970. "Hardly an arsenal," as Skip Roberts commented.

Though not an arsenal, these weapons had been smuggled into Guyana. No one in Peoples Temple had obtained an export license for any of them. No one had registered the guns in Guyana. But the pistols, rifles and shotguns recovered from Jonestown could not be considered paramilitary weapons, so ATF closed the case without finding "a conspiracy ... to supply firearms illegally to extremist groups."

Ex-members also promoted the stories, and fears, about a Temple hit squad. The San Francisco District Attorney drew up a hypothetical list of assassination targets the day after Ryan's death. The prosecutor based his list on word of mouth, "sometimes from only one source, and often from persons who have not been associated with the temple in years," according to The Reno Evening Gazette. By November 30, the list of "hit men" had reached 60. A few days later, The New York Times reported that "virtually every member who survived the massacre two weeks ago was named by one or another of the former members as a potential assassin."

The reports contradicted themselves. On December 9, for example, Terri Buford told reporters no hit list existed, although she added that the Temple had set aside three million dollars for a "Last Stand Plan". She claimed "there are still people alive who could be members of a hit squad." Ten days later, she said Senator John Stennis was on a Temple hit list.

Several federal and local law enforcement agencies, including the San Francisco Police Department, investigated the threat of a hit squad. They had to. Jimmy Carter and Richard Nixon, reporters Lester Kinsolving and Marshall Kilduff, and defectors such as Tim Stoen and Al and Jeannie Mills all appeared on the defectors' list. The killings of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk fueled hit squad stories the week after the suicides. The rumors

were short-lived, however. The assassin, a disgruntled ex-supervisor, surrendered within hours of the shootings. Dan White had no connection to Peoples Temple.

As early as November 28, The Washington Post observed that investigators could find "no evidence that 'death squads' of Jones' loyalists are waiting to assassinate them, as many survivors fear." Two days later, the Justice Department attorney heading up the Ryan investigation added, "This investigation had uncovered no evidence that this early [hit] list was credible or that there is a more current one."

A year and a half later, the murders of Al and Jeannie Mills and of their daughter Daphne revived fears of a hit squad. As enemies of Peoples Temple and organizers of the Concerned Relatives, the Mills' would have headed any hit list. But police investigators could not link the killings to Peoples Temple, and downplayed any possibility of a hit squad. Most of the available evidence indicated that a relative, or someone the Mills' knew, committed the execution-style murders. The case remains unsolved.

Survivors bore the brunt of ex-members' accusations and of the public's suspicions. Upon their return, they faced interrogation by the FBI, the Customs Service and several grand juries. Initially, eighty FBI agents gathered at Charleston Air Force Base in South Carolina to await the survivors' return. By the time Guyana police allowed the Americans to leave, however, the Air Force had completed its primary mission, returning the bodies, and had already left Guyana.

The majority of those who escaped the massacre flew to New York, where Customs Service agents gave them "personal examinations" and interviewed them on the plane. The Customs Service inquiry "dealt with the transportation of currency into and out of the United States ... and with the transportation of firearms and ammunition from the United States to Guyana." The agents also examined documents brought in by survivors "to determine if they were treasonous or seditious." After the agents made their determinations, they placed the material on the interview table for the duration of the questioning.

Once the Customs Service completed its interrogation, FBI and Secret Service agents then escorted the survivors to 17 Winnebagos set up for more interviews. Many survivors were questioned for up to nine hours. The interrogation of Jim Jones' son, Tim Jones, lasted more than ten hours. "The FBI had shifts of two agents, which

changed every two or three hours," said Tim's attorney. When Jones requested a lawyer, the agents told him he couldn't have one. Other survivors said the FBI agents called them liars during their ordeals.

What was the FBI's interest in survivors? Ostensibly the agency has primary responsibility for investigating the murder of any Member of Congress, even if the death occurs in a foreign country. The FBI tried to persuade Guyana to allow its agents into the country. The government resisted until November 30, when it permitted four FBI experts in ballistics, photography and engineering to work with the Guyana police. Later on, the country allowed an FBI agent to attend the trial of Larry Layton.

Beyond its interest in Leo Ryan, however, the FBI said it had no authority to probe the deaths of other American citizens. No American agency had that authority, since the deaths occurred on foreign soil.

But the extraordinary circumstances of the deaths, and a lack of information made the American public demand an investigation. The families of Ryan and the newsmen slain at Port Kaituma wanted the State Department to explain its involvement with Jim and Peoples Temple. Liberal and radical black leaders believed there might have been a racist conspiracy, since so many of the victims were black. U.S. medical examiners protested the lack of proper post-mortem examinations. And relatives simply wanted to know why it happened, and how.

Initially the Justice Department said it would not inquire into Jim's death or the mass suicides because the FBI had "enough eyewitnesses who have given us accounts of what happened in Jonestown," according to a Justice Department spokesman. Two days later, Justice reversed its position and announced it would perform autopsies on a few bodies. "We wanted to know who led it, who planned it and how did these events come about," said Assistant Attorney General Philip B. Heymann. If the Justice Department ever found out, it never disclosed that information.

A federal grand jury also worked under the auspices of the Justice Department. Convened November 30, it planned to study the possibility that Peoples Temple members had plotted Congressman Ryan's murder from the U.S. It looked into stories of hit squads, rumors of millions of dollars, and everything else but how and why Peoples Temple died in Guyana. A grand jury called by San Francisco County paralleled this investigation.

The federal grand jury issued dozens of subpoenas against returning Temple survivors. During their appearances many took the Fifth Amendment or conferred

with their lawyers on each question. Some asked U.S. District Judge Robert Peckham to let them study transcripts of the interviews they'd given to the FBI at the New York airport prior to testifying before the grand jury. Peckham delayed the proceedings two weeks to allow this.

Terri Buford provided the most sensational testimony that the grand jury heard. Terri defected from the Temple October 27, 1978, although she found asylum with Mark Lane, one of the Temple's attorneys. In the grand jury room, she accused Tim Stoen of planning illegal activities while he belonged to the Temple; she alleged that a hit list existed; she claimed that a San Francisco Temple member led an assassination team; and she denied she had any authority within the Peoples Temple organization. Mark Lane based his account of the Temple in his book, The Strongest Poison, primarily on information from Terri.

The federal grand jury heard evidence from almost everyone connected with Peoples Temple, as well as from a good many who weren't. It extended its eighteen-month term to forestall Larry Layton's escape from American justice. And it effectively prevented any information about the Temple from reaching the public. Grand jurors and law enforcement officials are proscribed from repeating what they say and hear during jury proceedings, and many witnesses declined to.

In addition, the grand jury's ongoing investigation hampered Freedom of Information requests to the Department of Justice and the FBI. Both agencies delayed release of most documents until the investigation by the U.S. Attorney -- that is, the grand jury -- was completed. Larry Layton's trial in the United States, and the government's attempt to retry the case, have continued to delay the release of certain documents.

In late 1980, more than a year after it heard the bulk of the testimony about Peoples Temple, the federal grand jury charged Larry with conspiracy, and aiding and abetting the murder of Congressman Ryan. Larry couldn't be extradited to the United States until legal proceedings against him in Guyana had concluded. The grand jury had waited until then.

Judicial proceedings against Larry and Charles Beikman took almost two years to get to a jury in Guyana. Although bureaucracies function slowly in the tropics, most of the delays resulted from tactics employed by the attorney they shared. One of Guyana's most prestigious lawyers, Rex McKay stretched out the proceedings, and succeeded in getting the charges against both Larry and Chuck reduced.

Because the case against Chuck Beikman had no international repercussions, Guyana found him easier to prosecute. The police initially charged the ex-Marine with the murder of Sharon Amos and her children Liane, Thomas and Christa at the Temple's headquarters in Georgetown. McKay negotiated a guilty plea for the attempted murder of Stephanie Jones, a niece of Stephan Jones, in exchange for a government promise to drop the murder charges.

When John went to Guyana in December 1979, he spent most of his time at the Georgetown Gaol, visiting Larry and Chuck. John got to know Chuck a little bit and found he liked the man. Over a year after his visit, he recalled Chuck in a letter:

I was jogging this morning when I heard, and then saw, some children playing on the school ground. I thought of Annie. The train of thought ended with Chuck Beikman and his spontaneous smile and response at the mention of Annie's name... I found him insightful and believable...

He said that he suspected Patricia [Cartmell] of being the one whose voice from the grave Jim Jones called and talked with in one of their services. He confronted Patricia about it a long while later. When Jim Jones said that shots had been fired at them from the road in Redwood Valley, he said that he went out and found shells on the ground. 'The firing' was phony too, he said...

My own judgment is that, from my interview, he was insightful, made his decision and had his reasons for staying, and might be without guile, certainly more trustworthy as a witness than 'defectors'.

McKay told John that the prosecutor had an "exceedingly poor case against Beikman." Nevertheless, McKay advised Beikman to accept the guilty plea on the lesser charge of attempted murder, because it would have been difficult for a barrister to explain why Chuck was in the bathroom with Sharon. He thought Chuck would get three years on the lesser charge.

Chuck didn't want to plead guilty. John told him that his brother, Dale Beikman, wanted him to follow McKay's advice regardless of his personal feelings. Chuck said he'd go along, because "Dale's paying the bill."

Beikman's case didn't go to court until April

1980. He pleaded guilty. Although the judge knew that Beikman had already served eighteen months in jail, he sentenced him to an additional five years.

Some critics believe that Temple leaders living at Lamaha Gardens used Beikman to get themselves out of a bad situation. One account explains that the Guyana police threatened to keep everyone under house arrest until they came up with a murderer. But Sharon, a zealous Temple member, probably did murder her children and then killed herself. "Sharon and Liane would do anything Jim said," Chuck told John. How could he have done it, he asked, if he had no blood on himself or his clothes?

During Beikman's preliminary hearing shortly after the deaths, Stephan Jones testified that Chuck was in the bathroom with Sharon, and that he tried to cut Stephanie's throat. Eight-year-old Stephanie, the only eyewitness, provided contradictory and confusing testimony. Stephan narrowly escaped prosecution himself, after he jokingly claimed from the witness box that he killed Sharon Amos. The police didn't think it was funny, and arrested Stephan. A few days later, the court formally charged him with the deaths of Sharon and her children. After a few delays and two months in jail, the court released Stephan in February 1979.

Larry Layton didn't get off so easily. As the only living suspect in the airstrip killings, he couldn't. Police arrested him shortly after the shootings, and the court held an arraignment hearing a few days later. It charged Larry with the murder of Leo Ryan. At a preliminary hearing in mid-December, the prosecutor introduced a confession in which Larry said he took "full responsibility" for what happened at the airstrip. The court scheduled the trial for February 1979. Eighteen months later, a jury finally heard Larry's case.

In the meantime, Rex McKay convinced the court to throw out the results of the preliminary hearing. Almost a year after Ryan's death, the court convened a second preliminary hearing, and McKay persuaded the judge to reduce the charges against Larry to attempted murder.

Not all of the delays stemmed from Larry's defense. One of his other Guyanese lawyers, Jai Narine Singh, believed the government played a deliberate waiting game. Singh felt the government wanted the case to die a natural death, since the prosecutor didn't have enough witnesses to succeed in a murder or conspiracy trial. "Do not be unduly worried," Singh told John. "Larry will never be convicted here of the murder of Ryan or the press people. But he faces the second charge [discharging a firearm with intent to kill or harm] with some difficulty."

When the trial for attempted murder finally started in May 1980, Larry pleaded not guilty. A few days after the trial opened, and a few hours after its deliberations began, a Guyanese jury returned a verdict of not guilty. The jurors said the government failed to produce sufficient evidence against Larry. "A child would have acquitted him," said one.

The police took Larry back into custody on the chance the government might eventually bring some conspiracy charges against him. The prosecution had failed once, however, in the case for which it had the most evidence.

Guyana and the United States reached an agreement on Larry's extradition that fall. Larry was released into the custody of U.S. marshals, who escorted him to San Francisco, where the trial would be held. At the arraignment in U.S. District Court over two years after Leo Ryan's death, Larry pleaded not guilty to charges of conspiracy in the murder of Ryan and the attempted murder of U.S. Embassy officer Richard Dwyer. He also pleaded not guilty to the charges of aiding and abetting the deaths on the Port Kaituma airstrip.

While awaiting trial in the San Francisco County jail, Larry wrote John and Barbara that conditions there represented a big improvement over the Georgetown Gaol. By July 1981, when jury selection for his trial began, he'd been imprisoned almost three years.

Like McKay in Guyana, Larry's attorneys in this country tried to delay his trial. The defense began by challenging the law under which Larry would be tried. His lawyers claimed that Larry could not be tried in the United States for a crime that occurred in another country. The request for a dismissal went to the U.S. Supreme Court, but in June 1981, Justice William Rehnquist refused to hear it. Rehnquist's denial for the court, without comment, effectively upheld the opinion of the district court judge that the federal law against murdering a Member of Congress had worldwide coverage.

As jury selection began, it looked as though Larry's lawyers -- his private attorney and federal public defenders -- might use an insanity defense. They asked prospective jurors their thoughts on brainwashing and mind control. The defense eventually discarded this approach. At the end of the five-week trial, Larry's attorneys rested their case without calling a single witness.

We were relieved. John and Barbara visited Larry in jail several times before the trial started. They'd

given a name of a psychiatrist who might be willing to testify for Larry, and they'd offered to testify as character witnesses. In June 1981, however, an assistant to one of Larry's attorneys told John some things that made him retract his offer. Mary Ann Bachers revealed that the defense had documents showing that Carolyn had helped plan the mass suicide, and that Ann had experimented with poison before the final day. John didn't see these documents, nor have we been able to obtain them under the Freedom of Information Act. Bachers warned John that the prosecution would bring up these documents to try to impeach his testimony.

"I thought of Becky's words that 'worse things can happen to us,'" wrote John. "There are questions as to the validity of the documents," he continued, "and whether in fact there is any evidence that people were murdered prior to November 18. Nevertheless, I am dealing with this as though it were true."

Perhaps the abundance of negative testimony discouraged the defense from calling any witnesses. Certainly the prosecution painted a grim picture of Jonestown throughout the trial. The strategy backfired. It must have become clear to the jurors that Larry was as much a victim as those who died at the airstrip. Prosecution witnesses revealed that everyone who lived in Jonestown endured physical hardships and psychological stress. How could Larry escape that? Additionally, the witnesses described Larry's severe depression following the death of his mother Lisa a month before Ryan's visit.

During the trial, the defense tried to question U.S. Embassy officer Richard Dwyer about CIA connections with Jonestown. But U.S. District Court Judge Robert Peckham refused to allow that line of questioning. He also barred the prosecution from entering the so-called "death tape" as evidence, because he felt it was hearsay. The people on the tape were all dead. They could not be cross-examined. Furthermore, they spoke knowing they were likely to die.

The jurors heard plenty of other witnesses, though. They listened to accounts from the defectors who fled Jonestown that last day. They learned of Larry's confession to the Guyanese police, which Peckham allowed over defense objections. They saw the videotape NBC's Bob Brown made as he was gunned down. But after eight days of deliberations, the jury announced it was deadlocked. On September 26, 1981, Judge Peckham declared a mistrial. After the trial, the jury revealed that it voted 11-1 in favor of acquittal on conspiracy charges, and was stuck 7-5 for conviction on the charges of aiding and abetting.

The judge denied a defense motion for acquittal, but did free Larry on bond. Meanwhile, the government announced it would re-try the case. To succeed in its second attempt against Larry, the prosecution renewed its request to enter the death tape as evidence. After listening to the tape again, Judge Peckham declared he was more convinced than ever that it should be barred from any trial. The U.S. Attorney appealed the ruling.

Almost two years later, the U.S. Court of Appeals reversed Judge Peckham's ruling. Peckham had felt that playing the tape violated the defense's right to cross-examine Jim Jones. The appeals court said the district court judge erred in his reason for excluding the tape. However, the appellate court said, the tape could be excluded for other reasons.

On February 21, 1984, Peckham set the date for Larry's retrial. In April, he again barred the prosecution from using the death tape in the court action set for September 4. In his 19-page decision, the judge said the tape "represent[s] the cognitive meanderings of a crazed mind." Peckham did agree to admit incriminating evidence he had excluded from the first trial, however. A conversation between Jim and Charles Garry implicated Larry in the airstrip shootings.

Then, in August, Judge Peckham reversed himself and decided to allow another tape admitted as evidence. In that tape, Jim declares that Leo Ryan might not leave alive. But the judge remained adamant in his refusal to allow the death tape as evidence. "There's no way the prejudice can be eliminated," he said.

The retrial was postponed indefinitely when the court learned that Larry had to undergo surgery. The prosecution said it may again appeal the decision on the death tape. The trial, and the issues surrounding it, are far from resolution. In the meantime, the Justice Department will not release any more FOIA documents on Jonestown.

For a long time, we looked to Guyana to answer our questions, solve our riddles. And, for a while, that seemed possible. Of all the agencies, U.S. or Guyanese, which investigated Peoples Temple, the Guyana police undertook the task with the most thoroughness. But the magnitude of the situation overwhelmed them. A few days after the deaths, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff shipped five polaroid cameras with film, and five fingerprint kits to the Guyanese police. The police worked with a single medical examiner, assisted by a U.S. pathologist, to examine the 900 bodies at Jonestown and to conduct autopsies on the five killed at the airstrip. The crime scene was miles from anywhere. And politicians pressured

them to get rid of the Jonestown problem in a hurry.

Nevertheless, the police questioned everyone they could find who was involved in Peoples Temple. They held Mike Prokes and Tim and Mike Carter for several days. They charged Larry Layton and Charles Beikman with murder. For weeks, they didn't let anyone leave the country. They went over the evidence and came to their own conclusion: death in Jonestown by suicide.

The Guyana coroner's jury ruled differently following an inquest in Matthews Ridge a month after the deaths. After meeting for six days, the jurors determined on December 22 that all but three individuals died at the hands of Jim Jones and persons unknown. Jim himself, they said, was also murdered. Those who committed suicide: Ann Moore, Maria Katsaris, and Don Sly. The verdict was the



Mending a net at the Matthews Ridge courthouse, May, 1979.

jury's second. It initially returned a verdict of suicide for all 900, but the presiding magistrate shouted that it couldn't have been suicide. Ten minutes later, the jury came back with a declaration of murder.

The jury of four men and one woman heard several theories about what actually happened on November 18. The prosecutor hypothesized that Jim had planned to escape with some money, but an irate Temple member killed him after the massacre. The chief pathologist, Dr. Leslie Mootoo, citing the evidence of injections he discovered on 70 individuals, supported the murder verdict. However, he testified that Ann had been murdered too, because she had a look of surprise on her face. Skip Roberts questioned Mootoo's conclusion about Ann. "Perhaps she was born with a look of surprise," he told us. "We don't know." He theorized that Annie killed Jim, killed the animals, and then killed herself. Roberts, who heard

the death tape and talked to the witnesses, still believes most of the people of Jonestown committed suicide.

Some Guyanese officials may have wanted to uncover the truth about Jonestown, and November 18, but the tragedy created a political crisis for that country. When Deputy Prime Minister Ptolemy Reid refused to answer questions about Jonestown following his initial statement to Parliament, members of the country's opposition parties cried "cover-up". Opponents questioned Prime Minister Forbes Burnham's connection with Jim Jones, and quoted news articles about money and favors the Temple allegedly provided as payoffs to government officials.

Burnham has not wanted anyone to look at Peoples Temple too closely. Public pressure forced him to announce in January 1979 that an independent Commission of Inquiry would study his government's relationship with Jim. The commission consisted of a single person, the acting Chief Justice of Guyana's Supreme Court. That investigation effectively ended in the summer of 1979, when the building which housed all of the nation's records on Peoples Temple burned to the ground.

The public's interest in Jonestown and Peoples Temple died shortly after the story faded from the front pages of the newspapers. All the investigations into the tragedy, in this country and abroad, are closed. Congress cancelled a hearing into State Department handling of Jonestown, and Larry Layton's retrial does not promise any new revelations. No politician will champion a cause as unpopular as Peoples Temple. No one cares anymore, except for the relatives, except for us.

We had to continue. The official answers were uninformative, or evasive. We had to continue.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

MOORE V. FBI

We have many questions concerning U.S. government involvement in, and investigations of, Peoples Temple; we also wonder about ex-members, "defectors", and survivors who somehow escaped the holocaust. In one sense, everyone who is alive is suspect.

--- Letter initiating
private investigation,
February 1980

Washington, D.C. was the obvious place to start looking into Peoples Temple. But we were leaving soon. As our departure date neared in the summer of 1979, we searched for someone to pursue the Peoples Temple story there. We talked with John Hanrahan, a former newspaper reporter who was establishing a private investigation business with a partner. Hanrahan estimated it would cost a minimum of \$20,000 to track down the answers to all our questions. That price tag brought us back to reality. We decided to think about it.

We left Washington in late August and headed for Reno, Nevada, where John and Barbara lived. We would stay there until January.

In October, John filed a Freedom of Information Act request with the FBI for information on Carolyn and Ann. In January 1980, John requested FBI files on himself.

In addition to writing FOIA letters, we talked again about hiring John Hanrahan. Barbara was fearful. "They've already taken two of my daughters," she said. "I don't want the CIA going after you, too." John was concerned about finances and wondered how we would pay for an investigation. Nevertheless, he planned to be in Washington in February 1980, and made an appointment to meet with Hanrahan.

Mac and I drafted a list of major questions we had. The list condensed our questions and concerns down to twenty pages. "The main things we're looking for," we wrote Hanrahan, are:

1. Where the money to finance all anti-Temple activities came from...
2. Any significant interconnections between any people and institutions...
3. Sustained contact with U.S. military or law enforcement agencies, either voluntary (i.e., employment) or involuntary (i.e., prison).
4. Of course, any specific, direct involvement of U.S. government agencies.

We summarized for Hanrahan all the U.S. government involvement we'd uncovered by then. We wrote down the various agencies -- Treasury Department, Federal Communications Commission, IRS, and so on -- and how they were connected to Peoples Temple.

Finally, we explained our interest in Jim Jones. "The big question about Jim is, of course, was he simply a madman, or was he a knowing tool of the CIA/whatever? It might be easier to prove the former."

We had outlined an enormous task. Hanrahan soon found he had to narrow his focus. He decided to concentrate on federal officials in Washington, D.C. Based in Washington, with numerous contacts in and out of government, and with an expertise in getting information out of bureaucracies, Hanrahan suggested that as the best course. We agreed. At his February meeting with Hanrahan, John set a \$5000 limit on the investigation.

Hanrahan began by calling people who were directly involved, and those more tangentially related. It was hard for him at times, since we didn't want him to reveal who his clients were. Some refused to talk with him because of that.

One document we wanted Hanrahan to get was the classified version of the House Foreign Affairs Committee report on Leo Ryan's assassination. Aides for Congressman Bill Royer, Ryan's successor, told him the security around the classified report was tight. They'd read it, they said, but they had to remain in one of the committee rooms under the supervision of a staff investigator. They added that there wasn't anything very significant in the classified version, either. It was a cover-up, they felt, just like the public report. We decided not to tackle that issue.

The more Hanrahan pursued leads, the more convinced he became that we should follow through on all government contacts with Peoples Temple: first with Freedom of Information Act requests; and later, if necessary, with lawsuits. He'd filed requests with more than 20 agencies, and eventually reviewed thousands of documents at the State Department, the FBI, and the Federal Communications Commission.

Hanrahan received one document from a Department of Justice Freedom of Information request that later became part of a lawsuit against the FBI. The department's Office of Legislative Policy sent him a stack of notes indicating Congressional letters to the department regarding Peoples Temple. The letters themselves were exempt from disclosure. A memo from Assistant Attorney General Alan Parker to the Chief Counsel for the FBI's Office of Congressional Affairs was included. The October 20, 1980

note lists three questions the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence asked during its investigation of CIA ties to Peoples Temple.

1. Is there any information in the FBI's files, from any source, on Jim Jones, Jonestown, Peoples Temple or any person significantly connected with any of these three that originated before November 18, 1978?
2. Was any of the information in question #1 passed on to the CIA or the Department of State?
3. What are the FBI's current indexing guidelines? When did they change?

The Parker memo prompted us to begin making a new round of FOI requests. We asked for the answers to the questions he listed. And we made our own requests to the FBI and its San Francisco field office for their pre-November 18, 1978 documents.

The answers came shortly. In response to the House Intelligence Committee query, the FBI reported that a search conducted on November 21, 1978 resulted in only nine references to Peoples Temple. These included an account of the Temple fire in 1973; the suggestion that Jim Jones be considered a suspect in the Patty Hearst kidnapping; a report of a homicide in Ukiah in 1976 which the FBI referred to local authorities; and secret documents which showed "that unnamed members of the Peoples Temple in San Francisco had been in contact with representatives of a foreign government." These documents also described Jim Jones "as a multiracial religious sect pastor ... who allegedly fled to Guyana with church funds."

Our own requests turned up far more than nine references to the Temple in FBI files. In addition to critical newspaper articles dating from 1972, the files included highly negative contacts with the church. One document, notes made on September 23, 1973, recorded the observations of an unknown informant.

This organization, headed by a Reverend JIM JONES, reportedly preaches nuclear holocaust and threatened any of its members who attempt to leave the organization. He advised that the organization is importing blacks from San Francisco for some unknown purpose, and is sending supplies of an unknown character to some country in Africa.

A memo dated October 4, 1972 is headed, REVEREND JAMES W. JONES: PEOPLE'S TEMPLE CHRISTIAN (DISCIPLES) CHURCH... EXTORTION: IS-CUBA. The heavily-deleted document notes that the informant provided a copy of a Temple songbook, and pointed out that one song, "Emancipation", "makes reference to being freed from the profit motive and a 'revolutionary way not planned for some far-off day.'"

Another item from early 1972 gives an account of a visit to a service. "Jones professed a belief in Communism," two informants told the FBI, "and professed a wish to unite with the Red Chinese under MAO Tse tung." The informants "advised that they are members of the VFW and are concerned citizens who thought that this information should be brought to the attention of the proper authorities." The FBI conducted a brief investigation following this report.

The FBI consistently denied any interest in Peoples Temple in response to several letters from Temple members, although it did maintain a file, or files, headed PEOPLES TEMPLE OF THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, JAMES JONES aka JIM JONES. And over one of the many letters of support Temple members wrote FBI Director Clarence Kelley in the fall of 1976, someone wrote "Rev. Jim Jones -- Calif." The FBI knew Peoples Temple well enough to clip an article dated November 8, 1978 which announced Congressman Ryan's planned visit to Jonestown. And the FBI knew about Carolyn Moore Layton.

Seven months after John asked for information on Carolyn and Annie, the FBI released its case file on Carolyn. Most of the documents in her file were innocuous. They included a letter from Dr. Cowan at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology about her autopsy; a letter Carolyn signed June 6, 1977, requesting under the Privacy Act all information the FBI had about her, and a response from Clarence Kelley saying there were no records "identifiable" to her. There was a fourth document, however: a six-page report compiled by the FBI on Carolyn Layton.

Most of the copy we received had been blacked out -- withheld under the national security exemption to the Freedom of Information Act -- but several sentences weren't. For example, the identity of a "Special Clerk making the aforementioned observations will be maintained in San Francisco file 105-45316." The FBI also checked Carolyn's registration with the California Department of Motor Vehicles.

The FBI looked into Peoples Temple as well, and the report on Carolyn included information about the Temple's address, its lawyer Gene Chaikin, and other

Temple members. Our heavily-edited version did not explain the relevance of these names to the FBI's investigation of Carolyn. It did imply, however, that the agency's interest was not limited to her.

Instead, the report we received included the following paragraph:

The People's Temple has been described as a multi-racial religious sect headquartered out of Redwood Valley near Ukiah, California, ministered by one Rev. JIM JONES. The Rev. JIM JONES has been a controversial figure in the San Francisco area for the past several years, and within the last year he has fled to Guyana, South America, allegedly with church funds. It also should be noted that the State of California and the City and County of San Francisco have outstanding actions pending against Rev. JIM JONES.

This was, almost word-for-word, how the FBI described a secret file to the House Intelligence Committee.

We decided to appeal the FBI's deletions. With Peoples Temple dissolved and Carolyn dead, we didn't understand why the FBI wouldn't remove its national security stamp from her file. In his appeal letter of May 29, 1980, John wrote:

I am greatly disturbed by the implication of the denial that my daughter was a threat to the national security. Carolyn had strong, and often unpopular, opinions about social conditions in the United States, but she was neither a terrorist nor a subversive. Neither did she belong to any group which advocated the violent overthrow of the U.S. government. Her main organizational affiliation was with Peoples Temple, a church in the Disciples of Christ denomination. The Temple's work with the poor and underprivileged in our society was controversial, but it was not anti-American.

In any event, no matter what my daughter's views were or what her work with Peoples Temple entailed, she is now dead, and can no longer be considered a subject of scrutiny for reasons of national security.

Quinlan Shea, the Director of the FBI's Office

of Privacy and Information Appeals rejected John's appeal on July 24, 1980. He added, though, that he had referred the material to a review committee to determine if it still warranted classification. The committee would notify us, Shea said, if anything were declassified.

A year later -- almost two years after we wrote our first letter to the FBI -- the Review Committee informed John it would not declassify the material on Carolyn.

In early 1980, we also asked the FBI to release all the information it had on Jonestown and Peoples Temple. John and Barbara had focused their request the previous fall on Jonestown documents which mentioned Carolyn or Ann, thinking that letters they'd written might be included. Our later request aimed at the church's internal papers that might tell part of the history of Peoples Temple in Jonestown.

The FBI responded by sending a "Guyana Index", a ten-page guide to the materials gathered in Jonestown. John Hanrahan, who'd made a request similar to ours, told us much of the material had been released to the public. Rather than paying the copying charges on everything we thought we might want, we traveled to Washington, D.C. in September 1980 to look for ourselves.

The FBI had withheld much of the material because the Justice Department's investigation into Leo Ryan's death was not yet completed. There was still a lot of material to go through. After five days in the FBI's public reading room, we hadn't finished the job. We skimmed through photocopies of testimonials, notes, letters and drug inventories. We read the journal of an older woman who described in detail the day-to-day life of a typical Peoples Temple member. We flipped through hundreds of pages of Temple notes and memos concerning contacts with representatives of the Cuban, North Korean, and Soviet embassies in Georgetown.

And there was more: 900 audio tapes found in the Jonestown community. The task of listening to, cataloging and summarizing 900 tapes -- most of them an hour long -- was monumental. Additionally, radio static, competing voices, and inferior recording equipment marred many. Even on good tapes, speakers did not identify themselves. There was no need to at the time the recordings were made. When a name was mentioned, the FBI had to guess at the spelling. Under those circumstances, mistakes couldn't be avoided.

Yet once the agency had written its summaries, it apparently felt the review was over. We pointed out to the agent playing the tapes for us that the "Mike Trobes"

listed in the summaries was probably Mike Prokes, the Temple's publicist who left Jonestown during the suicides with over a quarter million dollars in a suitcase, and who shot himself to death four months later. The notation of "Mike Trobes" will help no one, if the FBI ever wanted to index the tapes, or review what Temple leaders other than Jim said, or respond to an FOI request for tapes mentioning Mike Prokes. But the agent who guided us through the tapes was not interested in any corrections we were able to make.

Other changes we suggested were more substantive. One summary listed a tape dated July 4, 1978, which featured an unidentified woman with a German accent saying she didn't want to return to the U.S. I said I thought I could identify the woman, and asked to listen to the tape. I was right. It was Lisa Layton speaking. She had died of cancer in Jonestown shortly after the tape was made. As the mother of both Debbie Blakey, a defector who interested Congressman Ryan into going to Guyana, and Larry Layton, who'd been arrested in connection with Ryan's death, it seemed as though she was a fairly important person to the FBI's investigation. She was at least worth identifying. Apparently not, however, for the agent merely jotted down my comment, and shipped the box back to the tape storage room.

Another summary noted an unidentified male talking about ways to uncover the government's conspiracy against Peoples Temple. By that time we'd heard several tapes about the conspiracy, and didn't feel we needed to hear any more. We'd captured the mood and feelings in Jonestown about conspiracies. The tape was running, though, so we continued to listen.

It turned out that the unidentified male had an identity after all. We recognized the voice of Mark Lane as he talked of a plan to sue the U.S. government for its harassment and infiltration of the church. He would uncover the conspiracy, he told his listeners, during the discovery proceedings of the lawsuit. But no one at the FBI was interested in knowing that the "unidentified male" was Mark Lane. We thought it was interesting, however, because Lane denied in his book The Strongest Poison that he ever promised to represent Peoples Temple in such a lawsuit.

The most mysterious of all the tapes we heard was a recording of a Guyana news broadcast which confirmed the assassination of Leo Ryan at the Port Kaituma airstrip, and reported a rumor of mass deaths in Jonestown. That tape, like all the others, was found at the scene of the suicides. We wondered how it got there, who could have made it, and why a survivor -- if it were a sur-

X

vivor -- would have spent time recording a newscast. The agent with us said the FBI had no explanation.

Most of the time, Mac and I kept silent during the agent's running commentary on what we heard. Cooperative and friendly, he let us read the summaries of tapes cleared for release. He also tracked down the few tapes we wanted which hadn't been in their proper places. But he had formed his own impressions of Jonestown, based primarily on the most outrageous tapes, and wanted to be sure we heard them. His Top-Forty included a "White Night"; Jim vowing that Congressman "O'Brien" would not leave Guyana alive; different members' fantasies about killing their relatives, accompanied by Jim's high-pitched laughter; Jim hysterically lecturing the community about the dangers facing those who tried to escape; and Jim drunkenly offering to "fuck" a woman in front of the whole congregation. Other tapes, ones we wanted to hear -- like a business meeting featuring crop and animal production reports -- were "boring", according to the agent. He played them for us, but didn't like the detour from his favorite route.

It wasn't until January 1982 that we thought of asking the FBI for documents it had generated on Peoples Temple before November 18, 1978. This really had been our interest all along: what did the agency know, and what did it do, before the tragedy? It took John Hanrahan's provocative materials from the Office of Legislative Policy to get us going.

At the same time, we began to seek a lawyer to take the documents and deletions on Carolyn to court. It took over a year to find one, but eventually the Washington firm of Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering agreed to take the case pro bono. Todd Buchwald and Karen Meenan were our attorneys, and on May 31, 1983, they filed the complaint launching Moore v. FBI. Judge John H. Pratt of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia was assigned to the case.

We first asked for a Vaughn Index, which would compel the FBI to justify its exemptions. Our lawyers noted that even the dates and subject matter of the documents "as to which the connection to national security is anything but apparent", had been deleted.

The FBI didn't provide the index. Instead, it filed a declaration by a special agent who explained what his exemption codes meant. Another special agent signed a declaration which briefly described how the FBI processes, and classifies, Freedom of Information documents.

We won a partial victory, though. The pages came

back to us with their dates intact: June 23, 1978, August 2, 1978, and September 22, 1978. Two of those dates appeared on other items we obtained from the FBI.

One of the answers to the questions posed by the House Intelligence Committee refers to a secret document from June 1978. This document shares many similarities in wording with one of the pages in Carolyn's file.

A memo dated August 2, 1978 mentions that the subject heading PEOPLES TEMPLE, JAMES JONES aka JIM JONES had been changed to show the correct title. In addition to attaching recent news clippings on the Temple, the memo showed that on July 27, "a former close associate and member of the Temple who broke with Jones, advised [deleted] that he was going to the FBI in San Francisco with the following information." The rest of the memo is blacked out.

Nine months after we filed suit, Judge Pratt ruled that the FBI's "Declarations" could substitute for Vaughn requirements. We would not be allowed the discovery process to question the FBI special agents on the adequacy of their expertise.

We filed a memorandum opposing the FBI's motion for summary judgment in April 1984. Karen and Todd attached an affidavit in which I described the June 1978 reference in the FBI papers. The affidavit noted the similarities in dates, the description of Jim Jones, and the notation that the State of California and the city and county of San Francisco had "outstanding actions" against Jim Jones.

The FBI replied by providing the District Court decision in another FOIA case, Schlesinger v. CIA. In that case, the judge found that public and in camera affidavits submitted by the CIA showed "that proper procedures were followed in reviewing and classifying the documents." Schlesinger unsuccessfully argued that some 180,000 pages of CIA papers detailing U.S. involvement in the 1954 coup in Guatemala had been improperly classified because the U.S. role had become public knowledge.

On July 6, 1984, Judge Pratt issued an order for summary judgment. Because there were only six pages involved in the disputed document, the FBI offered it to the judge for in camera inspection. With a one-page order, Judge Pratt dismissed the case.

Shortly afterwards, we filed a motion for clarification of the order. Todd and Karen argued that they needed to know the court's rationale in order to decide whether to pursue an appeal. They wanted the court to articulate its reasoning on the issues of segregability, law enforcement purpose, intelligence and other informa-

tion already known, and the expertise of the special agent making the classification. A Memorandum Order issued in August 1984 did little to explain the court's decision. Instead it merely incorporated the findings and conclusions set forth in an earlier opinion.

In December 1984, therefore, we took our case to the U.S. Court of Appeals. We based our appeal on several issues. These included the qualifications of the special agent classifying the document about Carolyn; the denial of any discovery proceedings; and the lack of a proper Vaughn index. The appeal is under the court's consideration.

Regardless of the outcome of the case, it seems clear that classifying information about organizations which are defunct and people who are dead is absurd. Unless the FBI has something to hide. Much information about Peoples Temple is already public. The FBI has released pages and pages, for example, of Temple contacts with foreign governments. Several documents reveal that the FBI lied to Temple members. We have no faith that the agency would not lie to us.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

McGEHEE V. CIA

This paragraph [of the Complaint] is denied except that defendant admits that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is an agency of the United States.

-- CIA Answer to
lawsuit filed by
Fielding M. McGehee III

Carolyn and Annie believed that the Central Intelligence Agency wanted to destroy Peoples Temple. Don Freed and Mark Lane fueled that belief by uncovering a "conspirator". In addition, Freed said that an official in the Guyanese Ministry of Justice knew of a CIA agent working in Jonestown. Annie's last letter to me reflects Freed's influence:

Mom and Dad have probably shown you the latest about the conspiracy information that Mark Lane, the famous attorney in the M.L. King case and Don Freed the other famous author in the Kennedy case have come up with regarding activities planned against us -- Peoples Temple.

A few weeks after I received her letter, Annie was dead. Her words about conspiracy still fresh, Mac and I immediately thought of the CIA. It wasn't far-fetched to believe the CIA might have been interested in Peoples Temple. A group of 900 Americans, mostly black, had moved to a socialist country, taking millions of dollars with it. The group espoused socialist ideals. Its leaders talked of emigrating to the Soviet Union, and met with Soviet officials in Guyana.

We decided to get some evidence from the agency itself through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). On December 6, 1978, nineteen days after the suicides, Mac asked the CIA for all documents in its files relating to:

1. The Peoples Temple which was founded in Indianapolis in the 1960's and which had subsequent addresses in Ukiah, Redwood Valley and San Francisco, California, and Jonestown, Guyana;
2. The Agricultural Project, or Peoples Temple Agricultural Project, in Jonestown, Guyana;
3. Jonestown, Guyana;

4. The late Rev. James Jones, minister of Peoples Temple;
5. The late Carolyn Moore Layton, who died in Jonestown on November 18, and who has been described by several newspapers as the co-ordinator of Peoples Temple in Rev. Jones' absence;
6. Information on Peoples Temple "defectors", "hit squads", and "assassination teams".

An FOIA caseworker at the CIA told us it was one of the most thorough requests filed on Peoples Temple.

We made the request under the auspices of the Military Audit Project, the public research organization where Mac worked. We thought the organizational affiliation would give us more credibility and speed along our request. It did neither.

An unbelievable series of delays and deceptions followed. The CIA had already made at least two searches for records on the church, one in August 1977, and one on December 5, 1978 -- the day before Mac wrote his request. Conducted in response to Congressional inquiries, both searches turned up documents. When we talked with CIA employees that December, no one told us of those searches.

Instead, the Information and Privacy officer assigned to our case persuaded Mac to limit his request to Peoples Temple. Mr. Rochester said some categories would duplicate documents in the general Peoples Temple files. Faced with a \$55 computer search on each item, we agreed to narrow the request to one subject: Peoples Temple.

As a result, we did not receive all the relevant documents we initially asked for. This later became an issue in the lawsuit. The date we limited the request, December 22, would also become a critical factor.

Mr. Rochester estimated the request would take three months to process. Mac called him in March 1979 and every three months thereafter to see how our request was progressing. In October 1979, Mr. Rochester gave us an encouraging reply. The agency was examining the records, he told us, and processing our request.

We outlasted Mr. Rochester. A year after Mac wrote his initial letter, he talked to "Frieda". Frieda refused to give him her last name. "It isn't important," she explained. "Everyone here knows who I am." She said she wasn't an FOIA caseworker, but wouldn't say what she was. We concluded her name was an acronym for Freedom of Information Act, and that she was assigned to handle troublemakers like us.

Frieda's mystique grew when she reported that nothing had been done on our request. She added that Mr. Rochester had left a note in our file saying we'd been informed of that in our last call. When Mac asked when we could expect the agency to act, Frieda refused to speculate. More than 550 requests stood ahead of ours, waiting to be processed first. Although Mac pressed her -- "1981? 1982? 1984?" -- she declined to say anything.

Mac asked her to transfer his call to someone in authority with a surname who might be able to answer some questions. He talked with the Acting Information and Privacy Coordinator, Charles Savage. Mac asked if anyone had ever sued the CIA on the issue of excessive delays, hoping the threat of litigation might stir the agency into action. It didn't work. Savage said 20 such suits had been filed in 1979, and 17 others were filed in the first two months of 1980. Savage casually added that Mac could sue that minute, since the CIA had, in effect, denied his request by exceeding the 10-day statutory time limit. Without elaborating, Savage said some litigants were able to convince the courts that their requests should be expedited. Others weren't.

Savage could afford to be smug. The CIA still had the case of Open America v. Watergate Special Prosecution Force to excuse its delays in handling FOIA requests.

One of the 1974 amendments to the Freedom of Information Act required federal offices to answer requests within ten working days of receipt. The agencies were also to decide administrative appeals of initial denials within twenty working days. Congress added a qualification, however, by allowing agencies to exceed the time limits if "unusual circumstances" caused unavoidable delay.

The amendment plugged a loophole in the original law. The 1966 Act contained no statutory timetable whatsoever. As a result, agencies could -- and did -- ignore FOI requests until the information sought lost its value.

The first significant attempt to enforce the new time limits failed. A public interest group seeking access to files compiled by the Watergate special prosecutor's office in the Justice Department learned that Justice had a backlog of over 5000 requests. Having received no response from the department within ten days, Open America filed an administrative appeal. Twenty days later, the group sued the Justice Department in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

In October 1976, eighteen months after the amendment went into effect, the court decided that the sheer number of requests pending before an agency could represent the "unusual circumstances" anticipated by Congress

when it adopted the extenuating language.

The CIA guaranteed that it would always have a backlog by keeping the number of employees working on FOI requests to a minimum. That gave the agency a reason for its lengthy delays. In 1978, for example, the year Mac made his request, the agency acted upon 1254 others, a number which fell noticeably short of the 1608 it received. And there was already a substantial backlog of 762 cases when the year began. The result: the agency ended 1978 with 1116 unanswered requests. The magnitude of the CIA's backlog persists to this day, and the intent of the 1974 amendment remains unfulfilled.

In a 1982 report to Congress, CIA Deputy Director for Administration Harry E. Fitzwater admitted that the CIA rarely meets the ten-day statutory limit. "In almost all instances, " he wrote, "the deadline for responding to requests and appeals expired prior to our actually working on them." But Fitzwater failed to note the irony of blaming delays on litigants when he observed that:

Some requestors, understandably impatient over the lack of response, file administrative appeals or go into early litigation, thereby further slowing the process as we move resources to meet the priority demands of litigation.

As a result of his conversation with Savige, Mac decided to make a few more requests. He asked for all the information the CIA had already released on Peoples Temple. Savige assured him the agency hadn't given out anything, not even a press release after the suicides. He added that the policy of the FOI office was to pool all requests on the same subject, and to answer all of them at the same time, regardless of the date the office received them. We wanted to get that policy in writing, and to make sure our request was travelling with the others on the Temple.

The CIA answered the second request quickly. "To date," Savige wrote on March 20, 1980, "no information has been released by this Agency concerning the Peoples Temple." This was somewhat misleading. The CIA had in fact located documents in response to the two Congressional inquiries, but had not released them.

That summer we began to consider suing the CIA. The second anniversary of Jonestown, and of our FOIA request, would pass in a few months. During those two years we had learned a number of things which strengthened our conviction that the CIA had some involvement in Peoples Temple. We didn't know the extent of the involve-

ment, but we believed that it existed. The recent history of Guyana proves that.

In 1953, while still a British colony, Guyana held its first elections based on popular vote. Cheddi Jagan, an Indo-Guyanese dentist, and the People's Progressive Party (PPP) won in a landslide. But the PPP was Marxist, and an independent Marxist or communist government in Guyana was intolerable to British and American interests. The British ousted Jagan and suspended the constitution.

The movement for independence soon split along personal and ideological lines. Linden Forbes Burnham, a former Jagan ally, took a faction of the PPP and formed a new party, the People's National Congress (PNC).

Jagan continued to win the popular elections in 1957 and 1961. But turbulent strikes and demonstrations marred the stability of his government in the early 1960s. In 1964, columnist Drew Pearson wrote that the CIA and British security forces had fomented the violence. An account by P. I. Gomes, author of a chapter on Guyana in New Mission for a New People: Voices from the Caribbean, said:

The conservative-led TUC [Trade Union Congress] engaged in an 80-day strike against the Jagan government, and their strike costs of over \$1,000,000 were paid by the C.I.A. through the Guyana representative of Public Service International, with the connivance of the British Prime Minister, Colonial Secretary and head of security of the British government.

The CIA also used an American trade union to provoke confrontations between Afro- and Indo-Guyanese as well as labor unrest. Two CIA operatives ran the International Division of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), funneling money and assistance to Jagan's opponents in the labor movement. According to a 1967 New York Times article:

The agents gave advice to local union leaders on how to organize and sustain the strikes. They also provided funds and food supplies to keep the strikes going and medical supplies for pro-Burnham workers injured during the turmoil.

At one point, one of the agents even served as a member of a bargaining commit-

tee from a Guiana dike workers union that was negotiating with Dr. Jagan.

In 1964, newly-elected AFSCME President Jerry Wurf disbanded the International Division and cut all ties with the CIA. The severance came too late, though. The strikes had left 200 Guyanese dead and hundreds more injured. And Forbes Burnham had a vehicle to bring him to power.

Frustrated with an electorate that continually chose Jagan over Burnham, the British government changed the voting system to ensure Burnham's success. In the 1964 election, Jagan and his party captured 46% of the total number of votes. But under the rigged scheme, the PPP picked up only 8.6% of the "proxy" votes required by the British. Burnham finally won an election in Guyana.

Britain gave Guyana its independence two years later.

Unwilling to risk defeat in the 1968 election, the CIA provided the Burnham government with a new voter registration program. The Shoup Registration System International, a CIA-front organization, made up the registration lists. According to Covert Action Information Bulletin, a publication devoted to exposing CIA interference in foreign countries, the lists "were heavily padded by including horses, deceased citizens and hanged criminals." Shoup also co-ordinated the 1966 voter registration drive in Viet Nam. The Pennsylvania-based company has since disappeared.

Burnham won the election, but his party did not have the two-thirds parliamentary majority required by Guyana's constitution. To make sure he wouldn't fail in the 1973 election, the Guyana Defense Force seized the ballot boxes and held them for twenty-four hours. Burnham got his majority, and it gave him the strength to declare the "paramountcy" of the People's National Congress -- the ruling party -- over all agencies of the government.

To avoid embarrassing problems in the future, the PNC, and Burnham, passed the Referendum Act in the summer of 1978. The Act proposed a national mandate for a new constitution which, among other things, would create an "executive presidency". In effect, Burnham could become president for life.

Widespread opposition led to a boycott of the election, and independent observers reported a twelve to fourteen per cent turnout. Burnham, however, claimed that 75% of the electorate gave him a victory. That election postponed future elections for fifteen months while the Guyanese parliament rewrote the constitution.



City street in Georgetown, Guyana, 1979.

Burnham delayed elections again in October 1979, since effective opposition was growing. The People's Progressive Party and the Working People's Alliance (WPA), a new party, shared the support of eighty per cent of the Guyanese. Popular dissatisfaction with Burnham made the prime minister escalate the violence begun in the 1960s by the CIA. Political assassinations started.

As early as 1973, gunmen shot and wounded a University of Guyana biologist who was active in the WPA in its infancy. Police traced the getaway car to Hamilton Green, the Health, Housing and Labor Minister. Green also happened to be Burnham's cousin. There were no arrests.

The successful assassination attempts came in 1979 and 1980, after Jonestown. They included the fatal stabbing of Catholic Standard reporter Father Bernard Darke in full view of the police; the shooting death of Minister of Education Vincent Teekah; the murder of two WPA activists within days of each other; the firing and disappearance of Security Chief James Mentore; and the assassination of WPA activist and Marxist historian Walter Rodney in a bomb blast.

The death of Rodney climaxed a year of civil unrest and protest over the growing repression of the Burnham government. The July 1979 anniversary of the rigged election on the referendum triggered mass protests and demonstrations. After one rally, Burnham's party headquarters were burned; the country's records on Jonestown burned with it. Witnesses claimed that men in Guyana Defense Force uniforms set the fire.

Burnham blamed the opposition, and arrested eight leaders in the Working People's Alliance. Police

charged three with arson: two lecturers from the University of Guyana and Dr. Rodney, a former lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. Rodney had been asked to teach at the University of Guyana in 1978. When the Pan-Africanist returned to Guyana, however, his position at the university vanished.

The arrests, followed by Father Darke's stabbing at a protest demonstration, precipitated a major strike among bauxite workers -- those Afro-Guyanese who had been Burnham's primary supporters. Clerical workers, the National Association of Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Employees, and the Staff Association of the University of Guyana joined the bauxite workers. One-quarter of the nation's 80,000 workers went on strike.

Aside from demanding that the government honor its promise for increased wages, the workers requested that the United Nations send observers to monitor the elections scheduled for October. Strikers accused the prime minister of corruption, mismanagement and dictatorship, according to an article in The New York Times. The prime minister responded by sending his goon squad, the House of Israel, to break up the strike. He postponed the elections as well.

The trial of Rodney and the others on arson charges did not begin until almost a year after their arrest. Lincoln van Sluytman, a member of the WPA's support committee in New York, described the opening of the trial this way:

The worldwide publicity surrounding the case led a group of international observers to attend the trial proceedings which began June 2, 1980. As a result, Burnham's chances of quietly locking away his enemies seemed very slim.

The enemy had to be silenced.

On June 13, as Walter Rodney sat in a parked car with his brother Donald, a bomb concealed in a walkie-talkie exploded in Walter's lap, killing him instantly. Although injured, Donald escaped and hid with friends. He explained that his brother was supposed to test the walkie-talkie from inside the Georgetown prison. On instructions from Timothy Smith, a GDF electronics expert, Walter Rodney was to look for a signal light on the radio before trying to speak. The government's first description of Rodney's death followed this preplanned script for the assassination. "Official accounts first said that a man had been killed outside the walls of the Georgetown Jail," reported Covert Action,

when a bomb he was carrying to blast the prison detonated. The government claimed that the corpse was not immediately recognizable because the face had been blasted away.

But Rodney died a block away, in his car. And, unfortunately for the government, he was recognizable. Additionally,

further evidence of the government lie comes from witnesses at a Georgetown cocktail party who recall that [GDF] Chief of Staff [Norman] McClean excused himself at 8:45 p.m. on the 13th -- within minutes after it happened -- to meet with Burnham and others, saying Walter Rodney had been killed in an explosion. This was despite official allegations that it was not known until much later who had been killed.

Coincidentally, McClean and Health and Labor Minister Green traveled to Washington, D.C. twice during May, the month before Rodney's death. McClean allegedly confided that their purpose was to acquire "electronics communications equipment". Sgt. Timothy Smith disappeared.

That December, Burnham finally held the election he had postponed for two years. An international team of observers went to Guyana to monitor the process, and came away charging the police with harassment. Eric Avebury, chairman of the United Kingdom Parliamentary Human Rights Group, claimed police confiscated his notes, tapes, camera and film, detaining him twice. Other irregularities included a day's delay in the vote counting.

On December 17, 1980, the PNC declared itself victorious. The party's success at the polls was "fraudulent in every possible respect," said Avebury. Forbes Burnham, newly-made Executive President with enormous police and veto powers under the new constitution, got five more years.

Things have deteriorated still further since then. The Nation reported in 1983 that:

Members of opposition groups are frequently detained, and the once-independent judiciary is now firmly under Burnham's thumb. A parliamentary delegation from Canada recently described the human rights situation in Guyana as "repugnant". The delegation found that citizens were being tortured and reported the existence of death squads.

The House of Israel, another group of Americans based in Guyana, does the dirty work for Burnham and the People's National Congress. Led by an American criminal who jumped bail and ended up in Guyana, the House of Israel operates as a paramilitary organization. The "cultists" -- mostly unmarried young men between the ages of 16 and 25 -- wear the colors of the PNC as they break up strikes, harass demonstrators, and in some cases, assassinate Burnham's opponents.

It is a mystery how David Hill, a convict wanted by the FBI, made it to Guyana in the first place. Still more mysterious is why he was never extradited. In any event, the press has established that House of Israel thugs stabbed Father Darke to death and beat up other protestors at the same demonstration; that their headquarters also serves as a bomb factory, which the country's insurance director refused to insure; that they have supplied manpower as strike breakers; and that they terrorize the families of strikers in their homes.

Certainly the role Jim Jones played in the Burnham regime was curious. The Peoples Temple hierarchy maintained frequent, and even intimate, contact with government officials, discussing problems like the Stoen custody case, visits from unfriendly relatives, and, of course, Leo Ryan's trip. One Temple member was the mistress to Guyana's ambassador to the United States, Laurence Mann. Many Guyanese citizens we talked with felt that something was going on between officials in the Burnham government and the church. A reporter told us, "The whole story of the relationship won't come out until Burnham's out."

Some have claimed that Jim worked for the CIA. We received an anonymous letter, postmarked Oakland, California, which charged that:

[Jones] said he was working for the government -- the CIA people, who were using the Peoples Temple members as guinea pigs in a mind control experiment. That if this worked, it would later be used elsewhere on a massive scale after the terrible depression came, on those who would not do what the government ordered them to do.

Several newspapers reported that Jim told a Swedish journalist, "All my thoughts are coming from the CIA."

We found no evidence to support the assertion that Jim Jones worked for the Central Intelligence Agency. We

did learn of some interesting coincidences, however. For example, when Jim lived in Brazil, "his neighbours believed he was a secret agent," according to an article in the Guyana Chronicle. The story, based on an article in a Brazilian daily,

quoted neighbours as saying that Jones never carried out any religious activities while in the city and added that his behaviour was strange and mysterious.

One of them added: 'He always said he had come to Brazil to rest, but he left his house each morning holding a leather brief case and only returned in the evening.'

Another intriguing coincidence was the CIA's investigation of Jim. On June 26, 1960, the State Department issued a passport to Jim and Marceline. Their application noted plans for a seventeen-day trip to Poland, Finland, the USSR and England. Although they didn't go to Europe and the Soviet Union, a trip to Cuba undoubtedly prompted the State Department to forward their passport information to the FBI, the CIA, and the House Committee on Un-American Activities. That same month, September, someone in the CIA's Office of Security "expressed interest" in Jim. A document written following the suicides and released -- with many deletions -- under the Freedom of Information Act, describes the "interest":

A check on the name James Warren Jones shows that in September 1960 [name deleted by CIA] requested a name check from the Office of Security [deletion] expressed interest [deletion]. A check [deletion] showed that the case was marked closed and that no interview apparently ever took place. Phone calls [deletion] on 5 Dec 1978 failed to turn up any evidence that Jones was ever contacted.

On November 29, 1960, the CIA concluded that "our completed security checks on this person have disclosed no pertinent derogatory information."

Six months after the suicides, Cuban-born American Carlos A. Foster described Jim's 1960 visit to Cuba in an interview with The New York Times. Foster claimed, "Mr. Jones had told him he had gone to Cuba because he believed many Cubans were eager to escape the austerity and economic chaos that followed Fidel Castro's overthrow of Fulgencio Bautista on January 1, 1959, and that

they might readily accept an offer to live in a commune in the United States." The Times continued Foster's story:

After working with Mr. Jones in Cuba, Mr. Foster, who is black, says he lived as a virtual prisoner in Mr. Jones' home in Indianapolis for two months. Mr. Jones told him his white middle-class neighbors were not accustomed to seeing black people, he reports, and that if the Cuban left the house alone, he would be lynched.

Ironically, almost twenty years later, black Temple members would discuss their interest in moving to Cuba with representatives of the Cuban Embassy in Guyana.

The United States' interest in Burnham is equally curious. Why does the U.S. want to keep him in power, if his government is as socialistic as he claims? After all, the government controlled 80% of the nation's economy by 1976, making Guyana the most socialized nation in the Western Hemisphere outside of Cuba. Control of industry came by nationalizing foreign-owned bauxite, rice and sugar companies. These included American companies, like Reynolds Metals.

Political and commercial partnerships between the United States and Guyana deteriorated markedly during the 1970s. And when Guyana seemed to "tilt" favorably towards Cuba, the U.S. government cut foreign aid to almost nothing. Meeting with Guyanese officials in August 1977, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, said the total contribution from the U.S. to Guyana that year was \$1.5 million.

Relations between the two countries hit bottom in 1976 when Burnham blamed the American government for the sabotage of a Cuban airliner. Cuban exiles were suspected of planting a bomb which killed 73 persons. Eleven of the dead were Guyanese. The Prime Minister raised questions about the involvement of Joseph Leo, legal attache in the U.S. Embassy in Caracas, Venezuela. The State Department later admitted that Leo had helped one of the bombing suspects get a U.S. visa.

The two nations overcame their differences, however, during the critical years of Jonestown's development, 1977 and 1978. According to figures appearing in the October 15, 1980 issue of The Guardian, U.S. aid to Guyana jumped from \$2 million in 1976 to \$24.7 million in 1978. This about-face also coincided with the failure of Burnham's four-year development plan "to feed, clothe,

and house the nation by 1976." Domestic food production had fallen drastically by the end of the four-year period. Sugar production barely met pre-1970 levels.

International lending institutions followed the lead set by the United States. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) loaned \$81 million to Guyana in 1979 as the country balanced on the edge of bankruptcy. The following year, IMF loaned another \$133 million over a three-year period. The fund required "austerity" measures as conditions of both these loans. Guyana had to reduce public sector jobs, and raise prices. As a result, the Guyanese have had to endure cuts in electricity and transportation; cuts in social security benefits; and, since government subsidies were withdrawn, increases in the prices of necessities like milk, rice and flour. They got little in return, since 1979 debt payments for nationalized industries gobbled up 58 per cent of the country's revenues. That same year, when President Jimmy Carter and Prime Minister Forbes Burnham signed an agreement in which the U.S. promised to provide economic and technical assistance to Guyana, a third of the country's labor force was unemployed. The national minimum wage, adopted in 1978, was abandoned.

Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s and 1980s, the U.S. State Department responded to developments in Guyana by sending some unusual diplomats to the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown. Richard Dwyer, the Deputy Chief of Mission wounded at the Port Kaituma airstrip, was identified as a CIA employee since 1959 in the 1968 edition of Who's Who in the CIA. He moved on to Grenada after Guyana. Robert Ode, the retired Foreign Service Officer assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown shortly after the suicides, turned up in another trouble spot less than a year later. He was one of the hostages seized by Iranian militants at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. Richard Welch, the CIA Chief of Station who was assassinated in Athens in 1977, worked with the CIA mission in Guyana in 1966. And in 1983, the U.S. Ambassador to Guyana, Gerald E. Thomas, was described as "the candidate of the right [wing]" for the ambassadorship in El Salvador. He failed to be selected.

One Foreign Service Officer with a documented intelligence background was Richard McCoy, consul for the Embassy in Georgetown. McCoy makes no secret of his role in a U.S. Air Force counter-intelligence team.

It was U.S. Ambassador to Guyana John Burke who aroused our interest the most. While trying to reach Ambassador Burke, John Hanrahan learned he worked with an agency called "National Collection". According to

the phone company, the agency's number had a CIA prefix. Hanrahan then called the CIA's general switchboard and asked for John Burke. "He is at 351-5381," the switchboard operator said. "Do you wish to be connected?"

Nevertheless, Burke insisted his job was not with the CIA. Rather, he said, he'd been "detailed to the Intelligence Community Staff of the Directorate of Central Intelligence," a group of representatives from a number of agencies. Burke said he couldn't comment about any possible CIA foreknowledge of the suicides. "As far as the Embassy in Georgetown is concerned when I was down there," he added, "there were no CIA operations that I was aware of."

If anyone in Georgetown were likely to know of CIA action in Guyana, Burke would. A former librarian and lieutenant commander in the Navy, he joined the State Department in 1956. His career skyrocketed. During the 1960s, when his assignments focused on Viet Nam, he received five promotions. In 1963, he worked as Assistant Saigon Deputy Chief of Political Section; in 1967, he became Director of the Viet Nam Working Group back in the United States.

Burke transferred his interest from the Far East to the Caribbean in the 1970s. In May 1970, less than a month after Haitian dictator Francois Duvalier weathered a brief revolt, Burke went to Port-au-Prince as Deputy Chief of Mission in the Consular Section of the American Embassy. Blaming the rebellion on "a communist conspiracy", Duvalier asked the U.S. to lift a ban on arms sales to his country imposed by President Kennedy. The Nixon Administration okayed this, and the State Department immediately authorized one million dollars worth of private weapons sales. The U.S. government also increased economic assistance to Haiti beginning the next year.

In 1972, Burke returned to East Asia, becoming the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand. At the time, Cambodian refugees were pouring across Thai borders, victims of America's attack in 1970, and later, of the Khmer Rouge purge.

John Burke's career thrived on American interventionism. His presence in Saigon in the early 1960s; his leadership of the Viet Nam Working Group in the second half of the decade; his transfer to Haiti when arms sales to that country resumed; his timely appointment to Guyana a year before the Jonestown suicides; and his current work with the Intelligence Community Staff of the CIA, all indicate involvement with our country's efforts to manipulate the rise and fall of foreign governments.

U.S. embassies around the world house CIA opera-

tives, since embassy positions like "political officer" or, as in Burke's case, "Deputy Chief of Political Section" serve as perfect and convenient cover. An executive order allows agents to work under embassy cover, according to John Marks, co-author of The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence. One-fourth of all State Department "employees" who work abroad are CIA agents, he says. In a 1974 article titled "How to Spot a Spook", Marks wrote: "In places such as Argentina, Bolivia, Burma and Guyana, where the agency has special interests and projects, there are about as many CIA operatives under cover of substantive embassy jobs as there are legitimate State employees."

John Hanrahan's discoveries about Ambassador Burke, his research into other officials working for the American Embassy in Guyana during the years Jonestown flourished, coupled with his conversations with State Department employees and Congressional staff members, made him conclude in July 1980 that "all paths seem to lead to the CIA." Others came to that conclusion more rapidly.

Within days of the mass suicides, rumors circulated about CIA participation in the tragedy. With little more than vague suspicions and unusual coincidences to go on, leftist writers and publications belittled the CIA's immediate denial and began promoting their own theories.

"What kind of covert program has the U.S. been carrying out in Guyana?" Dierdre Griswold asked in the Worker's World. "And what possible relationship might they have had with this fantastic event?" The Black Panther Party answered the questions a week later. "We charge genocide," headlined the editorial in the December 2, 1978 issue of the party's biweekly newspaper. The editors listed salient coincidences in the death of Peoples Temple: the discrepancies in the body count during the first week; the physical appearance of the bodies; and the similarity of drugs found in Jonestown with those used in the CIA MK-ULTRA mind control experiments.

The Black Panther newspaper also reported that Dr. Laurence Layton -- father of Larry Layton -- had directed the Army's chemical warfare project at the Dugway Proving Ground in Utah. In the early 1950s, the paper added, Dr. Layton helped develop nerve gas.

The Chicago Defender then charged that one Temple member, Phil Blakey, had served as a mercenary and mercenary-recruiter for the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the CIA-sponsored force in Angola. Blakey allegedly worked in the African country in 1975

and remained in touch with people in the mercenary world.

When Leo Ryan's aide picked up publicity on the CIA-Jonestown connection, the rumors suddenly gained respectability. Although most of Joe Holsinger's allegations came straight from the pages of The Black Panther, the aide had a few new ones, too.

Holsinger asserted that U.S. Embassy officials Richard Dwyer and Richard McCoy, Temple member Tim Carter, and Guy Spence, one of the pilots at the Port Kaituma airstrip, were agents or informants for the CIA. He also believed that the CIA set up Ryan's assassination because the California Democrat co-sponsored the Hughes-Ryan Amendment -- the law which requires prior Congressional approval of all CIA covert operations.

Holsinger claimed in testimony before a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee that the CIA had conducted a covert operation in Guyana, and that Jonestown was part of it. Holsinger's allegations included:

- (a) The contention that the CIA conducted a varied range of 'activities' in Guyana;
- (b) The contention that a CIA agent witnessed Representative Ryan's assassination;
- (c) The contention that the CIA may have violated the Hughes-Ryan Act by failing to report a covert operation in Guyana;
- (d) The contention that the CIA made a conscious decision to allow the tragic events of November 18, 1978 to occur in order to avoid disclosure of CIA covert activities in Guyana;
- (e) The contention that this alleged reporting failure was conscious and calculated because Representative Ryan was a co-author of the Hughes-Ryan Act; and
- (f) The contention that the CIA was used to promote and protect American commercial interests in Guyana.

The aide's accusations led to a second investigation into Jonestown, following the May 1979 Foreign Affairs Committee report on Ryan's death. The first investigation had found "no conclusive evidence" of CIA involvement. But a Congressional staff member told John Hanrahan that "the CIA pulled a fast one." He explained that the committee had been "restrained" in its initial study. Hence, the enigmatic sentence was "crafted with excruciating care."

In 1980, the Foreign Affairs Committee staff for-

warded Holsinger's contentions to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. On the second anniversary of the Jonestown suicides, the committee said there was "no evidence at all" of CIA involvement. The agency had no connections with Jim Jones, nor foreknowledge of the suicides. The committee did not make a report to the Foreign Affairs Committee nor to the public. Instead, it announced its findings in a two-page letter. As far as the Intelligence Committee was concerned, the case was closed.

What kind of study was it? For one thing, committee staff merely retraced the steps of earlier investigators. They reviewed the material the CIA provided the Foreign Affairs Committee, according to CIA notes. For another, the committee failed to interview the man who started the CIA rumor, presidential aide Les Francis.

Joe Holsinger claimed that Francis told him the night of November 18 that, "We have a CIA report from the scene." Francis now denies mentioning the CIA. "I think I told him there was an intelligence report that the Congressman had been killed," he explained to John Hanrahan. He then added that he might have said "we have intelligence", using "intelligence" as a synonym for "information". He did note that the State Department, not the CIA, was the agency providing him with news that confusing and chaotic evening.

Evidence indicates that Holsinger is probably right, and Francis, cautious. The CIA did indeed provide the earliest reports of the deaths. The "After Action Report: 18 - 27 November 1978" by the Defense Department includes the following chronology of events:

TIME (EST*)	EVENT
Saturday, 18 November 1918 [7:18 p.m.]	SecDef [Secretary of Defense] alerted NMCC [National Military Command Center] of shooting incident in Guyana involving Congressman Ryan...
Sunday, 19 November 0329 [3:29 a.m.]	CIA NOIWON [National Operations Intelligence Watch Officers Network] reports mass suicides at Jonestown.

* Eastern Standard Time

Not only did the CIA first notify the Defense Department of the mass deaths, it may have known the

poisons involved. A Defense Department cable notes that a medical evacuation team leaving Charleston Air Force Base "should include personnel to treat poison victims with necessary poison antidote."

We'd waited almost two years for the CIA to act on our Freedom of Information request when Mac asked John Hanrahan if he thought we should sue over the delay. "I was thinking of suggesting that you spend your money on that, rather than pouring more into the investigation," he replied. With Congress considering a new charter for the agency which would completely exempt it from FOIA requirements, a suit seemed even more urgent. Several proposals placed our own request in jeopardy. We felt we had a fairly good legal case on the delays. Combining our concerns with another fruitless conversation with "Frieda", helped us decide. We would sue the Central Intelligence Agency.

Our experience with the agency coincided with the interests of an attorney at Public Citizen's Freedom of Information Clearinghouse. Katherine Meyer testified before a Senate committee earlier in 1980 on excessive delays in agency compliance with the FOIA. In the fall of that year, the Clearinghouse decided to take our case. Kathy would be our advocate. She began by appealing the CIA's de jure denial of the 22-month-old request.

The CIA gave her the same answers it had given us. The new Information and Privacy Coordinator, John Bacon, wrote: "We are still unable to give you a precise completion date for the initial request relating to documents on Peoples Temple." We could seek judicial review of his decision, he added, if we didn't like it.

On November 21, 1980, Kathy filed our suit against the CIA, asking the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. to order the agency to process the request and to provide us with the information we wanted. We drew Judge Oliver Gasch, who was generally unsympathetic to any case challenging national security claims. Kathy was dismayed. "I expect to end up in the Court of Appeals on this one," she told us.

On January 19, 1981, the CIA provided what Kathy called "the stock government Answer for an FOIA case: deny everything." We couldn't believe the CIA was serious, though. A frequent refrain was:

No response to this paragraph is ... required. To such extent, however, as response may be deemed necessary, it is denied.

A more humorous one was:

This paragraph is denied except that defendant admits that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is an agency of the United States.

And, to cover all its bases:

Any allegations not herein before specifically admitted are denied.

The agency's first substantive reply came shortly before a court hearing in the spring of 1981. U.S. attorneys admitted the agency had located documents relating to our request. After further negotiations, the government lawyers agreed the CIA would process our request within 60 days, release the documents we could have, and provide a detailed index to the ones we couldn't.

Judge Gasch formalized the agreement with a court order directing the CIA to come up with the papers by May 5, 1981. Gasch had allowed the agency to claim special treatment in the past. This time, however, he told CIA attorneys he didn't see why they couldn't turn over some of the documents before the next court date. It was a minor victory.

We realized how minor it was, once we received the CIA's records on Peoples Temple. Of the 84 documents it identified, the CIA withheld 26 entirely; released 18 with substantial deletions; and released 12 in full. The remaining 28 documents came from other agencies -- the State Department and the FBI -- which the CIA claimed prevented their release to us.

Some of the material the CIA released had only a single paragraph, or a few lines left after everything else had been blacked out. Document No. 43, for example, was an Intelligence Information Cable dated November 27, 1978. The first page read:

COUNTRY: Guyana
SUBJECT: (deleted)
SOURCE: (deleted)

Page two was slightly more informative:

3. The Jonestown incident, wherein 914 people died in a mass murder/suicide, has caused such a furor that many Guyanese have temporarily forgotten about their economic plight.

The third page was completely blacked out.

We learned several things from the exemptions themselves, though. First, the CIA did have agents working in Guyana in 1978. Document No. 12, for example, "consists of three paragraphs containing information which identifies at least two sources providing this intelligence." In this instance, and throughout the documents, the CIA used the FOIA's national security exemptions, because "release of this information would identify the particular intelligence methods and sources used and enable hostile entities to take measures to counter or neutralize them."

Second, it's likely that the CIA had at least one, and possibly two bases of operation in Guyana. The agency repeatedly deleted material "which identifies the location of a CIA field installation."

Finally, the CIA frequently denied us files because of the "jigsaw theory". If the CIA thinks disclosure might provide a piece missing from a larger intelligence puzzle, it will withhold a document. So the CIA frequently told us that, "This information includes such specific detail that its release would make the identity of the source evident to a participant to the described events or enable a knowledgeable reader to discern or deduce the identity of the source."

We were surprised by how few files the CIA had. One item in particular made us think we didn't have everything. We found a reference to a 1960 file under the heading, "The Rev. Jimmie Jones". In response to an August 1977 request for information on Peoples Temple from a Congressional staff member, the CIA said it had no identifiable records relating to "espionage, international terrorism, or drugs." Its search did turn up a file on Jim Jones, but the staff member didn't get it. He hadn't asked specifically for information on "Rev. Jimmie Jones".

A few months later, the CIA admitted it had excluded information on Jonestown, Jim Jones, and the assassination of Leo Ryan when it responded to Judge Gasch's order to provide documents on Peoples Temple. The admission didn't come in a conversation with Kathy, nor did it appear in the court record. It came in a letter John Bacon, the CIA's Information and Privacy Coordinator, wrote to the federal public defender preparing for Larry Layton's trial in San Francisco. We learned about it when the public defender sent us a copy of the letter.

We didn't get any of those documents, even though that was precisely what Mac asked for in his initial re-

quest. After all, he had agreed to drop those categories and confine the agency's search to records on Peoples Temple. Nevertheless, Kathy felt the reference to the Jimmie Jones file might be a wedge to force the CIA to conduct a more thorough search for additional records and to release more material.

The wedge took shape as an affidavit in which Mac described the delays and frustrations we'd experienced. He gave six reasons for believing the CIA had more information on Peoples Temple, including:

The CIA knew [the Jimmie Jones file] existed on December 5, 1978... which was before I filed my Freedom of Information request. This leads me to believe that all statements by the CIA in response to my request ... were misleading...

The CIA has conceded ... that it has not searched all of its files which may contain ... documents.

The agency's delays, its contradictory statements, and the attitude of its FOI personnel led Mac to conclude in his affidavit that the CIA "has acted in bad faith in processing my FOIA request [and] that it has been begrudging in every respect with regard to searching for and identifying responsive documents." Kathy filed the affidavit on July 10, 1981, shortly after the CIA asked Judge Gasch to throw out the suit.

Bacon's letter to the public defender in San Francisco revealed something else much more serious, though: a new policy on processing requests. The CIA neglected to inform the court, or us. We learned of it by accident.

The CIA did not begin to work on our request until the spring of 1981. At that time, it narrowed its search to documents it had located by December 22, 1978, the date Mac agreed to limit his request.

When the CIA admitted using December 22, 1978 as a cut-off date at a hearing in October 1981, even Judge Gasch had to question the agency. How could it wait two years, he wondered, and then, when ordered by the court to process the request, include only those documents it uncovered two years earlier?

In response to a court-ordered explanation, Bacon filed a rambling 22-page affidavit which revealed that Mac's FOI request had been paired with another, made November 21, 1978. Bacon, and the CIA, asserted that any system which did not establish an early cut-off date

"would make a shambles of the CIA's already heavily backlogged system." Yet Bacon made the very point we were arguing.

I should note that the 22 December date in fact resulted in a benefit to plaintiff -- namely, inclusion of documents originated between 6 December and 22 December.

The CIA tried to evade us in still another way. Throughout the summer and fall of 1981, the agency repeatedly claimed that the State Department and FBI documents located in its own files could not be released. They were not "agency records" in the legal sense. A memorandum filed at the time of the Bacon affidavit reiterated the agency's position that it lacked "control" over these papers.

Meanwhile, the two agencies gave us their decisions on the documents directly. The FBI, the source of one item, said it couldn't release the information because of "criminal proceedings". We assumed it meant the Larry Layton prosecution. The State Department, which generated the other 27 records, released most of its materials to us.

Knowing of the agencies' response and accepting the Bacon affidavit on the cut-off date issue, Judge Gasch granted the CIA's motion for summary judgment in January 1982. At the same time, he denied our request for an in camera inspection of the documents to determine if the CIA improperly withheld some. The case was closed in U.S. District Court.

A week later, we filed a notice of appeal in the U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit. And we began all over again, as though three years hadn't elapsed. Mac filed a new FOI request, asking for everything he'd listed in his first request, and adding six more categories. I filed a separate request seeking documents on the House of Israel. Kathy wrote a letter to the CIA General Counsel, asking if the agency planned to publish its policy regarding cut-off dates in the Federal Register.

That fall, Judges Robert Bork, Skelly Wright and Harry Edwards heard oral arguments for the Court of Appeals. The CIA must have thought its national security claims would impress the three-judge panel. At one point, a U.S. attorney implied that the FOIA didn't apply equally to the CIA by announcing that the agency "isn't the Postal Commission." Judge Edwards replied, "The CIA is a public agency, not a private agency." Its obligations under the law are, in fact, the same.

Edwards then asked how the CIA actually processed FOIA requests. A lawyer for the CIA explained that he couldn't describe how the agency's filing system worked, for national security reasons. Edwards responded, "If that's your answer, that just won't do."

In January 1983, the panel reversed the lower court ruling and sent the case back to Judge Gasch with instructions to ensure agency compliance. In a strongly-worded decision, Judge Edwards outlined the court's opinion in the three main areas of the case.

First, the court did not believe that the cut-off date was reasonable. Edwards proposed a procedure which the court felt would "not appear unduly burdensome, expensive, or productive of 'administrative chaos.'" The timetable made the cut-off period commence when processing actually began. The court ordered Judge Gasch to evaluate the CIA's current practice, and to consider if any remedy were due.

Second, the court disagreed with the CIA and Judge Gasch that documents originating at the State Department and FBI were not CIA records, if they appeared in the agency's files during the search for relevant information. In fact, it noted a serious problem inherent in the opposite assumption:

If records obtained from other agencies could not be reached by a FOIA request, an agency seeking to shield documents from the public could transfer the documents for safe-keeping to another government department. It could thereafter decline to afford requestors access to the materials on the ground that it lacked 'custody' of or 'control' over the records and had no duty to retrieve them.

Again the court proposed a sample procedure for handling documents which originate outside any agency, not just the CIA. The panel ordered the District Court to reconsider the CIA's claim that it could refer documents back to originating departments.

In offering both of its suggestions for processing FOI requests, the court warned the agency not to devise a scheme "fraught with excessive time delays." Speaking more directly to the statutory time limits of the FOIA, the opinion stated in its conclusion:

We wish to make clear the spirit in which further proceedings in this case should be conducted... [The Freedom of In-

formation Act] imposes on the courts the responsibility to ensure that agencies comply with their obligation to make records promptly available to any person who requests them unless a refusal to do so is justified by one of the Act's specific exclusive exemptions. Especially where, as here, an agency's responses to a request for information have been tardy and grudging, courts should make sure they do not abdicate their own duty.

Finally, the court did not feel that summary judgment was warranted. Two of the judges felt the CIA acted in bad faith.

We find that the record contains significant evidence suggesting that the agency has not processed McGehee's request in good faith. Our conclusion is founded principally on the combination of two facts: First, it took almost two and one-half years before the CIA processed McGehee's reasonable straightforward request; indeed, the agency made no substantive response whatsoever until compelled to do so by order of the District Court. Second, the CIA failed to disclose the fact that it was using December 22, 1978 as a cut-off date.

Judge Bork dissented from the "bad faith" finding. He felt, "The CIA's performance here may be far from exemplary, but it appears attributable to bureaucratic inefficiency rather than to a desire to circumvent the law."

The "bad faith" conclusion was the most important aspect of the Court of Appeals decision to us. It carried a requirement that the District Court inspect CIA documents in camera.

Because the charge was grave, and the consequences could reveal the CIA's involvement in Jonestown, the agency petitioned the Court of Appeals for a rehearing before the same three-judge panel or an en banc hearing before all thirteen appellate court judges. The CIA argued that the "bad faith" judgment hurt its credibility, jeopardized the "reputations and careers" of the CIA employees who process FOIA requests, and concerned the "entire government."

In June 1983, without asking for a reply from our lawyer, the panel reversed its bad faith finding. Without

elaborating, the court simply stated, "we are persuaded by the agency's argument." The District Court's decision not to review the documents withheld under national security and statutory limitations would stand. The appeals court reaffirmed all other aspects of its original decision.

Kathy believed the court vacated the decision on the bad faith issue to avoid an unfavorable Supreme Court ruling. Besides, she reasoned, Judge Gasch would have been the one conducting the in camera proceedings. He probably would have upheld the exemptions. "I didn't seriously believe we'd ever see anything in those documents," she told us a few days after the decision.

Despite our disappointment, we still won a substantial victory. The D.C. Court of Appeals sent the CIA a clear mandate to reform its procedures to handle its FOIA requests expeditiously. That mandate still stands.

McGehee v. CIA went back to the District Court. At long last, the CIA released documents on Jim Jones, Leo Ryan, the House Foreign Affairs Committee investigation, the House Intelligence Committee investigation, and State Department cables.

Heavily-deleted pages from the Foreign Affairs investigation revealed that committee investigators asked the CIA for numerous name checks, in spite of the prohibition against CIA spying on American citizens. Staff members also asked that their names be withheld, although public officials, performing in the line of duty, are not eligible for Privacy Act protection. We learned that the committee provided the CIA with a 63-page report which the agency placed in its vault. The report, designated "secret" by the committee, cannot be released by the CIA.

A description of exempted material showed that the CIA withheld documents which revealed the location of covert CIA stations, or the location of unacknowledged CIA installations; the identity of undercover CIA employees; sensitive intelligence sources or foreign intelligence sources; "very specific" intelligence methods; and cryptonyms.

The CIA did release a memo which we felt might have indicated a cryptonym, or code word. It concerned a call in February 1979 from Bruce Keidan, a reporter for The Philadelphia Inquirer. According to the memo:

Mr. Keidan said he would like to talk with somebody in CIA about information he has, but not necessarily with the Public

Affairs people. He would be willing to talk on the record or off the record and passed on three subjects that he wanted to talk about: (1) ALBATROSS, (2) Tim Stoen, and (3) Soviet negotiations. He did not identify any of the three subjects further but felt that if those words had any meaning to this organization he would be glad to discuss them.

Albatross was the name of one of the Jonestown boats. Philip Blakey was one of the people on it on November 18, 1978.

In our last set of interrogatories, we asked the CIA to find the NOIWON cable mentioned in the Defense Department report, and to search its files for the State Department cable which notes the "necessary poison antidote." The CIA came up with neither.

Kathy did not believe we could ever force the Central Intelligence Agency to release information it did not want to release. Several exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act protect the CIA. Exemption 1 prevents release of records which are "properly classified ... in the interest of national defense or foreign policy." In addition, the CIA has Exemption 3, which protects information "specifically exempt from disclosure by statute", which it cites in conjunction with the secrecy requirements of the National Security Act of 1947. Moreover, Exemption 7 (d) specifically prevents disclosing the identity of CIA informants and confidential sources. Finally, in 1984, Congress gave the agency a special exemption which allows it to withhold its "operational files" from release.

The CIA's annual reports to Congress show that the agency is not reluctant to claim these exemptions, and during Ronald Reagan's presidency, their use has become more widespread than ever. During the Carter administration, agency claims of secrecy and national security had to be balanced against the public's right of access to government information. The Carter policy also required questionable claims to come down on the side of disclosure. That policy changed with an executive order signed by President Reagan, which made national security the sole consideration in an agency's decision of whether to classify a document. Secrecy is paramount, no matter what doubts may exist.

We are concerned that the CIA will use its new exemption in combination with the exemptions applicable to all federal agencies to hide embarrassing or illegal

acts. Like the secret war in Angola; the assassination of South American leftist leaders Salvador Allende in Chile and Che Guevara in Bolivia; destabilization in Indonesia; inaccurate predictions about the course of events in Iran, Cuba and Viet Nam; and drug-testing in the United States.

The CIA has already interfered in the internal affairs of Guyana. The involvement extended beyond Jonestown. In 1979, the People's National Congress considered allowing 100,000 Laotians to settle in Jonestown. These refugees had served in the Meo Army, which fought in the secret war in Laos under CIA guidance. Right-wing relief agencies in the U.S. offered to finance the move, but the Guyana public balked. The Meo Army didn't come.

Just as the CIA constantly seeks more protection from disclosures of its operations, it has also sought a relaxation of the restrictions placed on it during the mid-1970s. Early in the Carter Administration, the Justice Department issued a legal opinion which subverted the Hughes-Ryan Amendment. As a result, the CIA has routinely engaged in secret activities without prior Congressional approval. And with the knowledge of the President of the United States.

Additionally, at the end of 1981, President Reagan signed an executive order which allows the CIA to conduct covert operations on American citizens and organizations in the United States. The CIA's activities can't be aimed at influencing U.S. policies or politics, of course, nor can they violate our constitutional rights. But as the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights observed, this puts "the CIA back in business in the United States with no oversight and a secret budget."

Many people go beyond that concern, and question whether the CIA has any business as an agency of a free society. In 1974, John Marks asked:

Could any rational person, after surveying the history of the last 20 years, from Guatemala to Cuba to Vietnam -- and now Chile -- contend that the CIA's clandestine activities have yielded anything but a steady stream of disaster?

Fred Branfman, in Uncloaking the CIA, assessed the situation more harshly, writing that:

The level of debate about the CIA must be raised beyond the questions of what is

proper congressional oversight, which covert activities should be abolished, how we can separate intelligence-gathering from covert activities, and so on. It seems to me that the time has come to say that the CIA as it now exists cannot be controlled by Congress; it can only be abolished by Congress. It seems to me that the time has come to say that there is no distinction between intelligence-gathering and covert activities if your goal is totalitarian control, if an organization has become one characterized by the use of totalitarian methods and totalitarian ends.

The CIA has toppled foreign governments, financed strikes, incited riots, encouraged -- and executed -- political assassinations, all for the sake of our national security? And are we more secure?

Certainly the CIA's information on Jonestown might help answer that question. Did it have foreknowledge of the suicides, or of the assassination plans? Did it encourage the paranoia endemic in the community? Did it set up Ryan for a hit? If it did not know about Jonestown, why didn't it? Was the number of drugs present in Jonestown sufficient to characterize the project as a mind control experiment? And did the CIA sponsor the experiment?

We are seeking "conclusive evidence" which will either exonerate the agency or condemn it. The inconclusive evidence we've seen so far suggests that the CIA expanded its interest in Guyana to include 1000 Americans who set up a community in that country. The inconclusive evidence hints of CIA monitoring, and perhaps infiltration and manipulation, of Jonestown activities. The inconclusive evidence indicates the CIA knew more about the suicides than it has told anyone.

The people of Jonestown were American citizens. If the CIA knew what was going to happen, and let it, then Fred Branfman is right when he says that, "the major enemy ... will not be the KGB or the Chinese or anyone else abroad. It will be the CIA."

The appeals court decision in McGehee v. CIA won't solve any of these problems. But the ruling will benefit other people seeking access to government information under the FOIA. According to one Washington lawyer, several federal agencies interpreted the original appellate court decision as a signal to remove administrative roadblocks they had erected for FOI requestors.

They feared bad faith findings on their own procedures. Now that that aspect of the decision has been retracted, the lawyer said, the agencies "might fall back on their old habits." On the other hand, the fact that a court was willing to examine an agency's FOI procedures as closely as the appeals court did might act as a deterrent against a resumption of old practices.

In the meantime, other agencies besides the CIA will go along with the specific procedural findings of the case. Shortly after the original decision in January 1983, John Fox, attorney for the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Practices within the Department of Labor, said, "I ordered our agency to comply with McGehee v. CIA on the cut-off date policy." That order remains in effect.

The courts are also judging other FOI cases in light of the decision in our case, and ruling in favor of requestors. A month after vacating the bad faith finding, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia could still cite McGehee v. CIA as authority when it ruled against the CIA's transfer of documents to another agency to avoid disclosure (Paisley v. CIA, #82-1977, July 22, 1983).

Our own experience shows how aware the agencies are of our case. When Mac called the Department of Energy recently to ask questions about an unrelated request, the FOI caseworker asked: "Is this the same McGehee of McGehee versus CIA?"

We never imagined a response like that when we filed our initial request in December 1978. Our purpose then, and now, is to find out what connections the CIA had to Peoples Temple and the deaths in Jonestown. And, in spite of McGehee v. CIA, we still don't know.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

IT COULD HAVE BEEN ME

We live history as if it were a performance by masked actors who trace enigmatic figures on the stage. Despite the fact that we know our actions mean something, say something, we do not know what they say and therefore the meaning of the piece we perform escapes us.

-- Octavio Paz
The Other Mexico:
Critique of the Pyramid

What human beings think of events is sometimes a more important factor in history than the events themselves.

-- Robert V. Hine
California's Utopian
Colonies

An endless stream of articles about cults and cultists followed the events of November 18. The analyses did little to enlighten anyone, and really served only one purpose: to alienate the members of Peoples Temple from the rest of us. We were assured that we weren't like them, and they weren't like us. But Carolyn, and Annie, and Carolyn's four-year-old son Kimo were very much like us.

A few weeks after their deaths, The Los Angeles Times printed a letter to the editor from Ruth Lindberg, a family friend. Her letter responded to Arthur Janov's psychological profile of a typical cult member.

I take strong exception to his assertion (which is the essence of his article) that the followers of such demagogues are usually products of broken and distorted childhoods, like their leaders... I have participated in many family occasions in the home of good friends whose two daughters and grandson have died in this horrible occurrence... It is the antithesis of what Janov implies. The children were secure, independent, bright, talented, warm, outgoing. Other children I have met do not fit the model. Profiles of members of other cults offer no pat explanations to our "whys."

Our current 1978 psychological answer is a criticism of the parent-infant relationship. My daughter said, "This could have been me." My husband answered, "Yes, and it could be me." Were the time right, the age right, and the charismatic leader charismatic enough -- it could be any of us.

Other friends expressed this feeling to us as well. "That I feel haunted and troubled is only an indication that I shared many of the same assumptions and ideals of the Jonestown people and sense my own vulnera-

bility," wrote a professor. One of Carolyn's high school friends who lived in Ukiah explained that she

always admired Carolyn for her intellect, her love for people, and her purpose in life, to help others. My thoughts have been dominated by Carolyn, my memories of her and the parts of her I didn't know, by the stories I am hearing continually of others who once resided in Mendocino County where I now live, and by how easily all of us could have become involved in Peoples Temple.

A friend of Annie's expressed similar feelings when she wrote:

In the past week I have learned that there is potential for great destruction as well as creation in all human beings. While before, I believed to some extent there was 'Them' and 'Us'; the 'bad guys' and the 'good guys'.

There have been times this week when I have been so afraid of this potential in myself, I have been tempted to disown Ann; to cry out indignantly, 'How could you do this?' To qualify my statement of 'it could have been me', with, 'But I wouldn't have gone that far.'

While many people revealed their fears to us, the media -- that is, the news directors, the writers, the reporters and the executives -- did not allow us to identify with individuals. Instead, they interviewed sociologists and anthropologists, who distanced Jonestown from ourselves. It became a cultural aberration rather than a human tragedy.

Dr. Barbara Hargrove, a professor at the Iliff School of Theology, tried to determine who exactly the news media did interview about Jonestown. She polled a group of 300 scholars who had attended a 1977 program for the Study of New Religious Movements. With a 61 per cent rate of return on her informal questionnaire, Dr. Hargrove noted:

Sociologists composed not only the largest disciplinary group in the survey, but also the most frequently asked to comment. They and anthropologists alone were

above the mean in the rate of contact for public comment, a fact which indicates that Jonestown was indeed seen primarily as a social problem, too broad in its membership and its implications to be relegated to the area of individual preference or deviation often reserved for religion in contemporary society.

This failure to discuss Jonestown in anything but sociological terms reflected what sociologist Theodore Roszak called "an ethical vacuum" in modern society. "It is the distinction of modern Western intellectual life," he continued in a December 31, 1978 article in The Los Angeles Times, "that so many of us have turned ourselves into religious illiterates as a matter of principle."

This is not to say that the people of Jonestown were spiritually ignorant. Far from it, they sought a life of meaning, of participation and action. They tried to change themselves and their world. Roszak asks:

Why do people surrender their freedom to totalitarian masters? The answer is not that they are morally weak. People who sacrifice all they have and are, even for a corrupted cause, cannot be evaluated that cheaply. Rather, they are morally desperate.

The people who joined Peoples Temple hungered for bread of the spirit. Perhaps, in their quest for meaning, they were desperate. In other societies, in other times, their desperate devotion would be valued.

We don't admire devotion or loyalty today. On the contrary, those who maintain loyalty to an unorthodox or non-traditional religion must be deprogrammed. But, as University of Nevada professor James Richardson wrote:

Deprogramming suggests that the initial recruitment must have been programming, a term that implies something abnormal. This abnormality has been characterized by the word brainwashing.

This view of those who have chosen to join different groups eventually "legitimizes repression," in the words of Dick Anthony, Thomas Robbins, and Jim McCarthy. "The utility of the brainwashing concept," they wrote in a special issue of Transaction Magazine devoted to brainwashing,

derives in part from its implication that concern is being directed not at the content of a belief or opinion, but at the manner in which this belief has been developed (i.e., via brainwashing).

Claiming people are brainwashed thus legitimizes kidnappings by deprogrammers; psychological and physical abuse to cleanse the victim's mind of its previous brainwashing; and conservatorship, in which courts award parents control of their "incompetent" adult offspring.

The consequence: personal responsibility is inoperative. Free will, an idea central to the theology of most Protestant denominations, is demolished.

The idea of brainwashing comes from two sources. First, family members, who can't understand their relation's new affiliation, believe the only explanation for the behavior is mind control. Second, ex-cultists, unable to explain or understand their previous commitment to an unpopular group, claim they were brainwashed. They deny responsibility for their involvement. Shiva Naipaul noted this in his book on Peoples Temple, Journey to Nowhere, when he wrote that Jeannie Mills had

spent six years in Peoples Temple, quitting in 1975. It was then that she had made the remarkable discovery -- under the tutelage of the mind control experts -- that neither she nor any of the other reformed disciples bore the slightest moral responsibility for anything untoward they might have done during their Temple years. The burden is entirely Jim's.

It would have been so much simpler to believe that the members of Peoples Temple were merely brainwashed or on drugs, that they were part of a mind control experiment. But until we get evidence that contradicts what we know about them, we have to believe they had choices.

"I don't see that we have acted so much out of grace as out of faith in relation to our daughters," John wrote a friend four months before the suicides.

We have taught them to stand upon their own feet, make their own decisions and take responsibility for those decisions and their actions. To act out of faith and love has been to affirm them when they acted out of their integrity. We have tried as best we

could to talk of where we see eye to eye and where we differ. To love means to respect, and to respect them means for us to affirm their use of their freedom.

Shortly after my visit to Guyana in May 1979, I wrote something similar in my journal.

I think since our trip I've felt more at peace about Ann and Carolyn. That they chose the manner of their deaths. Even though the questions remain, especially about U.S. government involvement, I feel more at ease, at peace with their decision. To call it brainwashing cheapens them and their act.

We knew Carolyn and Annie. We weren't always happy with their choices, but we knew they took the responsibility for their lives. With greater understanding, we listened to the words of poet William Ernest Henley, which Carolyn questioned as a girl. Ironically, the newsman Don Harris, murdered on the Port Kaituma airstrip, kept the same poem tacked up in his office.

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be,
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance,
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years,
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how straight the gate
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

We can equivocate, add "I am the master of my soul, but..." At some point, however, we all make a choice. The choice may be to abdicate responsibility; or or it may be to set out on a path yet unexplored; or it may be to choose to do neither, to drift through life without direction or consequence.

Labeling Peoples Temple a cult means we don't have to deal with these possibilities. As Meg Greenfield noted in Newsweek shortly after the suicides, "It makes the night less frightening for the rest of us if we can attribute grotesque behavior to ordinary, manageable causes."

We had no such easy out. The majority of people we knew in Peoples Temple simply couldn't be dismissed as cultists. Those who knew Ann and Carolyn, other relatives, friends, shared in the shock and disbelief. "Not Annie," one of them said in denial, "not Annie." At the same time, it was "Annie's final letter to the world [that] helped remove the tragedy at Guyana, awesome and terrible as it was, from the realm of being simply bizarre," wrote a worker at the Central Committee for Conscientious Objection. "In her letter came through the striving for justice and love that motivated so much of the Peoples Temple movement."

"That is what made the Jonestown experiment so important for us," John said in his sermon that first Sunday.

We have shared the same vision, the vision of justice rolling down like a mighty stream, and swords forged into plows. We have shared the same hope. We have shared the same commitment.

Nevertheless, nothing can mitigate the evil of the final day. "The grotesqueness of Jim Jones and Jonestown is so powerful," John wrote, "that only the wise and the strong can embrace the truth of it." The vision of the bloated bodies, arms entwined about one another, remains Jonestown's legacy.

"Life is full of contradictions and ambiguities," wrote Christian theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. "We live our lives in various realms of meaning which do not cohere rationally." The meaning of Peoples Temple does not "cohere rationally." The people involved, their goodness, their evil -- it doesn't make sense.

The non-sense of Jonestown continues to haunt survivors and relatives. "What you do see is a very substantial weight of long-term depression -- the feeling that certain personal aspects of the story haven't been fully told," said Chris Hatcher, a psychiatrist at San Francisco's Langley-Porter Institute. Hatcher has counseled dozens of Temple members and relatives. He told us that as recently as 1984, a woman called him, troubled

because no one knew the truth about her: relatives had died in Jonestown.

Tragedy followed tragedy. Temple members continued to die violent deaths. The first came just a few months after Jonestown. In March 1979, Mike Prokes -- who'd escaped during the suicides with a suitcase full of cash -- shot himself in a Modesto, California motel.

The suicides left Mike shaken. "Time can't even heal something like that," he told reporters in December.

It's just a legacy of death. I feel the most profound sadness I've ever felt in my life. It will stay with me, but I know I can function with it.



Barbara and Kimo, 1978.



Carolyn, Annie, and John, 1978.

The next month, he called John and Barbara and asked to see them. "At the time we talked with Mike, he was controlled," Barbara wrote,

and I did not sense a feeling of his being overwrought or in a state of deep grief. He was, of course. He was in a state of shock...

When I gave Mike a hug as we said good-bye after our brief dinner and conversation (brief, since we could not simply sit and cry and wail over the tragedy of it all in the Shakespearean sense in the Hilton Lounge), I may have sensed that it was final.

In the days before he killed himself, Mike wrote notes to several people, enclosing a thirty-page statement about Peoples Temple. San Francisco Chronicle col-

umnist Herb Caen reprinted his note from Mike.

The 'total dedication' you once observed of me was not to Jim Jones -- it was to an organization of people who had nothing left to lose. No matter what view one takes of the Temple, perhaps the most relevant truth is that it was filled with outcasts and the poor who were looking for something they could not find in our society.

And sadly enough, there are millions more out there with all kinds of different, but desperate needs whose lives will end tragically, as happens every day. No matter how you cut it, you just can't separate Jonestown from America, because the Peoples Temple was not born in a vacuum, and despite the attempt to isolate it, neither did it end in one.

Mike carefully planned his death. He made sure his mother was at the home of his brother in Sacramento. He arranged a press conference in a room he'd rented in a Modesto motel. Eight reporters attended. He gave them a statement which described life in Jonestown, the possibility of a conspiracy against Peoples Temple, and his own commitment to the church. Then he excused himself, went into the bathroom, shut the door, turned on the faucet and shot himself in the head.

Less than a year later, Al and Jeannie Mills and their daughter Daphene were shot and killed in execution-style murders in their Berkeley home. Police made no arrests in the case, although they believed the evidence indicated that the murderer was someone the Mills knew.

In October 1983, Guyana's Ambassador to the United States shot and killed his mistress, Paula Adams, and their eighteen-month-old son. Laurence Mann then shot himself. Paula, a Temple member, began her relationship with the Ambassador long before November 18, and continued long after. Police reported that the shootings arose from a domestic dispute.

Then, in February 1984, a young black man fired a round of shots into a Los Angeles schoolyard. He killed one girl and injured thirteen other children before turning the gun on himself. Tyrone Mitchell had been in Georgetown when the suicides occurred, but his parents and four sisters died in Jonestown.

Each person who died took a piece of the puzzle with him or her. Every relative, scattered across the

country, holds another bit of the story. Government officials, here and in Guyana, carry other fragments. And this is our history, formed by putting together as many pieces as we could find.

No one has found all the pieces to the puzzle yet, so the questions remain. The political questions: Who in the United States wanted to see the community fail? To what extent was our government involved, and why? The historical questions: Was it voluntary? Did the people think it was another suicide drill? How many people were shot? And the philosophical question in the cry of pain: "How could you do this?" We often return to a phrase by German poet Rainer Maria Rilke:

Be patient toward all that is unsolved
in your heart.

And try to love the questions themselves.

Do not seek the answers that cannot be
given you because you would not be able to
live them. And the point is to live every-
thing. Live the questions now. Perhaps you
will then gradually, without noticing it,
live along some distant day into the answer.

We have lived the questions since 1970, when Carolyn announced that she and Jim Jones were lovers. We have lived them since 1972, when Annie joined Peoples Temple, and John asked, "Oh, God, isn't one child enough?" We have lived the questions during our search. We will continue to live them every day, until life ends.

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