

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Memorandum

TO : Mr. Moore

FROM : J. O. Ingram

SUBJECT: RYMUR

- 1 - Mr. Adams
- 1 - Mr. Moore
- 1 - Mr. Ingram
- 1 - Mr. Gow
- 1 - Mr.
- 1 - Mr.
- 1 - Mr.
- 1 - Mr. Boynton
- 1 - Mr. Mullen

DATE: 12/14/78

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 10/23/92 BY 10410 JED/STW

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On 12/13/78, the Interagency Working Group on Guyana (IWGG) met at the State Department. The group included representatives of the Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Defense (DOD), Agency for International Development (AID), Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the FBI. The primary topics dealt with were: 1. the autopsies to be performed and 2. the disposition of unclaimed remains of the Jonestown victims.

See

Autopsies

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An agreement was signed by the State Department and DOD for the autopsies to proceed as scheduled 12/13/78. The estimated cost for the autopsies is between \$200 - 300 per body which is to be paid by the Criminal Division, U. S. DOJ. The following aspects regarding the disposition of the remains of the Jonestown's victims were discussed:

Disposition of Unclaimed Remains

Of the 913 bodies, approximately 615 have been identified and 457 families have been contacted. Of families contacted, 25 have indicated that they will not or cannot claim the bodies. It is estimated that the bulk of the identity process will be completed within the next week or two at which time approximately 200-250 bodies will remain unidentified or unclaimed. Of these, a large number will probably be children because of the identification problems.

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Steps are being taken to decrease the number of unidentified children's bodies. A list of presumed names of the children is being provided to an official in California who has agreed to check California hospital records for them.

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The following topics were covered regarding the disposition of the bodies:

I. U. S. Government Authority and Funds for Disposal of the Remains.

At the present time, there is no specific statutory authority enabling the U. S. Government to dispose of these bodies nor are there any funds for this purpose. U. S. Government action depends upon the President's authority as chief executive and commander in chief or identifying contingency/disaster authorization and funds which may reasonably be used for this purpose or, alternatively, obtaining new legislation on this subject.

II. Methods of Disposal of the Remains

There are basically two methods of disposal:

A. Burial

This method would be quite expensive; approximately \$1,000 - 1,500 per body. Moreover, finding a suitable burial site would be a major problem. Considerations are being given to burial in a variety of states either in a mass group or small burial groups. Consideration is also being given for burial at sea.

B. Cremation

Cremating the remains is the other possible means of disposal. The cost of cremation alone is significantly less. Since the Cremation Association has offered to cremate at cost, the cost would be approximately \$215 per body plus an additional \$25 per body for disposal of ashes.

In addition to being less expensive, cremation has the added advantage of alleviating the gravesite problem. The drawbacks to cremation include possible adverse public reaction since many of the bodies would be children.

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Another drawback regarding cremation is the environmental considerations. Preliminary consultations with EPA officials indicate that they believe the matter should be coordinated closely with the Federal Public Health Services (HEW), regional EPA, and concerned State officials.

III. Private Organizations

The other major alternative is to obtain the requisite services and funds from the states or private organizations. Most states would probably be unwilling to undertake the large significant burden that disposal would involve.

The next scheduled meeting is on 12/14/78 and the FBI will continue to send representatives to the meeting.

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APPROVED: *Wu*

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