

" JONESTOWN "

11/9/79 TO
DOJ.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 10/22/92 BY [redacted]

UNKNOWN SUBJECT;
ASSASSINATION OF
CONGRESSMAN LEO J. RYAN
PORT KAITUMA, GUYANA
NOVEMBER 18, 1978

(u)

CONGRESSIONAL ASSASSINATION STATUTE

On 11/17-18/78 Congressman Leo J. Ryan, certain members of his staff, various news media representatives, and a group of concerned relatives visited Jonestown, Guyana. The purpose of the Congressman's visit was to personally investigate allegations he had received from various sources that some Peoples Temple (PT) members were being held against their will at the PT compound in Jonestown. (u)

After inspecting the PT compound at Jonestown, Congressman Ryan and his party returned to their two airplanes at the Port Kaituma airstrip to fly back to Georgetown, Guyana. A member from the PT compound (Larry Layton) had professed to be a defector and secured permission from Ryan to accompany his party back to the U. S. Shortly after arriving at the Port Kaituma airstrip, a tractor pulling a flatbed trailer carrying a number of PT members opened fire on the Ryan Party. Layton had boarded one of the aircraft and began firing at the persons already on board with a handgun. It appears Layton began firing after hearing the shots fired from the flatbed trailer. (u)

The following persons were killed by gunfire from individuals on the flatbed trailer; (u)

Congressman Leo J. Ryan

Don Harris, NBC Correspondent

Bob Brown, NBC Cameraman

Greg Robinson, San Francisco Examiner photographer (u)

Patricia Parks, PT "defector"

A few of the people on the plane with Layton when he began firing at them were injured, but none died as a result of their wounds. (u)

FBI involvement in the investigation of the assassination of Congressman Ryan is based upon the Congressional Assassination Statute, Title 18, U. S. Code, Section 351. Immediately after Congressman Ryan was murdered, the Department of Justice (DOJ) was contacted to determine jurisdictional aspects of the FBI and DOJ in this matter. The Department replied that the Congressional Assassination Statute gives the Department extra-territorial jurisdiction to prosecute attacks on Congressman. Such prosecution, of course, must be conducted in the U. S. FBI investigative jurisdiction under this Statute is limited, however, to the U. S., its territories and possessions. The FBI has authority to investigate this matter in the U. S. to determine whether a conspiracy existed to assassinate Congressman Ryan. Investigation to determine if a conspiracy existed is continuing. (u)

Within hours after Congressman Ryan was murdered at Port Kaituma PT leader Jim Jones ordered his followers to drink a poisoned fruit flavored drink. It was later alleged some of the PT members were forced to drink the poisoned liquid at gunpoint. (u)

A subsequent count revealed 913 bodies at the Jonestown compound as a result of suicide or murder. These bodies were flown by U. S. Air Force personnel to the Armed Forces mortuary at Dover, Delaware; autopsies were performed on seven bodies including that of PT leader James Warren Jones. The combined efforts of FBI Identification Division and Dover Air Force Base personnel were successful in identifying 631 bodies of the 913 total (69%). (u)

577 individuals were identified by fingerprints alone. (u)

45 were identified by dental charts alone. (u)

9 were identified by a combination of fingerprints and dental charts. (u)

The above identifications were reported by the FBI Identification Division on 1/3/79. A few other identifications may have been successful as additional fingerprints, dental charts, X-rays, etc., were located. (u)

Of the unidentified bodies most were infants and children for whom there were no identifying documents available. (u)

The Government of Guyana has charged Larry Layton with five counts of murder, three counts of attempted murder, and two counts of gun violation. A preliminary hearing began in that country during the week of 10/29/79. If the presiding magistrate determines there is sufficient probable cause, he will authorize an indictment to be issued charging Layton with those offenses. (u)

The U. S. Department of State (USDS), DOJ, and FBI coordinated efforts to assist the Guyanese by helping two key witnesses, Vernon Gosney and Odell Rhodes, return to Guyana to testify. The preliminary hearing in Guyana has been continued and the results will be reported when it concludes. (u)

MISCELLANEOUS (u)

As of 9/22/79, the latest date for which information is available, \$546,263 have been expended during this investigation for salaries and related expenses. (u)

The main file for this investigation in the San Francisco FBI Office consists of 50 volumes. (u)

A subfile consisting of 20 volumes holds interviews of survivors, witnesses, and other pertinent investigations recorded on form FD-302. (u)

The San Francisco Office has 700 1A envelopes containing pertinent documentary evidence. (u)

There are also 100 subvolumes containing information about certain individuals identified as key witnesses or suspects. (u)

Approximately 2,000 pounds of bulky evidentiary material consisting of 22 foot lockers of tape recordings, documents, and other items is maintained in the San Francisco FBI Office (u)

San Francisco is also maintaining 14 crates of video tape material received from various sources (u)

Immediately following the Jonestown incident, 30 Special Agents in the San Francisco FBI Office were assigned full-time to this investigation. During its early stages as many as 80 Agents were assigned to this investigation at any one time across the country. (u)

Eighty Jonestown survivors were interviewed by the FBI upon their return to the U. S. (u)

A total of approximately 2,000 individuals have been interviewed during this investigation. These individuals are broadly described as PT members, survivors, former members, certain of their associates, and other individuals who may have had pertinent information (u)

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE PUBLICLY RELEASED (u)

During March, 1979, a Federal Grand Jury in San Francisco began hearing testimony to determine if a conspiracy existed in the U. S. to assassinate Congressman Ryan in Guyana. [REDACTED] individuals testified before that Grand Jury. On 3/14/79, a sealed indictment was returned by the Grand Jury charging Larry Layton and 14 un-indicted deceased co-conspirators with conspiracy to murder (u)

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Rule 6(e)
FRCP

Congressman Ryan, a violation of Title 18, U. S. Code, Section 351 (d). Layton was also charged in a separate count with aiding and abetting, a violation of Title 18, U. S. Code, Section 351 (a). (u)

The DOJ is closely following Layton's possible prosecution in Guyana. Depending upon the results of prosecutive action in that country, decisions will be made as to prosecution of Layton in the U. S. on the charges set forth above. (u)