

PAGE MICHAEL S  
79 GEORGETOWN 3776

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SECTION ARA-15

INFO 002-02 ISO-00 F-01 SS-15 NSDF-02 SSO-02 CIAF-02

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291237 198333Z (SA) John Simms DATE 2-27-81

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PLAS 2853  
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EDS	or	XDS	EXT.	DATE
TS	AUTH.			REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS <input type="checkbox"/>				
DECLASSIFIED <input type="checkbox"/> RELEASABLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
RELEASE DENIED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
PA OF FOI EXEMPTIONS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

AMEMBASSOR SENDS  
P.O. 11082; WA  
INFO: CASC, OREP (RYAN IFC) BY  
SUBJ: CODEL RYAN: SHOOTING INCIDENT AT PORT  
KAITUMA.  
REF: GEORGETOWN 3774.

1. I HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM A MEETING WITH PRIMIN BURNHAM,  
DEPUTY PRIMIN REID, FORMIN JACKSON, AND MINISTER OF  
INFORMATION SHIRLEY FIELD-BRIDLEY. VARIOUS OFFICERS OF  
THE GUYANA DEFENSE FORCE WERE ALSO IN ATTENDANCE. CREWS  
OF THE TWO CHARTER AIRCRAFT WHICH HAD BEEN SHOT AT DURING  
THE INCIDENT AT PORT KAITUMA HAD JUST ARRIVED AND WERE  
ALSO PRESENT. FOLLOWING RECONSTRUCTION OF INCIDENT IS  
BASED ON THEIR TESTIMONY WHICH MUST BE USED CAREFULLY IN  
VIEW OF THEIR UNDERSTANDABLY EMOTIONAL STATE.

2. BOTH CHARTER AIRCRAFT HAD ARRIVED AT PORT KAITUMA AND  
HAD COMMENCED LOADING CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S PARTY. THE SMALLER  
OF THE TWO, A FIVE-PASSENGER CESSNA, HAD ALREADY LOADED  
APPARENTLY WITH AT LEAST TWO OR THREE OF THE JONESTOWN  
RESIDENTS WHO HAD ELECTED TO LEAVE THE COMMUNITY WITH

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CONGRESSMAN RYAN, AMONG ITS FIVE PASSENGERS. ACCORDING TO THE  
PILOT ONE OF THE

INDIVIDUALS PRODUCED A PISTON AND BEGAN FIRING WITHIN  
THE AIRCRAFT AT THE OTHER PASSENGERS. AT ALMOST THE  
SAME TIME A TRACTOR PULLING A CART APPEARED ON THE  
SCENE. THE CART WAS LOADED WITH SEVERAL PEOPLE AND  
WHEN IT APPROACHED THE AIRCRAFT THE INDIVIDUALS IN  
THE CART BEGAN FIRING AT THE CLUSTER OF PEOPLE WHO  
HAD NOT YET BOARDED THE SECOND LARGER AIRCRAFT.

SEVERAL OF THE PEOPLE, ACCORDING TO THE PILOTS, WERE  
IMMEDIATELY STRUCK BY BULLETS AND IT THEIR ESTIMATION  
WERE KILLED DURING THE FIRST FUSILLADE. THIS GROUP  
INCLUDED CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND MEMBERS OF THE NBC CAMERA  
TEAM. THE FIRING ALSO DAMAGED THE ENGINES OF THE  
SECOND AIRCRAFT AND RENDERED IT UNFLYABLE. PEOPLE STILL  
ON THE GROUND WHO WERE NOT WOUNDED OR WERE WOUNDED AND  
AMBULATORY RAN INTO THE BUSES SURROUNDING THE AIRSTOP  
TO ESCAPE THE FIRE. THE THREE-MAN CREW IN THE DISABLED

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AIRCRAFT SCRAMBLED ABOARD THE CESSNA WHICH WAS TAXI-  
ING DOWN THE RUNWAY. THIS AIRCRAFT MANAGED TO TAKE OFF WITH  
FOUR CREW'S PLUS ONE WOUNDED PASSENGER WHO APPARENTLY  
WAS ONE OF THE PERSONS WHO HAD SUSPECTED TO LEAVE  
GEORGETOWN. (SHE IS NOW IN A HOSPITAL IN GEORGETOWN.)  
3. NEITHER CREW HAD ANY GREAT FAMILIARITY WITH THE  
INDIVIDUAL PASSENGERS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE  
CONGRESSMAN. THE NBC CAMERA TEAM AND THE DCM AND THESE COULD NOT  
READILY IDENTIFY CASUALTIES. THEY  
DID REPORT, HOWEVER, THAT WHEN THEY LEFT PORT KAITUMA  
THE DCM SEEMED TO BE AMBULATORY BUT PERHAPS SLIGHTLY  
WOUNDED. THE CONGRESSMAN AND THE CAMERA TEAM APPEARED TO  
BE DEAD.

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4. AFTER THE MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER THE AIR  
CREW WERE TAKEN IN CHARGE BY THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE  
FOR A MORE INTENSIVE DEFRIEPPING. I HAVE SENT AN EMBASSY  
POLITICAL OFFICER TO BE PRESENT AT THIS SESSION.  
5. UNITS OF THE GUYANA DEFENSE FORCE AND THE POLICE  
ARE BEING AIRLIFTED DURING NIGHT HOURS TO MATTHEW'S RIDGE.  
THE CLOSEST AIRSTRIP CAPABLE OF TAKING AIRCRAFT AFTER  
DARK. GDF IS ALSO POSITIONING TOW HELICOPTERS AT  
MATTHEW'S RIDGE IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO SHUTTLE TROOPS  
INTO PORT KAITUMA AT FIRST LIGHT. THERE IS ALREADY A  
SMALL GDF UNIT AT PORT KAITUMA NUMBERING PERHAPS NO  
MORE THAN SIX. AS OF NOW THERE IS NO COMMUNICATION LINE  
WITH PORT KAITUMA.  
6. THE PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS DEEP REGRET OVER THIS  
TRAGIC INCIDENT AND WISHED THIS TO BE CONVEYED URGENTLY TO USG.  
HE NOTED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN  
MOST FACILITATIVE REGARDING THE CODEL'S VISIT.  
7. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT OUR IMMEDIATE CONCERNS  
WERE AS FOLLOWS: (1) THAT THE GOG MAKE EVERY EFFORT  
TO GET INTO PORT KAITUMA TO FURNISH AID, ASSISTANCE AND  
PROTECTION TO THE AMERICANS WHO WERE STILL THERE.  
(2) THAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE BODIES OF THE DEAD SHOULD  
BE BROUGHT TO GEORGETOWN, AND (3) THAT THE  
PERPETRATORS OF THIS OUTRAGE BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE AS  
SOON AS POSSIBLE.  
8. I LEFT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AT THIS POINT  
AND RETURNED TO THE EMBASSY.  
9. WE HAVE ALSO LEARNED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN THREE  
MURDERS AND ONE SUICIDE AT THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE OFFICE  
IN GEORGETOWN. BURKE

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