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ORIGIN ARA-12

INFO OCT-81 SS-15 SIG-23 PMO-01 150-20 /035 2

CLASSIFIED BY ARA:CFUCK BRAYSEAN; ARA (GUY. VC):20 DONNELL:EG

APPROVED BY ARA:JABUSHNELL

ARA/AND:RZIMMERMANN

S/S-O:JTHEDEV

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SECRETARY WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS

CINCSOUTHCOM GUARRY ITS CANAL ZONE

CINCMAC SCOTT AFB ILL

CS BRIGADIER GENERAL MACDILL AFB FLA

USMC INCHARGE FT MCPHERSON GA

CDR 1ST AIRBORNE CORPS FT BRAGG NC

C O M I D E N T I A L STATE 295317

REF: 11652: GDS

REF: CASO, ORES (RYAN, LEON, BY

REF: STATE 203000 AND PREVIOUS

SUBJECT: STATES REPORT ON SITUATION IN GUYANA

1. FOLLOWING FOR YOUR INFORMATION IS A REPORT ON THE

SHOOTING INCIDENT THAT OCCURRED IN GUYANA ON NOVEMBER 12

IN WHICH CONGRESSMAN LEO RYAN AND OTHERS WERE KILLED.

RYAN WAS APPROXIMATELY 6:00 P.M. EST, NOVEMBER 12

GEORGETOWN REPORTED THAT CODEL RYAN HAD BEEN ATTACKED

WHILE RETURNING FROM THE PEOPLES TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY

IN THE REMOTE NORTHWEST INTERIOR OF GUYANA.

CODEL RYAN HAD TRAVELED TO GUYANA TO INVESTIGATE ALLE-

GIATIONS BY RELATIVES THAT MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLES

TEMPLE COMMUNITY WERE BEING HELD AGAINST THEIR WILL.

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RYAN WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A LARGE NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS

INCLUDING AN NBC TV CAMERA CREW FROM SAN FRANCISCO

AS WELL AS BY THE EMBASSY GEORGETOWN DCM (RICHARD

WINTER), MARK LAND AND ANOTHER ATTORNEY WHO ARE COUNSEL

FOR THE PEOPLES TEMPLE COMMUNITY. THE GROUP TRAVELED

BY CHARTERED AIRCRAFT THE AFTERNOON OF NOVEMBER 17 AND

WENT HAVING SPENT THE NIGHT AT THE COMMUNITY. SOUGHT

TO RETURN TO GEORGETOWN ON NOVEMBER 18, ACCOMPANIED BY

SOME MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLES TEMPLE WHO WISHED

TO BE WITH RYAN. THE PARTY WAS BOARDING THE CHARTERED AIRCRAFT

WHEN ONE OF THE PEOPLES MEMBERS IN THE SWALES OF

THE AIRCRAFT INTRODUCED A GUN AND BEGAN TO SHOOT AT OTHER

MEMBERS. AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME, A PLANE

PILOTED BY A TRACTOR APPROACHED THE AIRCRAFT.

A NUMBER OF PEOPLE ON THE TRAILOR, PRESUMED TO BE

PEOPLES TEMPLE MEMBERS, OPENED FIRE ON CONGRESSMAN

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/SR

REVIEWED BY _____ DATE _____

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RYAN AND HIS IMMEDIATE PARTY, KILLING HIM, NBC
CORRESPONDENTS DON FRANKS, NEWS PHOTOGRAPHER GREGORY
ROBINSON, NBC PHOTOGRAPHER, BOB BROWN, AND A PEOPLES
TEMPLE MEMBER. THE GUNFIRE DISABLED ONE OF THE
AIRCRAFT: THE OTHER TOOK OFF WITH ITS OWN CREW, A WOUNDED
WOMAN AND THE CREW OF THE DISABLED PLANE. OTHER MEMBERS
OF THE PARTY FLED INTO THE NEARBY JUNGLE AND FID UNTIL
THEY WERE CAPTURED OR DISAPPEARED. ACCOMPANIED BY WOUNDED DON
FRANKS, THESE PEOPLE REMAINED AT PORT KAITUMA THROUGH
THE NIGHT UNTIL GUYANESE FORCES ARRIVED THE FOLLOWING
DAY.

3. EMBASSY GEORGETOWN WAS IN IMMEDIATE AND CLOSE CONTACT
WITH GUYANESE AUTHORITIES AND PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM.
EMBASSY ASSURANCES THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD PROVIDE NEAR-
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THEY WERE REQUESTED TO COOPER TO ESTABLISH ORDER.
EMBASSY REQUESTED US LOGISTICAL ASSISTANCE WHICH WE
ARE PROVIDING MAINLY IN THE FORM OF AIRCRAFT
FOR EVACUATION OF WOUNDED AND AIR AND COMMUNICA-
TION SUPPORT AND SUPPLIES FOR THE GUYANESE DEFENSE FORCE.
ON NOVEMBER 18, EMBASSY GEORGETOWN AFTER ARRIVAL
OF GUYANESE FORCES MADE PUBLIC COMMITMENT ON NOVEMBER 18
INDICATING THAT MEMBERS OF THE SETS BEGAN MASS SUICIDE AFTER
SHOCKING INCIDENT IN THE JUNGLE, ACCORDING TO CURRENT
REPORTS, AS MANY AS 100 AT THE

EMBASSY GEORGETOWN ADVISED THAT STRENGTH OF COMMITTED SUICIDE
WAS APPROXIMATELY 100. INFORMED PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM
OF THE SITUATION IN PORT KAITUMA. (1)
EMBASSY GEORGETOWN REPORT TO GET INTO PORT KAITUMA
FOR ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION TO AMERICANS
WHO WERE IN THE AREA. (2) THAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE
REMAINDER OF THE SETS SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO GEORGETOWN.
EMBASSY GEORGETOWN IS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

4. HEAVY RAINFALL AND REMOVEDNESS OF PORT KAITUMA HAVE
IMPEDED COMMUNICATIONS AND WE DO NOT AS YET HAVE RELIABLE
REPORTS OF SITUATION AT PEOPLES TEMPLE COMMUNITY.
CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S BODY HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM THE SCENE
OF THE MURDERS TO GEORGETOWN AND IS NOW READY FOR RETURN
TO THE U.S. ALONG WITH THE BODIES OF THE DECEASED NEWS-
MEN. WOUNDED MEMBERS OF THE COULD HAVE BEEN FLOWN TO
EMBASSY GEORGETOWN AND OTHERS TO OTHERS. WE HAVE DISPATCHED A
MEDICAL TEAM TO PORT KAITUMA, INCLUDING EMBASSY
MEDICAL OFFICER VICTOR BURNS AND CONSUL AND ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICERS.

5. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BUSEWELL ANSWERED
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PRESS QUESTIONS AT NOON BRIEFING NOVEMBER 28. MOST
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QUESTIONS WERE DIRECTED AT USG CONTACT WITH PEOPLES
TEMPLE COMMUNITY IN GUYANA PRIOR TO CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S
VISIT TO SUBSTANTIATE CHARGES OF ABUSE AND DETENTION OF
MEMBERS. SUMMARY OF BRIEFING BEING TRANSMITTED TO POSTS
VIA WIRELESS FILE.

7. PASS SUBSTANCE OF ABOVE TO ALL CODELS. PASS TO
CONSULATES AS APPROPRIATE. CONSULAR INQUIRIES MAY BE
DIRECTED TO GUYANA WORKING GROUP TASK FORCE, WASHINGTON,
D.C., PHONE (202) 532-9390 TERN 23 OR 532-6618 TERN

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