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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
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TAGS: CASC, GY, (PEOPLE'S TEMPLE)

SUBJ: SUMMARY OF CONSULAR OFFICERS' VISIT TO JONESTOWN NOVEMBER 7, 1978

REF: REWITT/ELICE TELECON 12/2/78

ON NOVEMBER 7, 1978 CONSUL ELICE AND VICE CONSUL REECE VISITED THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL PROJECT AT JONESTOWN. THEY TRAVELED TO PORT KAITUMA AIRSTRIP EARLY TUESDAY MORNING ON A PLANE THAT THE EMBASSY HAD CHARTERED FROM THE GUYANA SUGAR CORPORATION (GUYSUCO). IN ACCORDANCE WITH PAST PRACTICE, PASSAGE WAS OFFERED ON A SEAFARER'S AVAILABLE BASIS TO PEOPLE'S TEMPLE MEMBERS WHO MIGHT WISH TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE TRIP.

THE EMBASSY OFFICERS MET THE PLANE AT OGLE AIRFIELD OUTSIDE OF GEORGETOWN AT ABOUT 8:00 A.M. IN THE MORNING. THERE THEY MET A VEHICLE FROM THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE THAT HAD BROUGHT JAMES JONES AND MARIA KATSARIS TO FLY WITH THEM. UPON THEIR ARRIVAL AT PORT KAITUMA AIRSTRIP THEY WERE MET BY TWO VEHICLES: A LAND ROVER, WHICH HAD BEEN SUPPLIED BY PRE-ARRANGEMENT FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA, AND A DUMP TRUCK BELONGING TO THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE. THE EMBASSY OFFICERS AND THE PILOT OF THE GUYSUCO PLANE BOARDED THE LAND ROVER AND PAID A CURTESY CALL ON MR. HERBERT THOMAS, THE PORT KAITUMA REGIONAL OFFICER. THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE DUMP TRUCK TOOK MR. JONES AND MISS KATSARIS TO THE FRONT GATE OF THE PROJECT AND

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WAITED THERE. AFTER THE COURTESY CALL, WHICH LASTED LESS THAN 10 MINUTES, THE LAND ROVER BROUGHT THE EMBASSY OFFICERS AND THE PILOT TO THE FRONT GATE, WHERE THEY ALSO BOARDED THE DUMP TRUCK. BECAUSE OF THE CONDITION OF THE ROAD LEADING INTO THE PROJECT FROM THE FRONT GATE, ONLY THIS LARGE TRUCK COULD GET IN.

CONSUL ELICE AND VICE CONSUL REECE WERE GIVEN A GUIDED TOUR OF JONESTOWN BY SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE. THE GUIDES INCLUDED, AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, MARCELINE (THE WIFE OF REV. JAMES JONES), EUGENE CHAIKIN, HARRIET TROPE, DEBBIE TOUCHETTE, SHARON MOSES, MICHAEL PECKIS AND MARIA KATSARIS. ONE GUIDE, WHOSE NAME THE OFFICERS DO NOT RECALL, WAS INTRODUCED TO THEM AS THE PROJECT'S AGRICULTURAL EXPERT. THE TOUR AT JONESTOWN INCLUDED VISITS TO THE NURSERY, THE COMMUNICATIONS SHACK (CONTAINING THE SHORT WAVE RADIOS JONESTOWN USED TO COMMUNICATED WITH SAN FRANCISCO AND GEORGETOWN), THE CAGE CONTAINING THEIR PET MONKEY, THE MEDICAL CLINIC, THE COM-

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MISSARY, THE METAL-WORKING SHOP, THE COOKING AREA, THE HERBAL KITCHEN, AND THE PHARMACY. JONESTOWN, IT WAS EXPLAINED, WAS A CASHLESS COMMUNITY, AND THE COMMISSARY DISPENSED GOOD TO THE RESIDENTS ON THEIR SIGNATURES. AT ABOUT 11:00 A.M., AFTER ALMOST TWO HOURS OF TOURING, MR. ELLICE BEGGED OFF ANY FURTHER SIGHTSEEING UNTIL THE OFFICERS COULD COMPLETED THEIR WORK. THE EMBASSY OFFICERS RETURNED TO THE PAVILLION WHERE THEY WERE TO HAVE LUNCH AND BEGAN INTERVIEWING SOME OF THEIR CASES. A FEW MEMBERS CAME TO SEE THEM IN ORDER TO HAVE STATEMENTS NOTARIZED. A DESCRIPTION OF WHO INTERVIEWED WHOM AND THE RESULTS OF THESE INTERVIEWS WILL BE APPENDED TO THE END OF THIS SUMMARY.

MR. ELLICE AND MR. REECE INTERVIEWED THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE MEMBERS AT THE SOUTH-EAST CORNER OF THE PAVILLION, WELL AWAY FROM ANY THIRD PERSONS, IN ORDER TO ASSURE PRIVACY. APPROXIMATELY 3/4 OF THE WAY THROUGH THE INTERVIEWS THEY BROKE OFF FOR LUNCH, WHICH WAS SERVED AT A LARGE SQUARE TABLE UNDER THE PAVILLION; MR. REECE

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AND MR. ELLICE WERE SEATED AT OPPOSITE CORNERS OF THIS TABLE. MR. ELLICE'S IMMEDIATE NEIGHBOURS DURING LUNCH WERE; REV. JAMES JONES, HIS WIFE MARCELINE JONES, SHARON AMOS, HARRIET TROPP AND MARIA VASSARIS. SOME OF THE MEMBERS NEAR MR. REECE WERE: MICHAEL PROKES, BEBBIE TOUCHETTE, JOHNNY JONES AKA JOHNNY BROWN, AND THE GUY SUCCO PILOT. AS LUNCH WAS SERVED, "JONESTOWN EXPRESS", A MUSICAL GROUP, PLAYED "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL" AND ALL THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE MEMBERS PRESENT STOOD, PALMED THEIR HAND OVER THEIR HEARTS, AND SANG ALONG. REV. JONES APPEARED FOR THE FIRST TIME JUST AS LUNCH WAS BEING SERVED WITH PEOPLE ON EACH ARM WHO APPEARED TO BE STEADYING HIM. THE CONSULAR OFFICERS WERE TOLD THAT JAMES JONES HAD RECENTLY SUFFERED A HEART ATTACK AND HAD A FEVER OF 105 DEGREES. HE WAS WEARING

A WHITE GAUZE MASK OVER HIS FACE. BOTH OF THE OFFICERS NOTED DURING THEIR VARIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH HIM BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER LUNCH THAT REV. JONES' SPEECH WAS MARKEDLY SLURRED. DURING HIS LUNCHTIME CONVERSATION WITH MR. ELLICE, REV. JONES TRIED AT ONE POINT TO SPELL A WORD THAT HE DID NOT WANT A NEARBY CHILD TO HEAR. HE WAS UNABLE TO SPELL THE WORD CORRECTLY AND GAVE UP IN APPARENT CONFUSION. BOTH OFFICERS NOTED THAT NEITHER MR. JONES' FOREHEAD NOR PALM WAS PERSPIRING AND MENTIONED TO EACH OTHER LATER THAT HE NOT APPEAR TO HAVE THE CLAIMED FEVER. AFTER LUNCH REV. JONES WAS HELPED AWAY FROM THE AREA BY TWO ATTENDANTS AND THE CONSULAR OFFICERS CONTINUED THEIR INTERVIEWS. DURING LUNCH, THE OFFICERS MET JOHN VICTOR STORN, WHO WAS BROUGHT TO THE TABLE ESPECIALLY FOR THIS PURPOSE.

BY THE TIME THE INTERVIEWS WERE FINISHED IT WAS MID-AFTERNOON, AND, AS THE PILOT WAS ANXIOUS TO TAKE OFF SOON DUE TO AN APPROACHING THUNDERSTORM, THE OFFICERS WENT BY DUMP TRUCK FROM JONESTOWN BACK TO THE FORD MAITUKA AIRSTRIP. THEY THEREFORE DID NOT HAVE TIME TO VISIT THE AREA OF THE COMPOUND HOUSING THE RESIDENTIAL COTTAGES, OR THE PIGGERY/LIVESTOCK AREA; THEY DID, HOWEVER, FLY OVER THESE AREAS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEIR DEPARTURE FROM

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FORT KAITUMA. SHARON AMOS AND JIM JONES, JR. RETURNED WITH THE
OFFICER FROM FORT KAITUMA TO OGLE AIRPORT. AT NO TIME DID THE
OFFICERS ON NOVEMBER 7 SEE ANY BARBED WIRE, ANY GUARDS, ARMED OR
OTHERWISE, OR ANY OTHER PHYSICAL SIGN THAT PEOPLE WERE BEING HELD

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AT JONESTOWN AGAINST THEIR WILL. NOR DID ANY OF THE CONVERSATIONS
BY THE CONSULAR OFFICERS WITH PEOPLE'S TEMPLE MEMBERS AT JONESTOWN
REVEAL ANY INDICATION THAT THE INHABITANTS OF JONESTOWN WERE RE-
CEIVING ANYTHING LESS THAN NORMAL GUYANESE STANDARDS OF FOOD, CLOTH-
ING, SHELTER, AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.

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MR. ELLICE AND MR. REECE SHARED THE SAME GENERAL IMPRESSIONS AS FOLLOWS: THE MEMBERS THEY MET APPEARED TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH, MENTALLY ALERT (CONSIDERING THE ADVANCED AGE OF SOME OF THEM), AND GENERALLY HAPPY TO BE AT JONESTOWN. THEY ALL SEEMED TO BE ABSORBED IN THEIR VARIOUS DUTIES SUCH AS SHCP WORK, TEACHING OR GARDENING. NO ONE INDICATED ANY DESIRE TO RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES. SUMMARIES FOLLOW ON THE WELFARE AND WHEREABOUTS INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THE CONSULAR OFFICERS.

CASE NO. 1 - (MR. REECE)

LORETTA CHAVIS: MS. CHAVIS SAID SHE HAD WRITTEN HER MOTHER SEVERAL MONTHS AGO AND HAD NOT RECENTLY RECEIVED A REPLY. SHE THEREFORE DISCOUNTED THE ASSERTION OF HER MOTHER (IN THE LATTER'S LETTER TO THE EMBASSY OF 8/30/78) SAYING THAT SHE WAS SICK. MR. REECE ADVISED MS. CHAVIS OF HER MOTHER'S INTEREST IN HER AND ASKED LORETTA TO WRITE HER AGAIN SOON.

CASE NO. 2 - (MR. REECE)

MARSHALL FARRIS: MR. REECE ADVISED MR. FARRIS THAT HIS SISTER WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A RECENT PICTURE OF HIM. HE SAID THAT HE HAD RECENTLY SENT A PHOTOGRAPH OF HIMSELF TO HIS MOTHER. SEEING THAT MR. FARRIS WAS BORN IN 1907, MR. REECE ASKED HIM IF HIS MOTHER WAS STILL LIVING AND HE REPLIED YES. HE SAID HE THOUGHT HIS MOTHER MAY HAVE SHOWN THE PICTURE TO HIS SISTER. MR. REECE ADVISED HIM TO SEND A PICTURE OF HIMSELF TO HIS SISTER ANYWAY. IN VIEW OF GEORGETOWN TELEGRAM 2219 OF 1978 NO COMMUNICATION WAS SENT BY THE EMBASSY TO MR. FARRIS

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SISTER AFTER THE NOVEMBER 7 MEETING.

CASE NO. 3 - (MR. REECE)

RHONDA HUI AKA RHONDA FORTSON: WE HAD RECEIVED A LETTER FROM MS. FORTSON'S MOTHER-IN-LAW INDICATING CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF MS. FORTSON AND HER HUSBAND, HUI FORTSON. THE RESULTS OF MR. REECE'S CONVERSATION WITH MS. FORTSON ARE CONTAINED IN A MEMO IN THE FORTSON'S FILE IN THE EMBASSY DATED NOVEMBER 8, 1978. IN SUMMARY, THE MEMO SAYS THAT RHONDA FORTSON DID NOT HAVE HER PASSPORT WITH HER

SO THAT POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION COULD NOT BE MADE. MS. FORTSON SAID THAT HER HUSBAND WAS IN THE UNITED STATES, AND THAT SHE HAD RECEIVED A LETTER DIRECTLY FROM HER MOTHER-IN-LAW SINCE HER MOTHER-IN-LAW'S WELFARE INQUIRY WAS SENT TO US. MS. FORTSON PROMISED TO WRITE HER MOTHER-IN-LAW SOON. MS. FORTSON REFUSED TO SIGN THE

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PRIVACY ACT RELEASE: THEREFORE,
THE EMBASSY DID NOT SEND A COMMUNICATION TO ANY
OF MS. FOOTSON'S RELATIVES AFTER THE NOVEMBER 7 INTERVIEW.

CASE NO. 4 - (MR. REECE)

MR. & MRS. CLAUDE GOODSPEED: THE RESULT OF MR. REECE'S INTERVIEW
WITH THE GOODSPEEDS ARE CONTAINED IN A LETTER TO MR. & MRS. MELVIN
HARRIS DATED NOVEMBER 8, 1978 A COPY OF WHICH WE WILL POUCH IF THE
DEPARTMENT SO DESIRED. THE GOODSPEEDS INFORMED MR. REECE THAT THEY
ENJOYED THEIR RETIREMENT IN JONESTOWN. THEY WENT FISHING AND WERE
INVOLVED IN OTHER ACTIVITIES. THE GOODSPEEDS ALSO REMARKED THAT THE
HARRIS' WERE NEVER PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THEIR WELFARE BEFORE
THE GOODSPEEDS WENT TO JONESTOWN.

CASE NO. 5 - (MR. REECE)

MRS. HARPER: MS. HARPER WAS THE SUBJECT OF AN INQUIRY DURING
JUNE 1978 BY HER SON, MR. CHARLES WHITE. MS. HARPER SAID SHE

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RECEIVED A LETTER FROM MR. WHITE DATED MARCH 23, 1978 IN EITHER
MAY OR JUNE OF THIS YEAR. MS. HARPER SAID SHE ANSWERED THE LETTER
IN JUNE AND WROTE AGAIN TO HER SON DURING THE WEEK PRIOR TO
NOVEMBER 7, 1978. THE EMBASSY SENT A DIRECT RELAY TELEGRAM TO MR.
WHITE ON NOVEMBER 9, 1978 INFORMING HIM THAT HIS MOTHER APPEARED
TO BE FINE.

CASE NO. 6 - (MR. ELLICE)

LIANE HARRIS: EMBASSY OFFICERS WHILE AT JONESTOWN ON NOVEMBER 7,
1978 WERE INFORMED BY HARRIS' MOTHER, SHARON AMOS AKA SHARON HARRIS,
THAT LIANE WAS NOT IN JONESTOWN AT THAT TIME. HOWEVER, SHARON AMOS
SAID THAT LIANE WOULD COME TO GEORGETOWN DURING THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER
12, 1978 AND WOULD THEN SEE A CONSULAR OFFICER REGARDING THE WELFARE
AND WHEREABOUTS INQUIRY FROM SHERWIN HARRIS, LIANE'S FATHER.

CASE NO. 7 - (MR. ELLICE)

BRIAN BOUCHE: BRIAN'S MOTHER HAD TRANSMITTED A LETTER FOR BRIAN
TO US THROUGH CONGRESSMAN MCLOSKEY'S OFFICE. MR. ELLICE GAVE BRIAN
THIS LETTER AND HAD BRIAN OPEN AND READ IT IN HIS PRESENCE. BRIAN
HAD NO PARTICULAR REACTION TO THE LETTER BUT INDICATED THAT HE WAS
WELL AND HAPPY AT JONESTOWN AND WOULD SOON CORRESPOND WITH HIS
MOTHER. BRIAN WAS A MEMBER OF THE JONESTOWN EXPRESS, PLAYING THE
SAXOPHONE.

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CASE NO. 8 - (MR. ELLICE)

DONALD FIELDS: DONALD'S MOTHER, MS. MAE FIELDS, HAD ASKED THE DEPARTMENT TO ASCERTAIN THE CONDITION OF HER SON. MR. ELLICE SPOKE TO MR. FIELDS, WHO ASKED HIM TO ASSURE HIS MOTHER THAT HE WAS WELL AND HAPPY. THIS WAS DONE BY DIRECT RELAY TELEGRAM TWO DAYS LATER. MR. FIELDS WORKED IN THE PROJECT'S PHARMACY.

CASE NO. 9 - MR. ELLICE)

BETTY GILL: MS. GILL HAD AN OUTSTANDING SOCIAL SECURITY CLAIM. THE JONESTOWN COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL HAD FAILED TO COMPLETE THE SOCIAL SECURITY FORMS PROPERLY AND MR. ELLICE GAVE MS. GILL ANOTHER COPY OF THE FORM WITH MORE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS.

CASE NO. 10 - MR. ELLICE)

SIVA GRIMM: THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN CONTACTED BY THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN BURTON AND REQUESTED TO RELAY A LETTER TO MS. GRIMM FROM HER FIANCEE IN CALIFORNIA. AT MR. ELLICE'S REQUEST, MS. GRIMM OPENED AND READ THE LETTER IN HIS PRESENCE. SHE INDICATED THAT SHE HAD NO PLANS TO RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES, THAT SHE NO LONGER CONSIDERED HERSELF ENGAGED TO HER FORMER FIANCEE, AND THAT SHE HAD MARRIED A FELLOW JONESTOWN RESIDENT AND WAS EXPECTING A CHILD. THE CONSUL OFFERED TO AMEND HER PASSPORT AND ASKED TO SEE HER MARRIAGE LICENSE. MS. GRIMM THEN INDICATED THAT SHE WAS NOT, IN FACT, MARRIED, AND WOULD AMEND HER PASSPORT IN THE FUTURE IF SHE DID MARRY THE FATHER OF THE EXPECTED CHILD. THE CONSUL SENT A LETTER TO THE OFFICE OF THE CONGRESSMAN REPORT-

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ING DELIVERY OF THE LETTER.

CASE NO. 11 - (MR. ELLICE)

LARRY LAYTON: MR. LAYTON (AND HIS WIFE) ASKED TO SPEAK TO THE CONSUL ABOUT THE RECENT DEATH OF LARRY'S MOTHER, LISA LAYTON. IT WAS AGREED THAT MR. LAYTON WOULD INFORM ALL OF HIS RELATIVES ABOUT THE DEATH AND WOULD CONTACT THE EMBASSY SHORTLY TO ASSIST IN COMPLETING THE IS-192.

CASE NO. 12 - (MR. ELLICE)

MARY ROGERS: THE CONSUL SPOKE TO MS. ROGERS AS THE RESULT OF A LETTER HE HAD RECEIVED FROM HER DAUGHTER, SAMANTHA TUCKER. MS. ROGERS INDICATED THAT SHE WAS WELL AND ENJOYED HER LIFE AT JONESTOWN. A LETTER TO THAT EFFECT WAS SENT TO MR. TUCKER THAT FOLLOWING DAY.

CASE NO. 13 - (MR. ELLICE)

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BONNIE SIMON: THE CONSUL SPOKE TO MS. SIMON AS THE RESULT OF A WELFARE INQUIRY FROM HER STEP-MOTHER, MRS. WAYNE STUDY. THE CONSUL SENT A LETTER THE NEXT DAY TO MRS. WAYNE STUDY REVIEWING THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW.

CASE NO. 14 - (MR. ELLICE)

KENNARD WILKITE: THE CONSUL SPOKE TO THE PARENTS OF THE INFANT KENNARD WILKITE IN CONNECTION WITH AN OUTSTANDING PASSPORT APPLICATION. HE ASSISTED THEM BY MAKING CLEAR THE PHOTOGRAPH REQUIREMENT, AND THEY INDICATED THAT AS SOON AS PROPER PHOTOGRAPHS WERE AVAILABLE THEY WOULD PROCEED WITH THE APPLICATION.

CASE NO. 15 - (MR. ELLICE)

EARL MCKNIGHT: MR. MCKNIGHT WAS THE SUBJECT OF A REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION. BOTH

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CONSUL OFFICERS VISITED MR. MCKNIGHT AT HIS QUARTERS BECAUSE OF HIS ADVANCED AGE (83). HE IDENTIFIED HIMSELF, WHICH IN ANT OF ITSELF CLARIFIED UP THE PROBLEM. SINCE THIS WAS THE LAST OUTSTANDING CASE, THE OFFICERS DEPARTED JONESTOWN.

END

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